Greening of the Indiana University Alumni Association

My IU Office of Sustainability (IUOS) placement was with the IU Alumni Association (IUAA). This position was created with the idea that the best way for IUOS to expand its audience and influence beyond the campus is to get involved with the IUAA and its many members. With the third largest alumni body in the U.S., improving the sustainability of the IUAA allows the Office of Sustainability to have an impact outside the campus. While we may often think of IU as a localized single entity, that is simply not the case. IU is global, with alumni living in over 154 countries. By reaching out to these alumni, IUOS has the ability to increase sustainability awareness around the world.

As the first intern in this position I had many challenges not often faced by interns in previously created and inhabited positions. I spent a lot of my time figuring out how IUAA operates, and how to properly maneuver within the organization. Because no previous interns had set any goals or plans it was up to me to determine which direction to take IUAA in. Many of the projects I began here at IUAA remain unfinished due to my relatively short time in the position. I hope that the person in this position in the coming semesters can continue to work hard to accomplish the goals I set forth to accomplish. My goal for this report is to explain what I did, where it is currently, and how my successor can properly continue with the project. I will include names and contact information of people you will need to use for each project as well as other vital information I figured out while working.

My first step I took when I got to IUAA was to do an inventory of current practices. I took a tour of the DeVault Alumni Center; IUAA’s building, and took notes on what I saw. I also reviewed computer and technology issues as well as alumni outreach outlets. My notes with recommendations can be found in Appendix 1. These are informal notes and recommendations but they may aid in future building inventories and projects. This is a living document that I updated as I found out more about the building and IUAA’s practices. Many of the recommendations have not yet been pursued due to time constraints and higher priority issues.

I see this position as having three overall concentration areas: 1. Building operation, 2. Alumni Outreach and, 3. Events. While all equally important Alumni Outreach was my main focus. I felt that the best way to have the largest impact was to focus on reaching those 500,000 plus alumni. I was however able to make some progress on building operation as well. I do believe that if IUAA truly wants to be a leader in sustainability both on and off campus, they need to improve their practices right here in the DeVault Alumni Center. By making improvements to the building itself, and the operations of the building, IUAA can show alumni they are committed to sustainability. If IUAA preaches sustainability in their alumni outreach but does not actually practice sustainability the message has no meaning. They need to “walk the talk” if they truly want to impact their alumni. While there may be three areas of concentration, I see them all as interrelated and equally important. While I may not have made as much progress on the events category I believe there is a lot of potential here at IUAA to make great improvements in the area of event planning. I will go further into each category later in the report.

About IUAA

IUAA is housed in the Virgil T. DeVault Alumni Center, located across 17th street from Assembly Hall. The DeVault Alumni Center was completed in 1997, before LEED standards were established at IU. It is 33,000 square feet consisting of office space, conference rooms, reading and sitting rooms, a banquet hall, a large kitchen as well as home to the Student Alumni Association (SAA). Roughly 65 workers occupy the building which is open from 8am to 5pm Monday through Friday. The land DeVault sits on is maintained by the IU Architect’s Office. IUAA does not have a direct say on landscaping issues but can make special requests. IUAA Organizes or participates in several of Indiana University’s largest events, and holds around 200 events per year at DeVault alone. There are over 100 alumni chapters worldwide,
with over 500,000 living alumni. IUAA also provides numerous print and electronic publications for alumni.

Accomplishments

The following are projects that have been completed since I began my internship with IUAA

- Foam and plastic cups in conference rooms replaced with reusable glasses and coffee mugs  
  o Previously in the conference rooms there were foam disposable cups that IUAA employees would give their guests for drinks. In order to reduce waste, these have been replaced by reusable coffee mugs and glasses. A memo was sent out to employees to inform them of this and a stand up sign was created and placed next to the cups to remind people of proper cleanup practices.

- Inefficient vending machines replaced with ENERGY STAR models  
  o Currently only one of the two vending machines in the SAA break room (first floor) is Energy Star certified. The other one has been ordered and is on the way.

- IUAA participating in fall Energy Challenge  
  o One of 11 new buildings to join for fall 2010.

- ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager Profile created for Alumni Center  
  o This profile was created to satisfy a credit for the LEED for existing buildings checklist (Energy and Atmosphere credit 1). Data for electric, natural gas, water and central steam are included through July 2010. We are still waiting to include central chilled water data. Once this data is included, the profile can be submitted to apply the building to be ENERGY STAR rated. The account can be accessed here: https://www.energystar.gov/istar/pmpam/index.cfm?fuseaction=login.Login. The current user name is my IU user name mickenne. The password is iuosintern. See IUAA Utilities.

- Utility conservation reminders placed around building  
  o Stickers from the utilities department have been placed on light switches and above sinks throughout the building to remind employees to turn the lights off when they leave a room and report any water leaks to utilities. Contact: Alex Rekkas, utility conservation in academic buildings intern, IUOS: arekkas@indiana.edu

In Progress

These are projects I began work on during my internship, but are currently unfinished.

- Solar voltaics to power outdoor lights, fountain and potentially part of the building  
  o Karl Zacker (kzacker@indiana.edu), IUAA Bloomington Chief of Staff and my supervisor has for a long time wanted to do something about the fountain on the back patio of the alumni center. It runs 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for about 6 months of the year. Because it is run on two pumps, that generate 2000 watts each, it is estimated to use 96kWh’s per day, and cost the University over $1000 per year to run. They cannot just turn it off however. When they turn it off the squirrels get stuck in it and drown. One solution to this problem would be to either run the fountain (as well as lights and maybe even part of the building) with a solar voltaic system placed on the south facing lower roof of the alumni center. Fellow IUOS intern Jesse Freedman (jesfreed@indiana.edu) estimated that the cost would be roughly $8 per watt installed, or about $24,000 - $40,000 for the entire system. This figure of $8 per watt was provided by Mann Plumbing and Solar Energy Systems of Bloomington. Utility consumption for outdoor lighting has not been figured.
• LED light fixtures for all outdoor lighting including floodlights, security lights and walkway lights
  o I have talked to Scott Parkinson (Sparkinson@esl-spectrum.com) of ESL Spectrum of Indianapolis about upgrading our existing outdoor lighting to LEDs. For lighting details see Lighting Guide.

• Replace plastic and foam disposable kitchen utensils with recycled material/biodegradable disposables
  o I have created an Excel spreadsheet that compares prices of biodegradable and recycled content disposable dishware with non-biodegradable and non-recycled content dishware from GuyBrown Products (an IU Procurement Services approved company) (Appendix 2). IUAA has not yet purchased any of these products.

• Improvements to IUAA sustainability web site and computing
  o I have talked to IUAA Senior Data Analyst/Lead Programmer Raj Adhikari (radhikar@indiana.edu) about many ways IUAA could improve computing practices. One idea was to improve the IUAA sustainability web page, which is currently very weak, consisting of only links to a few carbon footprint tests: http://alumni.indiana.edu/magazine/sustain.shtml. The page used to be difficult to find, but they have made it easier due to my concern. I have also advised IUAA to add more to the site about what sustainability is, what IUAA is doing, and what alumni can do, as well as a link to the IUOS website. IUOS Athletics Intern Isaac Farley (ibfarley@indiana.edu) provided this link to the IU Athletics sustainability website: http://iuhoosiers.cstv.com/ot/greeningIU.html. Also, a fellow IUOS intern Anne Kostyo (akostyo@umail.iu.edu) was working on a green events guide and green events certification website for the summer. I suggested that there be a link to the green events website added to the IUAA sustainability page. I will go further into green event planning later in the report.

  o I have also suggested that IUAA set duplex printing as the default setting, as well as smaller margins and fonts and to install The GoGreen Initiative Setup Wizard /GoGreen reporting service /GoGreen Gadget and power-savings plan on IUAA computers. http://www.indiana.edu/~sustain/Computing/sustainability_gogreen.html. Contact Larry Riss, Director Education Technology Services: lriss@indiana.edu.

• Increased sustainability updates in alumni outreach
  o I have been in contact with the Indiana Alumni Magazine Editor in Chief and Director of Publications Mike Wright (miwirght@indiana.edu). In an effort to include more sustainability related stories in the magazine, I have created a press packet for Mr. Wright (Appendix 3). He has been hesitant to include more sustainability issues in the magazine after the sustainability themed issue from March/April 2009. Mr. Wright told me about the issue “It was worthwhile, but not well received by the readership. People commented that they are tired of being beaten over the head with this topic, so I think we have to pick our spots and have some real news value in order to be effective.” Getting more sustainability coverage in IUAA publications is probably the most important thing that can be done here at IUAA for sustainability.

Recommendations for future work

• Continued involvement of IUOS Intern
  o I believe that in order for IUAA to continue to make sustainability progress, they are going to need someone there to push the issues. Many of the people I have talked to here about sustainability seem to be very much in favor of it and behind my ideas. Many
things were already being done before I got here. IUAA is a forward thinking organization but they need someone to make sure they continue to make improvements and become more sustainable. J.T. Forbes, the new IUAA Executive Director is very sustainability conscious and the two of us, along with Bill Brown and Karl Zacker had a meeting this summer about sustainability at IUAA. Mr. Forbes seemed to be on board with what Bill and I were working on and even voiced some concerns and ideas of his own. The potential to do something great at IUAA is very high. Their leadership is very environmentally conscious and they are eager to be a leader at the university. In order to take advantage and meet this great potential, there needs to be someone here whose number one priority is sustainability. While people at IUAA have the right mindset, they are all very busy and do not have the time to focus purely on sustainability issues. With the continuation of the IUOS intern at IUAA, I believe IUAA will become a leader in sustainability on campus and throughout the IU community.

- Green events
  - As was stated earlier, one of the three main aspects of this internship was green events. As I said, IUAA Organizes or participates in several of Indiana University’s largest events, and holds around 200 events per year at DeVault alone. Events have the potential to have a very large environmental impact and because IUAA holds so many events it is imperative that they take steps to make their events more sustainable. Unfortunately I was not able to make much progress in this area. Most of the events that IUAA holds are during the school year. The events that were held over the summer were sporadic and I was unaware of them. This is an area I believe the next intern in this position should try to focus on. One of my ideas was to have a pilot green event that was centered on a green theme. It could be a small event with guests from local alumni chapters. By piloting an event like this it makes it a learning experience for everyone; the ones hosting and the ones attending. It also takes the pressure off the hosts. If the first green event was held at an actual event and something went wrong it would be a bigger deal than if something went wrong at a pilot event. It also gives the hosts the ability to learn from experience and note what went right or wrong and better prepare them for future green events. Once a pilot green event is held, IUAA may be more comfortable transitioning all of their events to green events. As I stated earlier, one possible group that the pilot event could be held for would be a local alumni chapter, such as the Monroe Country Alumni Chapter. To set something like this up, contact Mark Skirvin, the Senior Director of Alumni Outreach (mskirvin@indiana.edu). I talked to him this summer and he seemed to really like my ideas and offered many other ideas of his own. The Student Alumni Association (SAA) could also be a good contact for a possible green event. They hold many events for students, including many of the homecoming festivities. The Director of Student Programs is Conor McIntyre (comcinty@indiana.edu) who I believe is on the (inactive) IUAA Green Team, so he should be receptive to sustainability initiatives. Because Conor was out of town for a long time this summer the person I talked to from SAA was Trish Surfus (psurfus@indiana.edu), Associate Director of Student Programs. For guidance on how to organize a green event, see the green events guide created by Anne Kostyo mentioned earlier. Ideally, a green events policy would be instated, requiring all IUAA events to meet a certain level of sustainability.

- Reinvigorate IUAA Green Team
  - Currently the IUAA Green Team is fairly inactive. Karl Zacker is the main contact for the IUAA Green Team.

- LEED certification for existing building
  - Continue to update data on Portfolio Manager as well as work to gain other credits on the LEED for Existing Buildings: Operations and Maintenance Project Checklist.
• Green purchasing policy/guidelines
  o Required for Materials and Resources section of LEED certification checklist (prerequisite 1).

• Motion censored lighting
  o Many lights are left on in vacant rooms.

• Balcony gardens
  o Balconies are rarely used and could potentially support green roof type elements. This could gain points in the LEED checklist in the Sustainable Sites section for credit 7.2 Heat Island Reduction-Roof.

• Replace outdated appliances with new energy efficient models
  o Many of the kitchen appliances are old and outdated. Newer models would use less energy and save the university money.

• Permeable pavement in parking lot
  o LEED checklist, Sustainable Sites section, credit 6 Stormwater Quantity Control.

• Sustainability training workshops for IUAA employees
  o I believe a major part of improving the sustainability at a work place is to change the habits of the people that work there. This will also prepare employees for and improve IUAA’s chances in the Fall Energy Challenge.

• Continue to pursue in progress projects

**Conclusion**

This internship was a great experience for me, both professionally and personally. I learned many things about implementing a sustainability program at an organization. This was something I had never done before and is something that I can see myself doing one day as a career. For those reasons this has been a great learning experience and has prepared me for future work in this area. Personally, I had a great time as well. I got to meet many new people with similar interests and passions as me. I collaborated with many other interns while in this position, and I got to really know some of them and come to think of them as friends.

While the internship was a very valuable experience, I did not come without hard times and frustration. There were many times that I had no idea what to do. As the first intern in the position I did not have a clear path to follow, which made it difficult at times, but this was part of the learning experience. This is partially what made this internship so valuable in my mind. I learned how to start from scratch and create my own work and be my own boss. In previous internships I was always assigned work, and told what to do and how to do it and why I was doing it. In this case I had to figure out a lot of that on my own. I was however lucky enough to have good support from Bill, Emilie, Karl and the other interns when I needed it. While being the first intern in the position made it more difficult for me to proceed and to accomplish my goals, I hope to have paved a way for future interns in the position to follow, and created a solid foundation on which future sustainability initiatives can be accomplished at IUAA.