

## **The Sustainable Newsroom of the Future Interim Report**

September 30, 2003

**To: Dean Bruce Coull, SOE**  
**From: Dr. Sonya Duhe', PI**

**Re: The Sustainable Newsroom of the Future**

The Investigators, Duhe', Tanner and Peterson are pleased to report we are making progress toward our goals of this grant.

Our research question as outlined in the proposal stated: Can newsrooms improve the bottom line through better environmental performance? Are there simple but effective ways to make a difference on local and global problems?

Our initial review of news entities and available research on sustainability reveals that while some TV and print outlets have embarked upon the three R's, reuse, reduce and recycling programs either for themselves or as a catalyst for the community where they exist, we have found no evidence as yet that outlets have connected a direct economic tie to their businesses where "sustainability" is being pushed. The researchers see this as an opportunity area for news outlets that are already trying to be leaders in environmental areas and one where our research may add greater strength.

To achieve our goals in the grant, we have completed the following:

1. Begun observations in newsrooms for site visits to broadcast and print newsrooms around the state.
2. Reviewing relevant literature on environmental practices within organizations.
3. Pre-testing the instrument for South Carolina TV and print newsrooms to assess the commitment, if any, to sustainability.
4. Currently, developing protocol for sustainable practices in print and broadcast newsroom laboratories in the School of Journalism and Mass Communications at the University of South Carolina.

Our plan is to survey newsrooms on their commitment to sustainability later this fall and to analyze the data collected. By using that data, site visit observations and our own working knowledge of newsroom culture, researchers will then design a practice guide for a more sustainable newsroom. That guide will then be executed in the School's senior semester programs. Review and evaluation of the practice guide will be conducted in USC's Senior Semester programs for refinement. Opportunities for presentation and publication as well as additional funding for this grant will be assessed.

**Copy: Dr. Andrea Tanner, Professor Rick Peterson**