

# Sustainability leadership in action

**From city government to corporate leadership, ASU alumni are working in every sector of society to make the world a more sustainable place**

By Lisa Robbins, ASU News  
April 18, 2025

**Editor's note:** This story was originally featured in a special edition of [ASU Thrive](#) magazine.

ASU alumni are making an impact. From city government to corporate leadership, they're working in every sector of society to make the world a more sustainable place.

Here's a look at four.

## The eco business strategist

### Michael Hwang

Microsoft, director, sustainability partner, go-to-market strategy; '14 MBA, '21 Executive Master of Sustainability Leadership

Michael Hwang brings sustainability leadership to big business. As director of sustainability go-to-market strategy at Microsoft, he leads the worldwide partner strategy for commercial technology solutions to achieve client sustainability and business resilience.

Before joining Microsoft, Hwang returned to ASU to pursue an Executive Master of Sustainability Leadership in 2021. During the program, Hwang, then a senior supply chain responsibility program manager at Intel, successfully influenced executive management to invest more resources into the tech giant's supply chain environmental program.

Using return-on-investment numbers on business and sustainability risks to Intel's supply chain helped him secure his job at Microsoft after graduation and move into a higher-level position.

## The mentor

### Dunia Namugayi

VOX Global, vice president, sustainability; '14 MA in sustainability

Future sustainability professionals get a leg up thanks to leaders like Dunia Namugayi. A vice president of sustainability at VOX Global, a public affairs firm, she mentors ASU College of Global Futures students in the Frasier Global Mentorship Program.

Namugayi loved that at ASU, sustainability was being studied scientifically. As a graduate student, she learned to understand complex issues around sustainable development and climate change, absorbing knowledge from talks held by experts and on-the-ground research on wave ocean energy while studying abroad in Trinidad and Tobago.

It's a program, Namugayi says, that's directly engaged with the sustainability industry and provides students with the skills to be workforce-ready.

## **The innovation leader**

### **Michael Hammett**

City of Phoenix, director, Office of Innovation; '91 BA in broadcasting, '15 MS in global technology and development

Michael Hammett and the city of Phoenix's Office of Innovation co-create pilot initiatives with other departments to address pressing city issues — ranging from water security to extreme heat resilience. Established in 2021, the office functions as a central hub for innovation, performance management and strategic data use across the city.

After 15 years working in local media, Hammett joined the city of Phoenix as a communications officer in 2006. He eventually returned to ASU to pursue his master's degree.

Hammett's online graduate work focused on international development, technology, equity, human-centered design and sustainability. Hammett says the program helped him view global issues holistically and use what he learned in multiple avenues in his career.

## **The navigator**

### **Chelsi Tryon**

Toppan Merrill, director of environmental, social and governance; '12 BA in business (sustainability), '14 Master of Sustainable Solutions

At Toppan Merrill, a financial reporting and regulatory compliance company, Chelsi Tryon helps clients navigate the ever-changing landscape of sustainability reporting. On a day-to-day basis, she works cross-functionally with almost every department — working with the marketing teams to create materials for the sales department, as well as supporting clients directly.

"For example, a director of investor relations might suddenly be tasked with sustainability reporting, and that's where we step in," Tryon says.

Toppan Merrill's primary services are advisory, which involves helping clients write sustainability reports, and design, which includes formatting, visuals and layout.

Tryon also applies her expertise to the nonprofit space as part of her role on the board of directors for Stardust. In addition to reviewing strategy and overall operations from a sustainability standpoint, Tryon helps the organization find funding to build a new regional center.

“(I’m) exploring strategies for grant funding to increase our footprint and to enhance our community impact,” she says.

Tryon credits ASU’s School of Sustainability with giving her the tools to approach her work with an adaptive mindset. Through coursework on life cycle assessment, sustainability strategy and systems thinking, she learned to effectively work with priorities of different teams — a skill she uses daily as a sustainability consultant.

Learn more at [collegeofglobalfutures.asu.edu](https://collegeofglobalfutures.asu.edu).

---

*This story originally appeared on [ASU News](#).*

## Main image



From left: ASU alumni Michael Hwang, Dunia Namugayi, Michael Hammett and Chelsi Tryon are making a difference out in the world through their professional careers.

## Text image(s)



Photo by Jill Richards





Photo by Melissa Lyttle



Photo courtesy Michael Hammett



Photo by Sabira Madady