

# IGNITE CHANGE. GO GREEN.

## Faculty Spotlight:

### Donna Switzer, CHMM, CPEA, Project Manager for Environmental Resources Management and Adjunct Professor for Villanova College of Engineering

In this interview series we bring you inside the world of Villanova's faculty and explore how their work relates to creating a sustainable future. In this issue we hear from Donna Switzer, an adjunct professor in the College of Engineering.

#### What is your academic background?

I started my academic career at American University with a BS in Marketing. Later I received my Masters in Environmental Science from Drexel University.

#### How long have you been teaching at Villanova?

I started teaching at Villanova 3 years ago.

#### In your own words, how would you define sustainability and why is it important to you?

To me, sustainability means: "enough for all, forever."

My involvement with sustainability comes from the industry perspective. Sustainability is important

because it allows manufacturers and designers to focus on opportunities to create value for people, and reduce their

impact on the environment. It requires manufacturers and designers to change their approach to problem solving, and to protectively seek methods to decrease negative outputs and increase positive ones.

#### Have you been able to incorporate sustainability into your course work?

Yes! My course, CEE 7829 environmental engineering, looks to give engineers the tools to evaluate opportunities to reduce pollution, waste, and toxicity while creating products and services that add value or opportunity.



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## **If you could create any course, what would it be?**

I am fortunate enough to have been able to create a course, Villanova's "Environmental Compliance Systems" (CEE7520). This course introduces the major environmental, health & safety, and hazardous materials handling laws and regulations influencing industry. The course discusses techniques to enable compliance with the laws, and how taking a sustainable approach to design and manufacturing reduces a company's impact and regulatory burden. I throw in a lot of my own "war stories" and bring in other industry professionals to add to the discussion.

## **What do you do outside of teaching at Villanova?**

I am a project manager/consultant with Environmental Resources Management (ERM). I help manufacturers manage their environmental and health & safety risks. This includes applying for regulatory permits (air emissions, water discharge, etc), developing plans (such as emergency response plans), conducting compliance audits, developing sustainability and management systems programs, and evaluating operations for risk reduction opportunities. Right now I am helping a power company with the permit implications of converting from a coal-fired power plant to a natural gas-fired power plant.

## **How does your work with ERM address sustainability concerns?**

Through my experience and professional contacts, I can assist manufacturers and designers in reducing their environmental and health & safety impact.

## **What are your favorite outside the office activities?**

I love to be outdoors- hiking, mountain biking, kayaking, whitewater rafting, camping, boating, and riding motorcycles. I also have a goal to visit all the US National Parks.

**If you have someone you would like to see on the Faculty Spotlight, please send their name to [liesel.schwarz@villanova.edu](mailto:liesel.schwarz@villanova.edu)**

