

## **Fair Trade panel to discuss differences, certifications**

**by Allison Reineck - Tuesday, April 05, 2011**

<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/10726/fair-trade-panel-to-discuss-differences-certifications/>

Business owners in Wisconsin will meet at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh on April 7 to explore various definitions and standards of Fair Trade as the movement continues to grow.

The panel discussion and talk-back session is taking place from 4:30-6 p.m. in Reeve Memorial Union, where panelists will discuss their experiences either working in and/or owning a fair trade business, as well as different certifications through Fair Trade USA, IMO certification, Transparent Trade and Direct Trade.

UW Oshkosh began selling Fair Trade products in 2005 and shortly after started campaigning to become a Fair Trade university. In fall 2008, Chancellor Richard H. Wells officially declared UW Oshkosh to be the first Fair Trade University in the U.S.

David Barnhill, environmental studies director and English professor at UW Oshkosh, said that the Fair Trade movement is continuously growing and there are several different ways these products make their way to the consumer.

“Divergences are seen as people pursue different ways to approach and structure Fair Trade,” said Barnhill. “Fair Trade USA (formerly Transfair) has been the main certifier for the U.S., but others prefer different approaches which has given rise to an alternative certifier, Fair For Life, as well as Direct Trade, in which the retailer works directly with the producer in the developing world.”

Panel representatives from Wisconsin businesses includes Matt Earley, coffee roasting cooperative Just Coffee in Madison; Gail Bennett-Christian, owner of a Fair Trade for All crafts store and member of the Milwaukee Fair Trade Towns Coalition; and Ken Osmond, owners of Planet Perk Café in Oshkosh.

“As the community learns more about Fair Trade, they recognize the complexity of the movement,” Barnhill said. “This panel is intended to show some of the differences and divergences in Fair Trade.”

Attendees will have the opportunity to ask the three business owners questions during this free and public event.

“The panel is a great opportunity for the UW Oshkosh community to learn more about the complexities and even the tensions within the Fair Trade movement,” said Barnhill.