



To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Debbie Friedel and I am the Director of Sustainability for Delaware North Parks and Resorts. I am responsible for implementing and managing our division's sustainability program which includes environmental management, education, facilities stewardship, and healthy living. I am engaged and work closely with others through community outreach to achieve a balance for our planet and ourselves.

Delaware North operates their global headquarters at the heart of Buffalo and serves more than half-billion guests annually. The company's national and international reach includes some of the world's most iconic places including national parks, sports and entertainment facilities, destination resorts and restaurants, airports and casinos. As a responsible business in the hospitality industry, our integrated approach to stewardship aligns perfectly with The Western New York Sustainable Business Roundtable.

In January of 2015 I had the privilege of delivering a keynote lecture for the Western New York Sustainable Business Roundtable's Sustainability Management and Resource Trade Show. The Event which was hosted at the University at Buffalo's Clinical Translation Research was standing room only with a broad array of members and from throughout the region.

During this visit I was able to learn more about the Roundtable and the critical role that the University at Buffalo played in co-founding, operating and continuing to anchor the initiative.

In 2013 the University initiated a partnership with Erie County and a small group of key business leaders throughout the region to assess the feasibility of creating a green business association that would work to build a greater synergy across the business sector in Buffalo Niagara to advance green practices. A year's worth of stakeholder engagement later (by specifically holding focus groups, performing marketing analysis, interviews and broad outreach to the business community) led to the launch of the Western New York Sustainable Business Roundtable on Earth Day 2014. Over the past year membership has grown to nearly 50 businesses (from large multi-national companies to smaller businesses and a diverse group of sectors) with active engagement occurring every month with numerous workshops, communication groups and on-line tools.

The Round table has been gaining momentum since its launch with the awarding of a US Environmental Protection Agency Region 2 grant that has provided full time staffing to the organization enabling it to foster collaborations that empower member businesses to act on their sustainability goals, maintain profitability, and promote a healthy community.

My work for Delaware North takes me across the country and I have the privilege of interacting with many institutions of higher education, businesses and sustainability colleagues. In my 12 years in this profession I have not seen the type of integration between the green business community and a public research university. The leadership UB has demonstrated is truly innovative, extraordinary, unique, and ground-breaking.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Debbie R. Friedel".

Debbie R. Friedel  
Director of Sustainability  
Delaware North Parks and Resorts