

## CAMPUS SUSTAINABILITY NEWS

(A sample of diverse news items from the last few months, compiled from the AASHE Bulletin by Monty Hempel)

### **77 Founding Members Launch the Intentional Endowments Network to Support Growing Interest in ESG Investing**

Boston, MA (March 14, 2016) – The Intentional Endowments Network (IEN) today announced the launch of a peer network designed to support endowment investment practices that address environmental, social, governance (ESG) and sustainability factors in order to enhance financial returns and align with institutional mission and values. The network launched with 77 [Founding Members](#) including 27 asset owners.

Founding Members include: Arizona State University, ASU Foundation, Becker College, California State University, Calvert Investments, Carleton College, Hampshire College, Hanley Foundation, Litterman Family Foundation, Middlebury College, Portland State University, San Francisco State University Foundation, Wallace Global Fund, UBS Asset Management, University of Maine and University of Massachusetts Foundation. Regular membership enrollment is now open to all endowments, foundations and practitioners of ESG and sustainable investing. For more details, visit [www.intentionalendowments.org/membership](http://www.intentionalendowments.org/membership).

### **SUNY Oneonta Creates Sustainability Living and Learning Community**

Beginning in fall 2016, the college will offer two new living, learning communities for incoming freshman. The Sustainability Living Learning Community will focus on management of environmental and financial resources, and finding harmony with the natural environment. The Social Justice Living Learning Community will enable students to engage diverse perspectives and views, critically examine issues that cause oppression related to race, gender, age and other differences, and form connections to other community members interested in social justice issues.

### **Emory U Receives Regional Recognition for Water Reclamation System**

The university received Southface's Fulcrum Award for its [WaterHub](#), an on-site, campus-wide water reclamation system that utilizes an eco-engineered treatment process to recycle nearly two-thirds of campus wastewater for heating, cooling, irrigation and toilet flushing. The Fulcrum Awards is designed to recognize people, programs, buildings, movements and organizations that demonstrate excellence in pursuing Southface's vision: a regenerative economy, responsible resources use and social equity through a healthy built environment for all.

Posted Mar 28, 2016

### **Ithaca College Announces Partnership on State-Funded 2.9MW Solar Project**

Ithaca College and the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) have partnered on a 2.9-megawatt photovoltaic project currently underway that is slated to provide approximately 10 percent of the college's electricity needs. The project will be financed through a power purchase agreement, which covers all up-front costs and maintenance, whereby the college buys the clean energy produced from the system owner at a set price over the 25-year term of the agreement through virtual net metering.

Posted Feb 24, 2016

### **Duke Kunshan U Campus to Receive LEED Certification**

Duke Kunshan University is the first Chinese university campus to be certified by the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) campus program, with all five campus buildings certified by the U.S. Green Building Council. The campus is distinguished by its use of aquatic elements to absorb, store, permeate, purify and reuse rainwater. Classrooms are equipped with air filtration and carbon dioxide monitoring and 32 percent of the campus site is covered in oxygen-generating native plants. Buildings make use of natural light to reduce energy consumption, high-efficiency water fixtures and solar thermal collectors.

Posted Mar 28, 2016

### **Stanford U Gets \$400M Pledge from Nike Chairman**

Philip Knight, the co-founder and chairman of Nike Inc., said recently that he had pledged to give Stanford University \$400 million to recruit graduate students around the globe to address society's most intractable problems, including poverty and climate change. Starting in 2018, the program will annually offer full tuition and board to 100 students, a third of them from the U.S. and two-thirds from abroad, who will gain admittance to one of Stanford's seven graduate schools and commit to working on important issues in small, multidisciplinary teams.

Posted Feb 29, 2016

## **U Illinois Urbana-Champaign Anticipates \$41M in Cost Avoidance**

A set of energy conservation projects on the Urbana campus has estimated \$41 million in cost avoidance over the next 20 years and will reduce the campus deferred maintenance backlog by an estimated \$25 million. Improvements in five College of Engineering buildings will include the installation of new HVAC equipment, direct digital controls, fume hoods, heat recovery systems, and occupancy sensors. Substantial completion is expected by July 2018.

Posted Feb 23, 2016

## **Johns Hopkins U Adds Sustainability to Challenge Initiative**

The university's [Idea Lab](#), an initiative that seeks collective input to shape the trajectory of the university, now includes the Hopkins Eco-Smart Acorn Grants. This new challenge provides an opportunity to identify and submit ideas that advance the university's mission to encourage responsible actions that prioritize people, natural resources and finances to safeguard the health of future generations. The other two challenges of Idea Lab are community and diversity.

Posted Mar 28, 2016

## **Higher Education Institutions Under Pressure to Disclose Investments**

The Associated Press reports that Congress and campus activists have stepped up pressure on colleges and universities to reveal financial investments made through their endowments. While lawmakers are questioning whether to tax colleges on investment portfolios, activists, including alumni and students, are demanding to know if investments are held in certain industries. An inquiry by The Associated Press to 50 public and private universities asking them to disclose their investments revealed "most schools issue annual reports with broad information and few details about specific investments".

Posted Mar 22, 2016

## **Inside Higher Ed 'Get Ready for More Protests'**

About nine percent of freshmen indicated in a recent annual survey that they have a very good chance of participating in student protests while in college, an increase of 2.9 percentage points from last year's survey, reported Inside Higher Ed. Conducted by the American Freshman Survey, the survey collected responses from more than 141,000 first-year students during their first few weeks of college.

Posted Feb 22, 2016

## **U Washington Campus Sustainability Research Projects Receive \$190K**

The university's Green Seed Fund approved three research projects to split \$190,000. The projects include research on the impact of campus landscape changes on stormwater volume and quality, and impact to surrounding wetlands; improving outdated irrigation systems; and design, construct and monitor a new rainwater irrigation system on UW Seattle campus will also provide data.

Posted Feb 19, 2016

## **Harvard U Law School Produces Video About Food Waste**

The Harvard Food Law and Policy Clinic, in partnership with Racing Horse Productions, has released a short film, EXPIRED? Food Waste in America, that explores how the variety of date labels on food products contributes to food waste in America. With the release of this film, the Harvard Food Law and Policy Clinic aims to raise awareness about the consequences of confusing and non-science-based date labeling, and about the impact that a uniform labeling standard could have on reducing food waste.

Posted Feb 19, 2016

## **Three Universities Create Global Alliance to Offer Sustainability Degrees**

Arizona State University, King's College London and University of New South Wales Australia recently announced the PLuS Alliance, a new partnership dedicated to find research-led solutions to global challenges and increase access to learning. Beginning in fall 2016, more than 20 programs in sustainability, global health, social justice and sustainability leadership will be offered online. Degrees through the PLuS Alliance include Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Arts and Master of Science.

Posted Feb 15, 2016

## **National U, U California San Diego Offer Sustainability Manager Training**

The new partnership offers students a pathway to pursue studies in sustainability management by allowing those who have completed a University of California San Diego Extension's Sustainable Business Practices certificate program to obtain credit for two classes that can be applied toward National University's Master of Science in Sustainability Management. Both the certificate and master's program are available online.

Posted Feb 15, 2016

## **Sterling College Reports 76 Percent Sustainable Food**

The college, known for growing 20 percent of its own food, was recently honored by Real Food Challenge for growing or procuring 76 percent of its food that is local, sustainable, humane and fair-trade. According to Real Food Challenge, the next highest ranked institution eats only 34 percent "real food". The Real Food Challenge survey the college used to determine its "real food" content also revealed the college eats 54 percent local food, defined as food that comes from either large farms within a 150-mile radius of campus or small farms within a 250-mile radius.

Posted Feb 15, 2016

## **Georgia State U Launches Green Office Certification Program**

This new program offers university departments and offices the opportunity to gain recognition for sustainable practices already in place and learn additional sustainable practices. The program is entirely voluntary and requires buy in from the majority staff and faculty in each unit applying. Scoring is tiered and based on level of difficulty to achieve certain tasks in categories including energy conservation, waste reduction, recycling, communications, and occupant health and comfort.

Posted Feb 15, 2016

## **Georgia Tech Green Cleaning Program Earns Third-Party Certification**

With certification under the Green Seal Standard for Cleaning Services, the university is now one of six higher education campuses in the nation to earn the certification. Certification verifies that Georgia Tech's cleaning program has gone through performance testing and on-site inspections to prove cleaning efficacy, while supporting the well-being of people and reducing impact to the environment. Key requirements of certification include cleaning equipment and procedures, purchasing, training, labeling and communication. The custodial department has reduced the volume of chemicals used to clean the campus by 56 percent from 2008 levels.

Posted Feb 10, 2016

## **Emory U Students Launch Interactive Sustainability Map**

After three semesters researching and mapping the university's sustainability network of over 700 staff, faculty and undergraduate and graduate students, the university's Graduate Sustainability Group has launched an interactive Emory Sustainability Ecosystem map. The map affords current and future community members interested in sustainability an avenue to identify a range of existing initiatives to plug into their work. The map is freely available on the Graduate Sustainability Group website through a project that was funded by the Emory Sustainability Incentives Fund.

Posted Feb 8, 2016

## **Mesa CC to Install 2MW Photovoltaic Array**

The community college is preparing for the installation of the 2,045-kilowatt system, slated for completion in late April, which will provide shaded parking spots. The array is expected to provide approximately 24 percent of the community college's total energy use.

Posted Jan 28, 2016

## **U British Columbia Releases Annual Sustainability Report**

The university's newest sustainability report aligns with the university's new 20-year Sustainability Strategy through targeted priorities in teaching, learning and research, operations and infrastructure, community, and communications and engagement. Highlights from the report include 636 sustainability courses, 48 sustainability programs, a 22 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions relative to 2007, and a clear focus on community well-being.

Posted Jan 28, 2016

### **U California Davis Becomes REAL Certified**

The United States Healthful Food Council recently announced that the university is the second university in the U.S. to be audited and certified for Responsible Epicurean and Agricultural Leadership (REAL). Modeled after USGBC LEED, REAL Certified uses a point-based system, implemented with assistance from independent, third-party registered dietitians, based on nutritional benefit, food preparation that enhances food quality and experience, procurement from safe and high quality sources, and food that enables better choices. Stanford University was the first REAL Certified university.

Posted Jan 28, 2016

### **SUNY Student Assembly Passes Resolution to Adopt STARS Across 64 Campuses**

The Sustainability Committee of the State University of New York (SUNY) Student Assembly recently passed the resolution calling for all campuses to "gauge, monitor, and enhance the overall sustainability of its campuses and entities" by using AASHE STARS as the standard. The resolution calls for campuses to maximize each category with the intent of obtaining a Gold rating and potentially allowing campuses to be awarded grant money through Reforming the Energy Vision (REV), a New York State clean energy initiative that aims to spur clean energy innovation.

Posted Jan 28, 2016

### **U Kansas Offers Undergraduate Certificate in Sustainability**

Students from all disciplines can now pursue a certificate in sustainability that aims to bring a lens of sustainability to their future career. Requirements of the certificate include completing a selection of interdisciplinary coursework, an experiential learning component and a final reflection. The experiential learning requirement will involve participation in 60 hours of service, research or fieldwork with a campus department, community organization or business on a project or effort related to sustainability.

Posted Jan 25, 2016

### **U Brighton Conducts Research on Innovative Air Monitor**

(U.K.): The university's new air monitor has the ability to measure nano-sized particles that can infiltrate the human body by way of the lungs and cause dire health consequences. The city of Brighton has ongoing issues with air quality and the university was selected because of its precise location in the city. Researchers hope that discoveries will pressure policy makers to take more action to reduce air pollution.

Posted Jan 23, 2016

### **Seven Higher Education Institutions Earn Green Cleaning Accolades**

The *American School & University Magazine*, in conjunction with the Green Cleaning Network and Healthy Schools Campaign, recently awarded Georgia Tech as grand winner, North Carolina State U as silver, and Montgomery College; Northwestern University; Texas Tech; University of California, Irvine; and University of Tennessee, Knoxville as honorable mentions. The award recognizes schools and universities for healthy and sustainable cleaning approaches, such as chemical and equipment choices, procedures and training, that protect human and environmental health, while still cleaning at a high level.

Posted Jan 23, 2016

### **National Union of Students Calls for Large Investment in Renewable Energy**

(U.K.): The National Union of Students (NUS), a U.K.-based membership organization, recently called for a divest-invest campaign that calls for universities and colleges to transfer 100 million pounds (\$142.6 million) out of fossil fuels into renewable energy. This campaign launched after a freedom of information request revealed 180 million pounds is invested in fossil fuels. The NUS also conducted a survey that concluded both students and staff strongly support divestment. The NUS plans to support students' unions as they push their institutions to divest.

Posted Jan 22, 2016

### **Johns Hopkins U to Purchase 13.6MW of Solar for Medical Complex**

Contracting with Direct Energy, the university recently announced its plans to purchase all of the electricity from a planned 13.6-megawatt photovoltaic plant for its East Baltimore campus. Posted Jan 19, 2016

## **Georgia Southern U Installs Solar-Powered Tables**

Funded by student sustainability fees, four new SolGreen solar-powered patio tables with built-in charging stations provide the campus community with an outdoor location to work and socialize while charging their devices. The tables come with four power outlets and four USB outlets, shut down automatically during rainstorms, can last five to seven days on stored power during overcast weather and contain LED lights for nighttime use.

Posted Jan 19, 2016

## **U Georgia Awards \$40K to Interdisciplinary Sustainability Projects**

Ten interdisciplinary student projects were recently awarded \$40,000 to implement project proposals that align with the university's 2020 Strategic Plan to promote stewardship of natural resources and advance sustainability research and education.

Posted Jan 19, 2016

## **North Carolina State U Takes First Step to Reduce Use of Plastic Bags**

Plastic bags will no longer be available for students to use for carry-out meals from the Atrium, one of the university's largest dining facilities, starting mid-January. In their place, paper bags will be available, though students are encouraged to forgo single-use bags altogether. The removal of plastic bags is the result of more than two years of collaborative work between the NC State Stewards, a student organization, and the University Sustainability Office.

Posted Jan 14, 2016

## **U Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Offers New Sustainability Minor**

Six academic units at the university now collaborate to offer a new campus-wide sustainability minor through the Institute for Sustainability, Energy, and Environment. The purpose of the Sustainability, Energy and Environment Fellows Program (SEE FP) is to promote systems-level thinking about energy and sustainability, and foster the development of an integrated view of the economy, society and the environment. The fellows program will prepare students for pursuing careers in the corporate sector, nonprofit organizations, government agencies and environmental advocacy groups.

Posted Jan 11, 2016

## **Michigan State U Releases Video on 2015 Sustainability Highlights**

The newly released video mentions the university's commitment to discontinue the use of coal on campus as a fuel source, the acquisition of \$170,000 in sustainability research funding, and the on-campus green office certification program had 193 spaces reduce their environmental footprint.

Posted Jan 11, 2016

## **U Connecticut Constructs Wildlife Corridor**

A new road that links the Storrs campus to a local route was engineered with a wildlife corridor that enables critters as small as salamanders to larger ones such as white-tailed deer to cross the road without danger from vehicular traffic. Further, the path of the road was designed to minimize destruction of surrounding wetlands.

Posted Jan 5, 2016

## **U California Divests from Private Prisons Amid Pressure**

After pressure from the Afrikan Black Coalition, the university sold approximately \$25 million worth of indirect investments in private prison corporations after the black student union revealed in November that the university held shares in private prisons. University shares in the private prisons, which were part of a portfolio, were sold on Dec. 1, 2015.

Posted Jan 5, 2016

## **Penn State Unveils New Online Undergraduate Sustainability Certificate**

The new online undergraduate certificate in Earth sustainability is offered through the university's College of Earth and Mineral Sciences. The four courses required to obtain the certificate allow students to work with large data sets about climate change, water and food supplies, and natural hazards and conduct lab activities.

Posted Jan 4, 2016