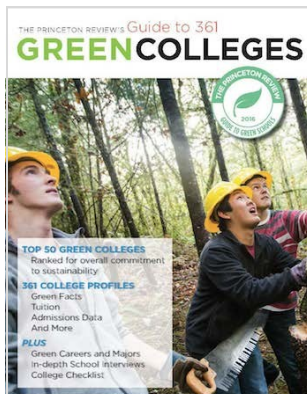


Newsletter of the **Center for Sustainability and the Environment** at Wells College.

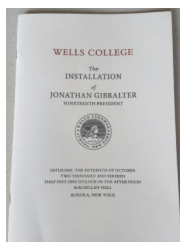


Scoring 91 out of 99, Wells was included in this annual guide for prospective students seeking an institution that fits their sustainability values. Princeton Review uses data we collected and reported during our self-evaluation using AASHE's Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System in which we earned a STARS Silver rating. We plan to repeat our STARS assessment in mid-winter 2017.

In this issue:

Spreading the Word...	2
Aurora Farmers Market interns	2
Learning in Unusual Ways	2
New Sustainability-related courses for Spring 2017	2
Sustain-a-Cell Assignment	2
The Sweet Smell of Success	3
Speaking of bathrooms...	3
We're sittin' pretty!	3
Ride on!	3
Another bright idea!	3
E-Waste Made Easy	3
Keeping the Good Stuff	3
"Mugging" our newbies	3
Energy-saving contracts	4
Washoku Shock Dinner	4
Sustainability Field Trip	4
New ways to reach out about sustainability	4

President Gibraltar's Inauguration focuses on Sustainability and Civic Engagement



Wells College put its very best foot forward in mid-October during the festivities around the Inauguration of our nineteenth president, **Jonathan Gibraltar**. The Inauguration weekend theme was *Simply Wells*, encapsulating key, unique aspects of this college's experience. President Gibraltar specifically asked that choices made about the events and activities reflect the college's strong embrace on sustainability. Toward that end, **Marian Brown**, director of the Center for Sustainability, was asked to join the Inauguration planning committee. The event invitations reflected our sustainability values; they were printed - using vegetable-based inks on Forest Stewardship Council certified paper containing 10% post-consumer recycled content—by a local company utilizing wind power-generated electricity. The campus was decorated with seasonal flowering plants, pumpkins and gourds; single-use signage was kept to a minimum.



The weekend opened on Friday, October 14th with an afternoon of learning activities themed around Sustainability and Civic Engagement. The keynote talk was given by Paul Rogat Loeb, editor of this fall's Common Read book: *"The Impossible Will Take A Little While: perseverance and hope in troubled times,"* a compendium of inspirational writings from global leaders on the front lines of progressive change.

Loeb's talk was followed by a panel discussion, moderated by **Niamh O'Leary**, on the intersections between sustainability and civic engagement. Mr. Loeb joined the panel, which included President Gibraltar, director of Campus Life **Meg Flaherty**, politics professor **Susan Tabrizi**, alumna **Jamila Walida Simon '01**, and Marian Brown, for a lively discussion. The panel was followed by a poster session featuring students invited to present on internships or research projects related to sustainability and/or civic engagement. **Stephen Armstrong '16** (right) returned to present his project to get water bottle fill stations on campus. A number of other current and past students presented their good work.



Inauguration Day, on Saturday, October 15th, opened with several community service opportunities in which the entire campus was invited to participate. This event was scheduled to coincide with Alumni Weekend, so many alumni joined in the fun. Projects included a clean-up and planting of the terrace garden in the Main Courtyard (Left: Grounds foreman **Jim Button** instructs the volunteer gardeners). Other volunteers, led by **Scott Heinekamp**, cleaned brush and marked trees along the Nature Trail (photo right).



The morning of community service activities concluded with the planting of a young red oak tree in the lawn in front of Zabriskie Hall, given to the campus by the college's Board of Trustees in honor of President Gibraltar.



The afternoon was bright and sunny for the formal Installation ceremony, which was held outdoors in the circle in front of Macmillan Hall. Delegates from many other colleges were in attendance, and representatives of the campus community: student, staff, faculty, emeriti all presented President Gibraltar with symbolic gifts. **Dan Hill**, representing the Heron Clan of the Cayuga Nation, reminded the audience that the land on which Wells College sits was Cayuga land; Dan played a commemorative song on a native wooden flute.

The *Simply Wells* Inauguration weekend closed with a Farm-to-Table Community Celebration dinner to which the entire community was invited. **Wells Dining** and the **Inns of Aurora** staff pulled out all the stops, serving up delicious dishes using seasonal foods that were locally sourced as much as possible. Informational placards identified the local producers of each individual dish.



Spreading the word...

Political Science prof **Tukumbi Lumumba-Kasongo** edited the book called “Land Reforms and Natural Resource Conflicts in Africa: New Development Paradigms in the Era of Global Liberalization”. Dr. Lumumba-Kasongo presented “Politics in a World of Inequality” at the 24th World Congress of the International Political Science Association in Poznan, Poland.

Economics professor **Kent Klitgaard** published his work, “Hydrocarbons and the Illusion of Sustainability,” in the July-August issue of *Monthly Review*. Klitgaard also delivered “Biophysical and Social Determinants of Economic Stagnation and Degrowth” (co-authored with fellow economics professor **Muin Uddin**) at the Conference of the International Society for Ecological Economics and International Society for Biophysical Economics in Washington DC.

Jackie Schnurr, professor of Biology and Environmental Science, published “Linkages among canopy tree neighborhoods, small mammal herbivores and herbaceous communities in temperate forests” in the *Journal of Vegetation Science*.

Marian Brown, Sustainability Center director, presented “Renewably Powering—and Empowering—a Community” and “From the Ground[s] Up” at the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education conference in Baltimore. Brown delivered “Integrating Sustainability into Curriculum” for the State of NY Sustainability Conference at SUNY New Paltz in November. *In absentia*, her invited presentation on “Residence Hall Recycling Support” was delivered at the conference of the NYS Association for Reduction, Reuse and Recycling.

Psychology professor **Milene Morfei** reviewed submissions for the Sustainability and Social Science Research Symposium to be held at the University of Michigan in May 2017.

Aurora Farmers Market interns

The Aurora Farmers Market, an on-going project of the Center for Sustainability, offers a series of student internship opportunities. **Shania Dauphinais** '18 was hired to manage the market for its entire June–October season. Shania also completed a summer internship on strategies to improve the market, about which she presented during the Inauguration civic engagement poster session (photo below).



Shania was joined in late summer by **Elizabeth Reeve** '17, who was doing her fall Farmers

Market internship (Liz presenting at right). This may mark the first time a Wells intern was partially supervised by another Wells student.

**Learning in Unusual Ways**

The *Introduction to Sustainability* class got an eye-opening lesson in proper recycling. Professor **Marian Brown** asked Facilities to drop off bags of landfill trash and recycling collected from residence halls in front of Zabriskie for her students to open and sort during class. They were surprised at some of their peers' “mis-cycling” habits.



The Center for Sustainability hosted a *Natural Dye* workshop in late September in our Chemistry lab. Fabric artist **Sarah Gotowka** taught participants about preparing natural dyes from flowering plants,

including some grown on campus. Workshop participants got to experiment by dyeing silk handkerchiefs using various natural dyebaths and techniques Ms. Gotowka demonstrated.

**New sustainability-related courses for Spring 2017**

ENVR 285 Natural Resource Management

Professor Schnurr will offer this 3-credit introduction to the field of science-based natural resource management, including both aquatic and terrestrial systems.

SUS 285 Tutorial in Sustainability

This class offers 1 credit for attending six spring events coordinated by the Center for Sustainability, doing additional research and writing an analysis of the sustainability topic addressed in each event attended.

FOOD 285 Spring Gardening

This 2-credit, second-block course, providing both classroom and hands-on knowledge about gardening, will be team-taught by professors McClusky, Muñoz, and Schnurr.

Chad Uran, sabbatic leave replacement for professor Ernie Olson, offers two courses. Dr. Uran, a White Earth Anishinaabe, is a visiting postdoctoral associate at Cornell.

FNIS 285 Language, Culture and Revitalization

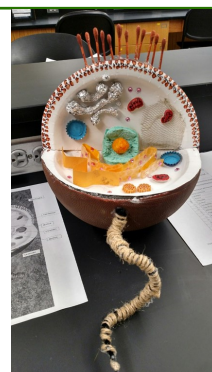
American Indian languages have taken on special importance as both evidence of and a model for cultural, political, philosophical, and spiritual revitalization. The course examines several approaches to language revitalization. 3 credits.

ANTH 385 Indigenous Representations in the Media

From the moments of contact, the representation of Indigenous peoples posed problems. This course examines the strategies and consequences of representational practices within global colonial contexts.

**Sustain-A-Cell Assignment**

Biology professor **Christina Schmidt** charged her Anatomy & Physiology class with the assignment to create cell models by repurposing existing materials. Sustainability Center director Marian Brown met with the class to explain the meaning of “found materials” and where one might locate them on campus. Brown also offered GRIND gift cards as prizes for winning entries. Teams had to explain the structure and function of cell organelles and identify what found materials they used to represent each. The team of **Jessica Mebane** '20 and **Caitlyn Smith** '20 was awarded both the *Grand Prize* and the award for the *Most Creative Use of Found Objects* for their lab period. The team used a wide variety of materials, including a broken-down basketball, used paper plates, dish sponge, a stale cheese ball, loofah netting, hay bale twine, materials from a bubble wrap mailing envelope, and foil bottle caps to craft their winning entry.



The Sweet Smell of Success

Facilities' Building Care group recently switched to *Eco-Air 2.0™* room deodorizers for use in restrooms. These non-powered, unbreakable, non-spill, slow-release solid air freshener units are rated to last for 30 days.

Eco-Refresh, the product manufacturer, has developed a take-back program so that, when the air freshening chemical inside is exhausted at the end of a month, the 100% recyclable plastic shell can be collected and returned for free to be recycled into a new air freshener insert. This is a great example of a "closed-loop" manufacturing process, reducing waste through recycling.



Speaking of bathrooms...

Ten bathrooms in Dodge Hall were renovated this fall. The cosmetic upgrades to these "necessary rooms" enhances the appeal for the hall's residents. What we like best about this renovation is that all the toilets and sink faucets were replaced with EPA *WaterSense™* certified fixtures using substantially less water than the units they replaced. The new *American Standard™* Cadet Pro toilets use only 1.28 gallons per flush, replacing older toilets using over three gallons per flush. The low-flow Moen sink faucets deliver 1.5 gallons per minute, while older lavatory faucets could deliver more than double that volume per minute.



We're sittin' pretty!

The Library has specified the Raynor Group's Eurotech series "Flip" chair for its grant-funded, third floor renovation project. The seats on these "Flip" chairs fold up so the chairs can be nested for efficient storage. All Eurotech series seating products have been independently certified by GREENGUARD as meeting indoor air quality pollutant guidelines and standards.

GREENGUARD certification provides third-party assurance that products have been tested for potentially harmful chemical emissions negatively affecting human health.



Ride on!

Wells is the first organization outside Tompkins County to participate in the new **Finger Lakes Rideshare Coalition**. This regional collaboration among educational institutions in the area: Cornell, Ithaca College, Tompkins-Cortland Community College, BOCES, and Wells—offers ridesharing to students, faculty and staff. Using the *Zimride by Enterprise* platform with a social media component to "check out" ridesharers, drivers can fill extra seats in their vehicle if they are taking a trip or running errands. Passengers can post their need for a ride home or for shopping trips. Employees may find commuting matches with other regional travelers.



Another bright idea!

Wells is the only private entity participating in a regional Request for Proposal for solar energy development issued in September by the Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board. This RFP covered forty potential solar projects for two dozen municipalities - and Wells - within our five Central New York counties; the potential is for over 8 megawatts of regional solar energy production. Wells worked with a Department of Energy-funded consultant to identify possible sites on college land for solar energy systems. We should know in early 2017 whether any of the proposals offer us a cost-competitive opportunity to "go solar." Stay tuned.



E-Waste Made Easy

Our Information Technology office has an agreement with *Regional Computer Recycling & Recovery* to periodically pick up and properly dispose of obsolete computers and non-working electronics (collectively called e-waste), in full compliance with federal law and New York's *Electronic Equipment Recycling and Reuse Act*. In June, Wells disposed of over 630 pounds of computers and assorted electronic waste; in September, we sent another 1,400 pounds of e-waste to be recycled. RCR&R verifies that hard drives are wiped of any data and that hazardous materials derived from such e-waste is kept out of the environment.



Keeping the good stuff

We reported (*above right*) that the Office of Information Technology regularly and responsibly disposes of e-waste: non-functional or obsolete technology equipment. As IT upgrades office and computer lab equipment, a number of computer peripherals (keyboards, monitors, mice) become surplus that still have lots of useful life left in them. Recently, IT staffers have been placing still-usable computer items in the *Bargain Basement* in Main, the place where students can access all manner of still-usable items.



Photo: IT specialist Dana Skinner stocks the shelf

"Mugging" our newbies

No, we're not talking about some weird hazing tradition. For the second year, we continue to partner with *Student Life* to issue a reusable beverage container to all new students and to new college employees. We make "newbies" aware of the location of water bottle fill stations and that they can obtain a 25¢ discount at the GRIND Café for using their mug for coffee purchases. Members of two clubs, *Campus Greens* and *F.O.R.C.E.S.*, act as spotters for those using their reusable container, rewarding them with a GOTCHA card, redeemable for a free hot beverage refill into their own mug.

Photo: Alex Wheeler, Residence Hall Director, joined us in July.



Energy-saving contracts

Earlier this year, we inked two service contracts offering us significant energy savings:



Campus Specialties Inc will rent *MicroFridge* units to interested students. These all-in-one units feature a 5 cu ft refrigerator, 0° freezer, and microwave. When the microwave is in use,

cooling unit compressors shut off, saving energy. The company even delivers the unit directly to the student renter's room.

Robbins Vending now provides our vending service, delivering an improved mix of product offerings and better service. They installed modern machines meeting *EnergyStar* energy efficiency standards.





Center for Sustainability and the Environment

Marian Brown, Director
Wells College

170 Main Street

Office: 213 Zabriskie Hall

Aurora NY 13026

Phone: 315-364-3304

E-mail: mbrown@wells.edu or
sustainability@wells.edu

We're on the Web:
www.wells.edu/sustainability



Wells Center for
Sustainability and
the Environment



@Wells Sust Center

Wells' sustainability efforts were showcased in the inaugural issue of the online *Greater Aurora Community Newsletter*, edited by Wells alumnae Barb Blom '82. Barb identified the need to compile the many on- and off-campus events and activities into one communication vehicle to help local community members be aware of all the great stuff going on here at Wells and in and around Aurora.



The Center for Sustainability hosted the October meeting of the *Cayuga Lake Intermunicipal Organization*, including representatives of all the municipalities around Cayuga Lake. The group gathered to learn about the recent outbreak of the highly invasive aquatic plant *Hydrilla*, discovered earlier this fall when *Campus Greens* took a lake cruise on the *Floating Classroom*.

Sustainability is a decision-making framework for continuous improvement that mindfully takes into account the social, environmental, and economic impacts of our choices.

Washoku Shock Dinner

Japanese language professor **Kurt Pipa** and this year's group of Japanese exchange students from *Doshisha Women's College* prepared their annual culture dinner in the kitchen next to the



Faculty Parlors in Main. The Japanese students were joined by about three dozen Wells students. The cooks harvested Japanese greens and tur-

nips grown in the Languages garden behind McGordon House and obtained parsley from the herb beds fronting Zabriskie Hall. The



Center for Sustainability provided additional local, organic vegetables and eggs for dishes for the meal, which was enjoyed by all.

Sustainability Field Trip

Southern Cayuga Middle School faculty Simone Lanning and Tim Amory teamed to bring their students to Wells in early October for a day-long sustainability educational experience. Forty-five 8th graders were split into three

groups rotating through three 90-minute activities. Each group of students had the opportunity to go out on the *Cayuga Lake Floating Classroom* to learn about the ecology of the lake by pulling up and analyzing samples of aquatic plants, and learning



about threats to drinking water quality from invasive species and water pollution. Each cohort of middle schoolers spent part of their time upstairs in the Wells College Boathouse, making sculptures from natural and found materials under the guidance of their art teacher, Mr. Amory. Each group of middle schoolers also spent a third of their time in the *Center for Sustainability*, learning more about water issues. We set up six different learning stations in the Center classroom that Ms. Lanning's science students rotated through.



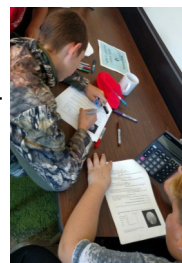
Several of the exercises were adapted from college level learning activities. One station offered the blind drinking water taste test challenge (see



more below), while another station offered the chance for students to map all the watersheds their home sits in (at right). Students learned how scarce



drinkable water is and how much water it takes to grow and process food items like beef and eggs (above left). Did you know, for instance, that



it takes more than 3,000 gallons of water to make one pound of chocolate? Another station (below right) guided students to calculate just how much water their family uses daily for household chores and personal care activities. One exercise compared the chemical ingredients in two shampoo products (above left) and asked students to reflect on how their personal product choices can affect drinking water quality.

New ways to reach out about sustainability



At the New York State Fair in August, Wells F.O.R.C.E.S. members volunteered to assemble free bird boxes for visitors to the info booth of *NY Parks and Recreation*, the state organization overseeing the F.O.R.C.E.S. program.

In October, Wells joined over two dozen higher ed institutions for the *NY Campus Crunch*, a celebration of local food.

The *Center for Sustainability* donated a bushel of local apples for participants to take and pledge to "crunch" in support.



Theatre professor Siouxie Easter asked the *Sustainability Center* to offer our blind drinking water test taste challenge during the Fall production of "*Urinetown*," which

had the theme of water rights. Campus drinking water was favored over bottled and spring water by many taste testers.

Campus Greens conducted another campus cleanup in early November, collecting way too much landfill trash and recyclable materials from campus grounds. ☺

