

BOARD SPOTLIGHT: NEW CEO OF THE ST. LOUIS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP IS READY FOR THE NEXT PHASE OF GROWTH

Sheila Sweeney is a native St. Louisan. Interested in politics from a young age, she worked as an intern for Senator Eagleton and as a legal aide in the Missouri Senate. This led to a career with Citibank as a lobbyist in 49 states. She also started her own company, SM Sweeney & Company, through which she specialized in transactions for property assemblage and commercial and industrial development for private investors, corporations, and individuals.

Throughout her career, she remained involved with civic operations. Sweeney was the chair of the St. Louis County Economic Council from 2005 to 2013. This County Council was merged with the economic development agency for the City of St. Louis in 2013 to form the St. Louis Economic Development Partnership (SLEDP). She was invited to chair the committee charged with creating the Partnership, and then became the Partnership's first board chair. Sweeney also served as chair of St. Louis County Port Authority, an affiliate of the Partnership.

Throughout her civic service, she helped drive developments and programs such as Northpark, River City Casino & Hotel, Helix Center Biotech Incubator, STLventureWorks, and the St. Louis Accelerate Challenge. She was a key proponent for the Community Reinvestment Fund, a nationally recognized grant program that has invested more than \$50 million to drive strategic development throughout St. Louis.

A champion for the region's growth for more than two decades, Sweeney was selected as the new CEO for the SLEDP in September of 2015 upon the retirement of the prior CEO. In this role, she focuses on economic development activities that will drive growth, generate prosperity, and catalyze investment throughout the region. This includes business expansion and retention, entrepreneurial support (financing and incubators), real estate and community development, and raising the region's global profile through international trade. The Partnership's international strategies are managed through the World Trade Center St. Louis (WTC) that brings together a strong system of business and government agencies to grow trade and investment while enhancing the global connectivity of the region. This work includes leading important regional initiatives such as the Brookings

Institute – Global Cities Initiative, inbound and outbound trade delegations, the St. Louis Mosaic Project, St. Louis' only EB-5 foreign investor Regional Center, and the St. Louis Foreign Trade Zone, to name a few. "I have personally been involved in St. Louis' international strategy development for a number of years," noted Sweeney. "In this age of globalization, companies and communities ultimately find themselves to be mandatory participants in a global marketplace. St. Louis is no different, so I

encourage and support new trade activity and foreign investment that will generate a new and diverse array of job opportunities tied to global economies."

In commenting on significant international business trends, Sweeney noted the global impact created by St. Louis' nationally-recognized entrepreneurial ecosystem: "In this hyper-connected economy, companies are exporting earlier in their life spans, leading to faster expansion. This new 'born global' phenomenon is leading to long-term international opportunities for St. Louis." Due to this trend, she is executing a clear vision to position the Partnership and St. Louis for their next generation of growth. To decisively create the environment

for limitless future progress, she recognizes the need for global trade competence and cultural literacy. "As globalization continues and cultures converge, I've come to appreciate that we all will benefit greatly from enhanced knowledge of global trade and cultural literacy. The more we understand and appreciate our unique cultural differences, the better able we are to effectively live, work, and compete in other countries."

Through her involvement in and support of international activities in the region, Sweeney was invited to join the advisory board of the Boeing Institute of International Business (BIIB) in Saint Louis University's John Cook School of Business. Dr. Seung Kim, director of the Institute, explained "Many key globally-focused economic development activities and essential infrastructure assets are launched and managed through the St. Louis Economic Development Partnership—and the groups preceding its creation. It is an honor for us to have

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BOARD SPOTLIGHT: SWEENEY POISED FOR GROWTH *(continued from page five)*

the Partnership represented on the BIIB board, assisting with our efforts to develop global education programs and events.” Sweeney expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to collaborate with the Institute on global business activities: “Internationally focused work cannot be accomplished by one organization. I’m proud of the fact that SLEDP and WTC have a long, successful track record of working with Dr. Kim and the Boeing Institute of International Business. Together, we have hosted international training programs, foreign delegations, and dignitaries, connecting St. Louis companies with global market

opportunities.” When asked about advice for current students majoring in international business, Sweeney noted that immersion is the only way to become more insightful and invested into the international arena. She gained a keen appreciation for different cultures and practices through international travel, and remarked on the value of study abroad opportunities. Additionally, she believes current business graduates need to understand that no matter what their area of concentration, they are all going to be impacted by global business in one way or another. “Going into the business

world today means going into a global environment. One would have to focus on being ‘domestic’ to avoid the international arena. Therefore, gaining as much understanding and knowledge about international business during school years would be a great asset for any graduate.”

For more information on the St. Louis Economic Development Partnership, please visit

<https://www.stlpartnership.com/>
For more information about the Boeing Institute of International Business, call 314-977-3898 or visit: biib.slu.edu

2015 DOCTORAL PROGRAM GRADUATES TEACHING AT U.S. UNIVERSITIES

The John Cook School of Business offers a doctoral program in International Business and Marketing. Each year, several students complete their dissertation defense and confer the Ph.D. degree. During 2015, Arilova A. Randrianasolo (left) defended his dissertation on April 27 and Alexey V. Semenov (right) defended his dissertation on June 15.



Dr. Randrianasolo’s dissertation focused on “Gaining Consumer Legitimacy: Developing A Measure and Framework of Legitimacy Within Consumer Stakeholders.” He is now an assistant professor of marketing in the Department of Management, Marketing, and Logistics at the Boler School of Business at John Carroll University in Ohio.

Dr. Semenov’s dissertation was “Offsetting Liability of Foreignness Within Various Geographic and Institutional Contexts: Examining the Effects of Cultural Intelligence and Firms’ Advantages on the

MNEs International Strategic Choices.” He is a now assistant professor in the School of Global Innovation and Leadership in the Lucas College and Graduate School of Business at San Jose State University.

New doctoral students begin the program every fall. For more information, please visit the web page business.slu.edu and select Programs of Study and then the Ph.D. program. Or contact the Program Director, Dr. Hongxin John Zhao: zhaox@slu.edu or 314-977-3834.

GLOBAL CONFERENCE

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Dr. Kim also thanked the audience for attending and engaging in the Q&A sessions.

He particularly greeted the student guests, not only those from Saint Louis University, but also those from area universities: “This is an outstanding learning experience. I’m very pleased to welcome students from the other area universities.” Guest students represented Washington University, University of Missouri St. Louis, Webster University, Maryville University, Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, and Eastern Illinois University.

This annual conference is held every November. If your company would like to become a Naming Sponsor, a Platinum Sponsor, an Ambassador Sponsor, a Consul General Sponsor, or a Consul Sponsor, please contact the Boeing Institute of International Business in the John Cook School of Business:

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