

Minnesota State

Community and Technical College

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Contact: Steve Guttormson – 218-736-1531 – steve.guttormson@minnesota.edu

Bigwood Lecture features ‘Not So Big’ author and architect

Sarah Susanka, acclaimed architect and author of the best-selling “Not So Big” books, will be the speaker at the annual Bigwood Lecture at Minnesota State Community and Technical College in Fergus Falls on April 23. The event will be in Legacy Hall with social at 5:30 p.m. and dinner at 6 p.m., followed by the program at 7 p.m.

Susanka first attracted national attention a decade ago with *The Not So Big House*, written at a time when “green” building and sustainable design were not part of the national conversation. In the years since, Susanka has written eight books that weave together a home and life design that serves both architectural aims and life goals. Her most recent book, *Not So Big Remodeling*, was released on March 10.

With the current downturn in the housing market and shifting social attitudes toward finding meaning in our lives, Susanka’s “Not So Big” message is at the forefront of an international dialogue surrounding sustainable design both in our homes and our lives.

Through her *Not So Big House* lectures and books, Susanka helps readers understand that the sense of “home” they’re seeking has almost nothing to do with quantity and everything to do with quality. She points out that we feel “at home” in our houses when where we live reflects who we are in our hearts.

In *The Not So Big Life: Making Room for What Really Matters*, Susanka uses this same philosophy to explain that we can feel “at home” in our *lives* only when what we do reflects who we truly are. Her books have sold more than one million copies, and she travels nationwide, sharing the call to “build better, not bigger houses” and lead “better, not bigger lives.”

Universities, leadership conferences, health care groups and wellness centers regularly seek her “Not So Big Life” lectures and workshops. Susanka is a native of Kent, England, and currently lives in

North Carolina. Susanka lived in Minnesota for 21 years, and her philosophy was shaped in part by the “starter castles” she saw replacing traditional cabins on Minnesota’s lakes.

Fast Company named Susanka to its debut list of “Fast 50” innovators whose achievements have helped to change society, and she was selected as a “top newsmaker” for 2000 by *Newsweek* magazine. In 2007, the Lindbergh Foundation presented Susanka with the Anne Morrow Lindbergh Award for outstanding individual achievement in making positive contributions in the world.

This year marks the 17th year of the Bigwood Lecture, which is presented by the Fergus Area College Foundation and endowed by Otter Tail Power Company, in recognition of the late Bob Bigwood, long-time Otter Tail president. Susanka’s Bigwood Lecture presentation parallels M State’s participation with the Presidents’ Climate Commitment, a nationwide effort by colleges and universities to help reduce the effects of global warming.

A limited number of dinner tickets are available for \$40, and there are a limited number of lecture-only tickets available at no cost. To purchase or reserve a ticket, contact Brenda Mergens at 218-736-1509 or brenda.mergens@minnesota.edu.

Susanka’s books are available at the Victor Lundeen Company in downtown Fergus Falls.