



Assistant Professor in Economics Dr. Lea-Rachel Kosnik, in her office in the SSB tower, discussing how we can improve the country's economic situation by improving our energy efficiency.

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT Lea-Rachel Kosnick

Environmental Economist pushes "second-effect thinking"

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Even though school was closed last Wednesday due to snow, Lea-Rachel Kosnik, assistant professor of Economics, still read up on environmental suggestions about how to reduce electricity consumption.

Kosnik is no freshman to the environmental concerns that are affecting society today. She has been teaching at the University of Missouri - St. Louis for the past five years, after receiving her Ph.D. from the University of California - Los Angeles.

Kosnik's expertise is in environmental economics, public and regulatory economics and behavioral economics. She is a member of the American Economic Association, the Midwest Economics Association and the Committee on the Status of Women in the Economics Profession, the Association of Environmental and Resource Economists, and the Society for the Advancement of Behavioral Economics.

Kosnik understands the challenges in keeping an economy healthy, and she believes that environment does play a part.

She recommends that the UM-St. Louis community make an extra effort to cut down on consumption of electricity, and pay attention to their energy usage during these difficult economic times.

Kosnik also suggests that the long-term health of the economy depends on a stimulus package.

She believes a stimulus is necessary as long as money is spent wisely on the economy to help the situation at hand.

Spending on infrastructure, such as roads, would be a good example of environmental improvement for the economy. In the same vein, improving the aging electric infrastructure, research on the environment and what President Barack Obama calls the Smart Electricity Grid.

Kosnik puts forth sophisticated objectives for herself and for her students, with her primary objective being to transmit fundamentals, train her students in what she calls "second-effect thinking" and, finally, to instill the love of learning.

As an effective university instructor, she is not all work and no play.

"My favorite thing is literature and theatre. Shakespeare is my thing. I do volunteer with my synagogue. Whenever someone needs a meal or a ride an announcement goes out and I help", Kosnik said.

"March," "Reflections of the Golden Eye" and "The Virgin's Lover" are just a few books that Kosnik finds exceptional in her pastime.

Two years ago Kosnik received the Gerald and Deanne Gitner Excellence in Teaching Award for New Faculty and her article "The Greening of Higher Education" is noted as a top ten download on the Social Science Research Network website.

Education may be the trick to creating and keeping a healthy economy. When knowledge is present then productivity is possible and Kosnik knows that education in children and in adults is a necessity for long-term growth development.

Going green takes a tiny effort to rebuilding a deteriorating economy. By flicking off the lights or unplugging a toaster oven, energy and money can be saved.

Kosnik has great tips on how to go green this semester and it could even save our economy.