

Our Vision

Using EDGE Project-Uganda as our model, EDGE Project hopes to expand its University of Wisconsin operations, and replicate its organizational framework and goals at universities across the United States. We hope to engage college students across the nation in an effort to create a student movement committed to global leadership and empowerment.

Student Organization

One of the founding principles of the EDGE Project is 'empowerment through unity'. As students, we are consistently told that we should refine our skills now so that we can make a difference in the future. We have created a community of motivated and uniquely-talented individuals, and through teamwork we know we can make a difference! We have created a system of checks and balances within our organization to ensure that our research is of the highest caliber possible.

Mission: To provide students with a platform to engage actively in issues of sustainable international development, project management, leadership, and the realities of life in developing nations by connecting them with the resources necessary to research, create, and implement small-scale community development projects.



From the Desk of EDGESide

In this issue of *EDGESide* we hope to provide an overview of all our activities on campus this past month as well as information on upcoming events. With so much going on both on the field in Lingira and on campus, we have an exciting update about the Grain Mill project as well as a feature new to *EDGESide* (that I am particularly delighted about) called *In the Spotlight* with which we intend to introduce our interns and highlight their hard work and what they are gaining from this experience.

I would like to thank you for your continued support in helping us achieve our goals and encouragement to aim above and beyond.

Sincerely,

Sarah Hasan

Editor in Chief, EDGESide

EDGE on Campus

- Co-founder of EDGE Project Farha Tahir was recently featured in the [student profiles](#) at University of Wisconsin La Follette School of Public Affairs for her involvement with EDGE Project.
- October 12th: In light of the massacre and following violence against women that erupted in Guinea this past month, a candlelight vigil was organized in collaboration with the Human Rights Initiative, Action in Sudan, and WE International, to draw awareness to the unacceptable state of human rights in the country.
- October 22nd: EDGE cosponsored the event *Social Responsibility and the Corporate Ecosystem: Perspectives from Global Food Entrepreneur Ashok Vasudevan* as part of the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation's (WARF) Gilson Global Impact Series.
- October 22nd: Cosponsored the Campus Forum *Act for the World: Educational Forum on the United Nations Millennium Development Goals*, highlighting our work as a representation of MDG 3-Promote Gender Equality & Empower Women.

Project Update

Latest developments regarding the EDGE Project Grain Mill on Lingira Island:

Earlier this month we received the exciting news from Headmaster at Lingira Living Hope Secondary School informing us of the completion of the Grain Mill. The EDGE- summer 2009 group worked closely with Headmaster Sam and Teacher Fred to found this monumental contribution to the sustainability of one of the most important social organizations on the island, the secondary school. The functioning of the grain mill will reduce food costs for the students, serve as a source of income generation for other school operations, and provide fodder for a prospective chicken coup and/or piggery as an additional income generation project. Sam and Fred have been an inspiration to the EDGE Project through their selfless compassion for their students and their school.

In the Spotlight

Name: Sharmila Ghosh

Team: Education; Community Development Intern.

Currently a sophomore majoring in Political Science and English; future plans to attend law school and either practice law or work in legislation.



I joined EDGE at the beginning of this school year, but I've been somewhat aware of the group's progress over the past couple of years because of close family ties with one of the co-founders of EDGE project. I wanted to join this student organization in particular because of the sustainable and beneficial work the group has been able to implement on the island of Lingira, Uganda. I was really impressed with the group's ability to research and brainstorm effective development plans for the improvement of the community, but also to actively execute these plans in a realistic manner.

Along with some other members of EDGE, my project this semester is to create a student council on the island to provide an opportunity for the students to have a voice and gain knowledge outside of the classroom. We are also going to plan a leadership workshop to help give the kids an added sense of self, which can hopefully boost their confidence and foster motivation for other aspects of their lives. As an active member of student council throughout my high school career, I am aware of all the benefits that accompany the organization, and I only hope to give the children in Lingira the same benefits. Along with researching a project for the Education team, I have been involved in planning EDGE Project's first annual Banquet by designing the invitations and planning the set-up. It's been a great experience so far that has allowed me to form friendships with other EDGE members.

I'm really excited to see my project progress and hopefully be able to watch the students on the island take part in the student council and leadership workshop! Being a part of an organization like EDGE helps me to manage my time effectively, but also gives me the ability to work towards a concrete goal that will eventually help someone. It's nice to know that my work and time will pay off in the end, and it doesn't hurt that I am having so much fun working with a group of inspired and determined individuals. I only wish I had joined the group my freshman year, but I cannot wait for the next few years with EDGE project and all of the work we have yet to do.

Name: George Oliver

Team: Health & Nutrition; Think-Tank Intern.

Currently pursuing a GIS Certificate Program; projected completion: Summer 2010.



A couple of key aspects of EDGE's message lead me to join the group this semester. First, the idea that my research and efforts could be connected directly to improving the lives of others in disadvantaged settings was very motivating. Speaking to Farha and Marissa, I got a sense of the group's dynamism, and the potential to do 'hands-on' work seemed like a good way to mobilize the energies of a student group. Secondly, through classes in demography, I had come to realize the importance of gender in understanding issues of development, and I felt EDGE's emphasis on gender and its general message reflected a holistic approach to development based on current scholarship. I agree with the group's view that a comprehensive approach targeting root causes is

Potential Opportunities

Students have the opportunity to get involved in various aspects of EDGE, including:

- Research
- Leadership
- Outreach
- Communications
- Fundraising

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necessary in promoting sustainable development. As for what I'm doing in EDGE, I am a member of the Health and Nutrition team, and I'm researching family planning education efforts in environments similar to Lingira's.

Currently I am applying to Master's programs in international development while studying Geographic Information Systems at the UW's Geography Department. In graduate school I hope to study issues of development and population in urban settings, with an emphasis on spatial analysis. I've taken the long route on my way to deciding upon a career in the field of international development. I studied contemporary Japan during my undergraduate years in Boston, spent 3 ½ years in Tokyo teaching English and studying Japanese, worked at an artisanal cheese shop and at a transportation planning agency in San Francisco. Being a member of EDGE is a great opportunity to better understand the particular challenges facing people in low-income countries. Hopefully, I'll get a chance to travel to the island next summer and see Lingira firsthand.

Upcoming Events

- The 1st Annual EDGE Project Banquet will be held Friday, November 13th 2009, from 6:30-9:30 pm at the University Club on State Street. The reception will feature a photo exhibit, fair trade craft sale and silent auction which will be followed by dinner. \$30 General admission, \$20 student; please RSVP by November 4 and contact mmommaerts@gmail.com.
- EDGE Project will be participating in another GlobalGiving Challenge! The *Give More - Get More Challenge* will run November 10th through December 1st 2009 and help raise funds by matching up to 50% on each donation, and up to \$5000 for raising the most money or for receiving the greatest number of donations. The more funds we raise, the more funds will be matched!
- EDGE will be presenting service learning opportunities for students at the PEOPLE Program's Leadership and Professional Development Conference on Saturday, November 14th at the Osthoff Resort in Elkhart Lake, WI.
- The EDGE Women's Empowerment Team is conducting a donation drive called *Kick-start your Thanksgiving* from November 16th to November 25th. Cleats, jerseys, running shoes, t-shirts and other soccer related items will be collected for the Lingira Girls Football Club. Stay tuned for more information on where you can donate!

