



## GIAN PETER VERGNETTI

FULBRIGHT SCHOLARSHIP TO MASDAR INSTITUTE OF  
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, MASDAR CITY, ABU DHABI,  
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES



A native of Scranton, Gian Peter Vergnetti was awarded a Fulbright research grant to the United Arab Emirates. In August he will embark on a 10-month cultural and economic development research endeavor exploring the nascent and flourishing Masdar sustainable technology cluster in Masdar City, Abu Dhabi. He will conduct research under the auspices of faculty at the Masdar Institute of Science and Technology, a graduate-level, research-driven university dedicated to the science and engineering of advanced energy and sustainable technologies.

Masdar Institute was established in 2006 in partnership with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Mass. Masdar City aims to be the world's first sustainably designed, carbon-neutral, zero-waste urban village powered entirely by renewable energy. The Masdar Initiative is a primary component of The Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030 to diversify the economy of the Emirates and transition from a 20th century carbon-based economy to a 21st century knowledge-based economy. Labeled the "silicon valley" of the Middle East, this budding, global, clean-technology hub sets the stage for the application and testing of new technologies and the practical implementation of theory and research.

"I am fascinated by Masdar's comprehensive, multi-faceted and interdisciplinary approach to innovation and the development of sustainable technologies; and the intimate partnership between the public sector and private enterprise," said Vergnetti. His research will explore this unique constellation, as well as the adaptability and behavior of industries and markets in response to the introduction of these technologies, and the economic and societal implications on a regional and global level. His time will include independent self-study and collaboration with the academic and research community along with networking and interaction among thought leaders, industry professionals and entrepreneurs.

An artist and designer, Vergnetti plans to enrich his understanding of Emirati heritage and culture by engaging local artists through various collaborative works such as exhibitions, workshops and performances. He will study Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) through hands-on, daily interaction with native speakers in conjunction with private tutoring.

Vergnetti's work at Masdar will build upon his continued interest in renewable energy and sustainable technology, beginning formally in the fall of 2003 while a student at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, N.Y. An industrial design major at Pratt, he would later transfer to The University of Scranton and change his major to international business.

## GIAN PETER VERGNETTI *continued*

Vergnetti credits his success with the Fulbright program to the unwavering support of Scranton's faculty and administration, as well as his family and friends.

"Dr. Susan Trussler (director of the International Business Program and Scranton's Fulbright program advisor) has never given up on me," said Vergnetti. "She has truly helped to make this dream a reality." Vergnetti also credits Scranton professors Daniel West, Ph.D., chair of the Department of Health Administration and Human Resources and Iordanis Petsas, Ph.D., chair of the Department of Economics and Finance, for their backing and inspiration both academically and professionally. "I could not have done it without their support," he said.

While at Scranton, Vergnetti travelled abroad and worked as a research assistant to Dr. West and Steven Szydowski, D.H.A., of the University's Department of Health Administration and Human Resources. Vergnetti says it was experiences like these that gave him the inspiration and confidence to follow his dream.

Vergnetti graduated in May 2008 from The University of Scranton, magna cum laude, where he earned a Bachelor of Science in international business with a minor in finance. He received the 2008 Kania School of Management Excellence in International Business Award and that same year was an alternate candidate for a Fulbright grant to study the renewable energy industry in Sweden. He is a member of Omicron Delta Epsilon (international honor society for economics), Beta Gamma Sigma (international honor society for business) and "Who's Who Among Students In American Universities & Colleges."

While at Scranton, Vergnetti served as vice president and president of the International Business Club and was a member of P.R.I.S.M. (Portfolio of Responsible Investments Under Student Management), the International Club and the Finance Club. In the fall of 2008, Vergnetti began his career in the Alternative Investments Group at Merrill Lynch & Co. (New York, N.Y.) where he works currently.

Vergnetti has held internships and positions with the U.S. Senate (Scranton), the ARC of Lackawanna County (Scranton), Colombo Construction Corp (Brooklyn, N.Y.) and NYLIFE Securities (New York, N.Y.).

A graduate of Wyoming Seminary, Kingston, he is the son of Leo Patrick Vergnetti of Scranton and the late Carol Lyn (Bacchetti) Vergnetti (a native of Blakely).