

Alumni-nominated spotlight: Renewable energy expert Peter Moritzburke



As part of our ongoing Pass the Pen series, we feature MEC Development Principal Peter Moritzburke '96 who shares his favorite GPS memories and his key to success in renewables and the environment

By Rachel Hommel | GPS News



For Peter Moritzburke '96, renewable energy has always been at the forefront of his mind. While at the UC San Diego School of Global Policy and Strategy (GPS), he interned at SAIC in Mexico City, looking at environmental products and services markets, including renewables. This led to his master's paper on fuel cell development in Bolivia, inspired by his work in

energy deregulation with the GPS student group Export Access.

Over 20 years later, Moritzburke still has the same passion and drive for renewable power. His expertise includes traditional and renewable power development, water resources, energy market and strategy consulting. He leveraged his background in solar and water startup management to found MEC Development in 2007 in the San Francisco Bay Area.

“There is no time more important than now to be in this industry,” said Moritzburke. “My biggest interest is in combating climate change. There is a huge opportunity nowadays for solar and wind, as they are cheaper and cleaner than generations fueled by other natural resources.”

An active GPS Alumni Board member, he still stays in touch with many of his school colleagues, whether networking at an event in the Bay Area or mountain biking with his fellow cohort, his favorite hobby to stay active.

Read on as Moritzburke shares highlights of his career and how he has used his GPS toolbox along the way.

Q: What has been a highlight of your career so far?

A: Doing meaningful work in renewable energy. We spend most of our waking hours at our jobs. I’m grateful to be able to make those hours count for more than a paycheck.

Q: If you could go back to GPS as a professor or special guest lecturer, what would you like to teach?

A: Politics and economics of natural resources. When you get down to the fundamentals of our existence, it comes back to natural resources. It’s even more critical now than it was 20 years ago. Understanding natural resources is critical for our existence and it’s really interesting!



Q: What book/movie have you read/seen recently and would recommend?

A: “Inglourious Basterds” – it’s pretty poignant today in our current domestic and international political environment. It’s a different take on the outcome of history but it also gets you to think about what alternative futures we have.

Q: What’s the best piece of advice you’ve received (professional or personal)?

A: A mentor told the group of us at a startup incubator: Don’t be that guy with a great idea who is waiting for someone else to make it happen. Make it happen.

Q: What do you like to do to relax/on weekends?

A: Many don’t know this, but I actually have a vermouth-making business called [Quercus Spirits](#). It started when I made a batch as a Christmas gift. That soon led to me entering it into the 2017 World Spirits Contest. It got silver! It’s a wormhole hobby that I’ll probably continue into retirement.

Q: What is your favorite app/website?

A: [Qz.com \(Quartz\)](#). It’s great for news, deeper analysis and perspectives on a wide range of topics.



Q: Is there a memorable travel experience you'd like to repeat?

A: I had an amazing time in Sacred Valley, Peru. The country has such a rich cultural heritage, natural beauty and genuinely kind people. I wasn't ready for the incredible natural beauty - the dramatic craggy mountains and the lush greenery. It was strikingly beautiful.

Q: Who would you like to pass the pen to and why?

A: I would pass this to Heather Shepard. She's a solid renewable energy advocate, policy expert and social advocate with a great sense of humor and she's genuinely nice.