



Sustainability Perspectives

Fall 2021

All talks in this series take place on Mondays at **12:30PM**.

All presentations will be offered virtually via **Zoom**.

Zoom meeting event and passcode information is available at:

<https://www.wells.edu/academics/center-sustainability-environment/events>

September 13 **How Can We Partner with the Rest of Nature?**

Kristin Ohlson, author, *“The Soil Will Save Us: How Scientists, Farmers and Foodies Are Healing the Soil to Save the Planet”*

Most people think plants are rooted in the soil mainly for stability and to siphon up water. Instead, plant roots are surrounded by microorganisms – fungi, bacteria, and many others – all furiously engaged in a dynamic partnership with plants and each other in which they trade carbon, nutrients, water, protective chemicals, and more. Without those partnerships, plants weaken and falter. Partnerships like these are at the heart of nature. They go on inside us humans—our microbiome is like an orchestra of trillions, constantly working together to fine tune our health and function—and everywhere in the landscapes around us. How can we better appreciate those partnerships—and especially, work with them and not disrupt them—as we farm and garden?



September 20 **How do Packaging Engineers View Sustainable Packaging Solutions?**

Dr. Daniel Johnson, Chair, Packaging Science, *RIT College of Engineering Technology*

Professor Johnson will describe how the unique field of packaging science approaches sustainability in an increasingly circular supply chain. Packaging Science is the design, development and testing of packaging solutions for your food pharmaceuticals, beverages, consumer and industrial goods. Biodegradable, recyclable and bio based packaging all have a role to play in sustainability, as well as advances in design and simulation. Research in RIT’s Center for Sustainable Packaging and how it relates to sustainability efforts of industry and governments will be addressed.

September 27 **Human Composting: an ecological death care option**

Anna Swenson, customer and communications manager, *ReCompose*

Recompose, an ecological death care company based in Seattle, Washington, is the first full service funeral home to offer the process of *natural organic reduction* (NOR), which gently transforms humans into soil after death. In this presentation, Ms. Swenson will cover the science behind the NOR process, this history of bringing *ReCompose* to life, and the importance of greener death care options.



October 4 **Savings Seabirds – Lessons from Puffins about Sustainability**

Dr. Stephen Kress, founder, Project Puffin, *National Audubon Society*

Worldwide, about one-third of all seabird species are now globally threatened because of effects of invasive predatory mammals, marine pollution, coastal development, and climate change. Against this grim background, Dr. Kress’s presentation about restoration of Maine seabirds offers hope that people can bring seabirds back to some of their historic nesting places and responsibly manage essential forage fish which seabirds require. The methods used to bring puffins and terns back to Maine islands are now used worldwide and he will share a few of these exciting and hopeful restoration projects that demonstrate how individuals can make a difference locally for global biodiversity. Dr. Kress will also discuss insights about what puffins are telling us about creating sustainable oceans that benefit people and seabirds.

October 18 **Introduction to Environmental Justice**

Mariah Davis, senior policy & campaigns manager, *Choose Clean Water Coalition*

Environmental justice is defined as “the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.” Ms. Davis will speak about national and more local environmental justice issues and will address what each of us can do to work for environmental justice for all in our Finger Lakes region.



November 8 **Generating Sustainable Solutions for the Future**

Matthew Goodman, Asset Manager, *Generate Capital*

Generate Capital builds, owns, and operates sustainable infrastructure to deliver affordable and reliable resource solutions for companies, governments, and communities. *Generate* develops sustainable solutions as diverse as solar arrays, fuel cells, geothermal systems, biomass & biogas, heat pumps, electric vehicles charging stations, and anaerobic digesters, among other leading-edge technologies. He will focus his talk on food waste recycling, zero waste to landfill goals and industry/technology capabilities, and sustainability reporting as it relates to food waste and biogas.

All **Sustainability Perspectives** series talks are free and open to the public.