

March 10, 2008

Dear Member of the Graduating Class of 2008:

Congratulations on your upcoming graduation!

We are pleased to offer you an exciting opportunity to participate in the Pledge of Social and Environmental Responsibility. Students at many colleges and universities nationwide have taken the pledge, and Webster University is proud to be among the institutions that have endorsed it since 2004.

The pledge reads as follows:

“I pledge to explore and take into account the social and environmental consequences of any job I consider and will try to improve these aspects of any organization for which I work.”

Taking the pledge is a voluntary decision, and likewise the determination of what counts as environmentally and socially responsible is up to you. Our hope is that your pledge will contribute to a broader effort to build responsible citizenship and a sustainable world. We ask that you sign the pledge card or wear a green ribbon only if you intend to fulfill the commitment. Wearing the ribbon makes a public statement of your intent to consider the well being of the world and its inhabitants, both in your choice of career and in the decisions you make while in the workplace.

If you wish to participate, please complete and send in the attached form. A certificate, wallet card and green ribbon will be mailed to you prior to the commencement ceremonies.

The reverse side of this letter contains further details about the pledge. Additional information is also available on the Webster University Center for Ethics Web site: www.webster.edu/ethicscenter

Sincerely,

Kate Parsons, Director
Webster University Center for Ethics

-----Please cut out and return the following form -----

Pledge Participant Form

Name: _____ Signature: _____
(Please print clearly)

Student Number: _____ Date: _____

Current address: _____

Please return the bottom portion of this letter with your graduation materials.
Office: Please return this form to Kate Parsons, Director, Center for Ethics, Philosophy Department

Last year over 100 colleges and universities provided graduates the opportunity to take this important pledge. Manchester College in Indiana now coordinates the nationwide campaign to raise social and environmental awareness. Here is what some participants have to say about the pledge:

John Hebert, M.A., Webster University class of 2004: “Although I chose to attend Webster U. for reasons of convenience and program study, my degree is worth that much more to me because of Webster’s emphasis on social and environmental responsibility. While many organizations today may espouse values without taking any real action toward them, Webster’s students and faculty take action toward their ideals.”

Aaron Strauss, coordinator of MIT’s 2000 pledge campaign: “People can crunch code and do lab experiments without considering what their company is doing. By taking the pledge, they will more likely ask questions such as, ‘Does the waste my lab produces end up in the Charles River?’”

Harvard University grad Sinead Walsh never considered herself the “environmental type.” But the pledge led her to bring about change: “I started making changes in my life, such as turning off lights, trying to reuse and recycle.” Sinead, a native of Dublin, Ireland, is now in Rwanda working with Population Services International.

(Last two quotes taken from Manchester College Press Releases)

Things to consider...

Determine what social responsibility means to you. According to the pledge, social responsibility is self-determined. What do you believe in? Workplace accessibility for everyone? Contributing to local charity and social change efforts? Respecting worker privacy?

Research socially responsible career fields and employers. There are a variety of resources that you can get from the organization itself, from independent sources, from advocacy organizations, and, of course, from simply talking to the organization’s employees.

Webster University Pledge Endorsers

Office of Academic Affairs
College of Arts and Sciences
Leigh Gerding College of Fine Arts
School of Business and Technology
School of Communications
School of Education
Center for Ethics
Accessibility Committee

Environmental Studies Committee
General Studies Committee
International Studies Committee
Multicultural Studies Committee
Recycling Committee
Women’s Studies Committee
Behavioral & Social Sciences Club
Forensic and Debate Team

Latin American Student Organization
Literature Club
Philosophy Club
Webster Outdoors Club
Students for Gender Equality
Students Working Against Depression
Webster LGBTQ Alliance
Yoga and Pilates Club

Stamp

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