Sustainable Business and the Triple Bottom Line:
Researching Sustainability Across Industry Contexts

Dr. Al Link

Bio:
Albert N. Link is the Virginia Batte Philips Distinguished Professor, and he is a member of the Economics Department. His research is in the general area of technology and innovation growth policy, with a focus on intellectual resources and natural resources as inputs to economic growth.

VFVC Project Summary:
*Aestheticizing US National Parks*
Professor Link’s research project was motivated by the overcrowding of U.S. national parks in the summer months of the year. Using Zion National Park data provided by the U.S. national park service as an example, the major finding of the project was that a doubling of entrance fees (currently $35 per vehicle) during the months of June, July, and August would reduce the number of park visitors to the desirable level of visitors in May. The policy recommendation to the national park service is to adopt seasonal pricing as a means of controlling overcrowding. VFVC funding for this project supported a PhD student in the Economics Department during summer 2020.

Dr. Chantell LaPan

Bio:
Chantell LaPan is an Assistant Professor in the Sustainable Tourism & Hospitality program at UNC Greensboro. Her research focuses on micro-entrepreneurship and tourism, with a particular interest in rural tourism development. She received a PhD in Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management as well as a Master of International Studies Degree from North Carolina State University and a Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

VFVC Project Summary:
*Sustainability Values in Culinary Tourism: Exploring the Link Between Restaurants, Farmers, and Tourists*
While farm-to-table culinary tourism has expanded greatly over the past several decades, the abrupt onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic seemingly reversed course overnight. In the U.S., many restaurants were shuttered for several months and subsequently had to alter their business model to reopen. Meanwhile, farmers that worked closely with chefs were vulnerable to dramatic changes in purchasing habits. Therefore, this study sought to explore the relationship between chefs and farmers and how the stress of the pandemic...
impacted these relationships. It also looked at the role of shared sustainability values on the farmer-chef relationship during times of stress. The study took place between October 2020 and March 2021 and involved in-depth virtual interviews with farmers and chefs. To date, 13 interviews have been completed, with a goal of at least 20. Preliminary results suggest that while working relationships are not always contingent on shared values, shared sustainability values can be critical in maintaining these connections during difficult times.

**Dr. Nir Kshetri**

**Bio**
Nir Kshetri is Professor at Bryan School of Business and Economics, University of North Carolina-Greensboro and a research fellow at Kobe University. He has authored ten books and about 170 academic articles. He has been ranked as the world’s most published and second most cited author in research on blockchain in Logistics and Supply Chain Management (IEEE Transactions on Engineering Management, 2020), and second most cited and sixth most published author in blockchain research (Central University of Tamil Nadu, 2020). Nir was the winner of IEEE IT Professional’s Most Popular Paper Award in 2020, 2019 and 2018 and Outstanding Contribution in Authorships award in 2020 and 2019.

**VFVC Project Summary:**

*Blockchain and sustainable supply chain management in developing countries*

This project seeks to provide an overview of blockchain’s potential roles in promoting supply chain sustainability in developing countries. We analyze multiple case studies of blockchain projects in developing countries to assess product quality, environmental accounting and social impact measurement. We have developed seven propositions that describe how blockchain can help address institutional, economic and technical challenges as well as power distribution-and integration-related issues in inter-organizational networks in these countries.

**Dr. Gillian Lei**

**Bio:**
Gillian Lei is an Assistant Professor of Accounting at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. She received her PhD. in Accounting and Information Systems from Virginia Tech and her MSA from University of Notre Dame. Her areas of research include companies’ strategic disclosure on social media and the dynamic relationship among corporate governance, sustainability, and firm performance. She has published in journals such as *Journal of Financial Economics, Journal of Business Research, Journal of Accounting Literature*, and *Journal of Information Systems.*
VFVC Project Summary:
Subgroups in Strategic Leadership Teams and Corporate Social Responsibility
Diversity in leadership teams provides opportunities for the formation of subgroups. Organizations have been searching for ways to harness the benefits of subgroups while simultaneously reducing process losses associated with subgroups. The project investigates how subgroups in boards of directors influence a firm’s engagement in and performance on sustainable business practices. Using a comprehensive dataset on board member attributes and one on sustainable business performance, we find that subgroups based on both social category attributes and informational attributes enhance sustainable business engagement and performance.

Dr. Jin Su

Bio:
Dr. Jin Su is an Associate Professor in the Department of Consumer, Apparel, and Retail Studies (CARS) at UNCG. Her research interests include global supply chain management and global sourcing strategies in the textile, apparel, fashion, and retail industries, sustainability and sustainable consumption, and brand marketing. Her teaching interests include dynamics in the apparel and retail industries and markets. She mainly teaches Retail and Consumer Studies courses at both undergraduate and graduate levels.

VFVC Project Summary
Exploring Sustainable Sourcing and Supply Chain Management in the Apparel Industry
The purpose of our VF grant research project addresses the issue of sustainability in the global apparel industry. Data was collected from in-depth interviews with apparel industry practitioners in Bangladesh and China. A qualitative research approach was used to analyze the information collected. The project examines the issues related to sustainable sourcing and supply management in the global apparel industry from the perspectives of the two leading apparel production countries – Bangladesh and China.