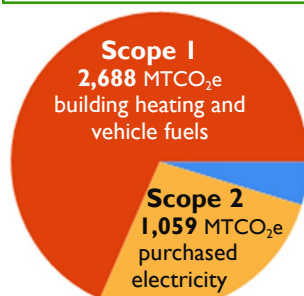


Newsletter of the **Center for Sustainability and the Environment** at Wells College.



Scope 3 (in blue) 183 MTCO₂e includes emissions from study abroad travel and landfill trash; these account for less than 5% of our annual greenhouse gas emissions.

Our FY14-15 greenhouse gas emissions were **33% below** our 2009 emissions level, well ahead of our Climate Action Plan interim target of a 10% reduction by 2020 from 2009's 5,842 MTCO₂e total.

Scope 1 emissions are down **32%** from 2009 levels.

Scope 2 emissions are down **24%** from 2009.

Sustainability, By the Numbers...

This edition of the *Wellspring* newsletter focuses on some of the many activities underway on campus to further demonstrate our campus commitment to integrating sustainability thinking and practice into the ways we live and work. We share some of the measures by which we gauge our sustainability progress.

As reported in the winter newsletter issue, one of the important ways we have been measuring our progress is through our self-assessment using the *Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education's* (AASHE) STARS (Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System), an objective framework utilized by more than 750 college and universities nationally and internationally. This extremely comprehensive assessment tool—there are more than 200 separate data points within 65 different categories - evaluates of our strengths (and areas for further development) in the four overarching areas of *Academics, Engagement, Operations, and Planning & Administration*. Our overall score of **55.84** earned us a Silver STARS rating, putting us in good company with over 125 institutions. But more importantly, this first STARS assessment provides us with a valuable baseline against which we can chart our own future progress toward becoming more sustainable as an organization.

There are two other important sources of data for this newsletter: our annual greenhouse gas emissions inventory for Fiscal Year 2014-15 (see info at left), and our results in the annual 8-week *RecycleMania* competition. Both offer some useful insights into where we are heading.



2015-2016 Sustainability Presentations

The *Center for Sustainability and the Environment* annually programs several sustainability-related educational series. This year, we offered **27** different events, attracting **626** campus community attendees and **65** members of the larger community to learn more about many of the aspects of sustainability.

Our largest speaker series is our **Sustainability Perspectives** series, which brings to campus expert speakers from throughout the region, speaking on a wide variety of topics. In Fall 2015, we moved into our own Monday mid-day timeslot and offered **ten** talks including explorations of meaningful work as a sustainability strategy, climate change impacts on agriculture, consumer education about toxic products, agroforestry, learning to mourn environmental losses, water-based invasive species, and sustainable burial. A session led by Robin Wall Kimmerer (right) from the *Center for Native Peoples and the Environment* on valuing native people's traditional ecological knowledge, was part of the *Peachtown Native American Festival*.



In Spring 2016, we offered **eleven** *Sustainability Perspectives* talks, looking into recycling agricultural plastics, gender/racial effects on urban community gardens, impacts of pharmaceuticals and consumer products on our drinking water source, sustainability ethics, renewable energy options, integrated pest management, biochar, the NYS Parks student engagement program called F.O.R.C.E.S. (*Friends of Recreation, Conservation and Environmental Sustainability*), and composting. Students who presented at the AASHE conference spoke about their experience. A *Perspectives* aquaponics talk was also included as an *Activism Symposium* session.

We offered **two** talks in the Sustainable Business series, programming for which we develop in collaboration with the *Sullivan Center for Business and Entrepreneurship*. Last Fall, we had Jason Wadsworth, corporate sustainability coordinator for Wegmans, in to talk about how this national grocery chain integrates sustainability. This Spring, Laura Ornstein, coordinator for the *New York State Sustainable Business Council*, explained the work of this specialized trade association for businesses committed to more sustainable practices.

We offered **one** *Sustainability Speaker* series talk, bringing in Dominic Frongillo (left), a dynamic, nationally-known, young political leader to inspire our students to become more active in the sustainability movement. In conjunction with *Wells Campus Greens*, we held **one** *Sustainability Film* event, screening *Cowsspiracy: The Sustainability Secret*, examining the impacts of intensive dairy and meat production.



In January, the *Center for Sustainability* collaborated with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cayuga County and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to host a pair of webinars on "Deer and Deer Management in New York State". Wells College was the designated webinar host site for Cayuga County residents. **40** area landowners and/or hunters attended one or both of the webinars, introducing NYDEC's Central Finger Lakes Wildlife Management Unit Aggregate pilot project to manage white-tailed deer, which have become a nuisance species locally.

In this issue:

Academic STARS	2
Sustainability-themed senior thesis presentations	2
Spring Sustainability interns	2
Sustainability minors graduate	2
Grounds for being proud	3
Greening IT	3
A Sustainable Bookstore	3
RecycleMania Improvements	3
It's Electric!	3
Chew on this...	3
Walk that off!	3
We're drinking to less waste	3
K-Cup Roundup Results	3
Reaching out about Sustainability	4
Trash 2 Treasure	4
Wells is named a First Mover	4
NYSAR3 Grant Award	4

Academic STARS...

In the AASHE STARS rating, we earned **27.89** out of 37 points in the general category of Academics. We earned high marks for having a sustainability academic program, and for the significant number of courses (**96!!**) we offer that integrate some sustainability content. All 18 departments have at least one course related to sustainability. We also did well in the number (**16**) of faculty doing research related to sustainability themes.

Nicole Loeven's summer 2015 internship research project, *River Flow Impacts Cyanobacterial Growth on Tainter Lake*, conducted in conjunction with Stephen Nold from University of Wisconsin-Stout, was accepted for presentation at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research.



Students in Dr. Ernie Olson's *Culture and Gardens* class developed several culturally different garden plans and presented these in an informal public presentation in the Sullivan Center for Business. There were lots of intriguing designs created by Ernie's students, but we were particularly drawn to the design that senior Ashley Gingeleski developed for a garden to be sited here on campus, up next to the Wells College-owned golf course. *Fore!*

**Sustainability-themed Senior Thesis Presentations**

A number of academic programs require seniors to present a thesis project that synthesizes what they have learned in their major. We noted at least **20** theses as sustainability related.

Psychology seniors presented theses: **Stephen Armstrong**, *Sustainable Drinking: Improving Drinking Water Practices on a College Campus*; **Austin Hahn** (photo), *Therapeutic Applications of the Natural Environment*; **Allison Jones**, *Wells College Grief Garden*; and **Ian Miller**, *Nature Deficit Disorder and Implications For Children*.

Sociology / Anthropology major **Nina Daniels** presented

Growing Experiences: An Analysis of Benefits and Threats a Community Garden Poses to a College Environment.

Economics and Management major **Wyatt Buerkle** developed "Determinants of Demand in Today's Photovoltaic Solar Energy Market."

Business majors presented theses: **Chelsea Carlin**, *The Intersection of Green Marketing, Consumerism and Sustainable Products*; and **Jake Clowry**, *An Examination of Socially Responsible and Sustainable Investment Methods and Their Application to Renewable Energy Production Companies: A Literature Review*.

Kailin Kuciewicz 's senior Business thesis was titled "Improving the Quality of Life: Multinational Companies' Commitment to Social Sustainability." Kailin had her paper accepted for presentation at the

Kailin Kuciewicz '16
Senior Thesis Project: Sustainability

Wells College senior, Kailin Kuciewicz, has been selected to present her thesis, "Improving the Quality of Life: Multinational Companies' Commitment to Sustainability," at the Thirteenth International Conference on Environmental, Cultural, Economic & Social Sustainability in Brazil in January 2017.

Be sure to congratulate her if you are attending the conference. Kailin will be presenting during the session, "Sustainability in Practice," on January 10, 2017.

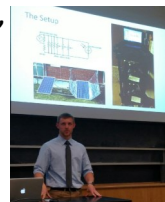


Thirteenth International Conference on Environmental, Cultural, Economic & Social Sustainability in Brazil in January 2017 and

accepted for publication in the peer-reviewed *International Journal of Sustainability Policy and Practice*. Kailin's accomplishment was profiled in the May Wells Alum2Alum e-newsletter.

Natural and Mathematical Science division seniors presented their theses: **Ashley Gingeleski**, *Flora Composition and Weed Di-*

versity at King Ferry Vineyard; **John Farruggia**, *The Health of Wells College Forest*; **Colby Schrom**, *Structural Analysis and Design of a Two-story Building*; **Cat Taylor**, *Improving Ecosystem Health and Productivity by Implementing Agroforestry Practices on a Small Farm in the Temperate Northeast*; **Sam Ayers**, *Habitat Selection of Merlin in Central New York*; **Tyler Morris**, (photo) *Compound Parabolic Concentrators and their Effect on Flat-Plate Solarvoltics*; **Kirsti Bruce**, *The Benefits and Drawbacks of Anaerobic Digestion*; **Connor Jansen**, *Emerald Ash Borer and its Effects on Ash Trees Throughout the United States*; **Courtney Wein**, *The Interactions of Hatchery Salmon and Wild Salmon in Alaska*; **Ryan Mitzel**, *Environmental Impacts of Renewable Energy and Green Technology*; and **Arent Kits van Heyningen**, *Raptor Rehabilitation in regards to Biodiversity Preservation*.

**Spring sustainability interns**

We had the privilege of working with two exceptional sustainability project interns this spring. Senior **Stephen Armstrong** enhanced our *RecycleMania* performance, including getting residence hall trash and recycling weights early on Easter Sunday morning (231 pounds of trash; 193 pounds of recyclables, a **46%** recycling diversion rate). Stephen led SAACs Division III Week Community Service project, collecting **1,100** bottles and cans to redeem for a donation to *Special Olympics*. Stephen also

collected **47** pairs of shoes in the ShoeBox recycling drive. **Eliza Schwab** '18 served as the spring *Aurora Farmers Market* intern, reaching out to new and returning vendors to ensure an improved market season.

Sustainability Minors Graduate

Three outstanding students are leaving Wells with sustainability minors under their belt – this makes **five** Sustainability minors (and **two** Sustainable Food Systems minors) so far, since the Sustainability academic program started in 2014. **Heather Hiltbrand** (right) graduated in December, pairing her major in *Environmental Science* with the minor in *Sustainability*.



Ashley Gingeleski (left) graduated *summa cum laude* with distinction in *Environmental Science* and double minors in *Sustainability* and *Sustainable Food Systems*. Ashley, who was an active leader in both the Wells Campus Greens and F.O.R.C.E.S. student organizations, was awarded the Cayuga Watershed Prize in *Environmental Science*, given to a student who has engaged in significant professional activities during their undergraduate years and who shows promise for future professional development in the field. Ashley was named to the Phi Beta Kappa honor society and at graduation, was awarded the Koch Prize for best research paper for her work at King Ferry Vineyard (see complete title above).

Nicole Loeven (right) graduated *summa cum laude* with a major in *Biochemistry* and a minor in *Sustainability*. Nicole was named to *Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges*, inducted into the Phi Beta Kappa honor society, and was awarded the Eleanor McMullen Biology Prize.



Grounds for Being Proud

Last Fall, HR and Advancement staffers unearthed whole geranium plants and took cuttings to overwinter in the Zabriskie greenhouse. Over **120** saved red and white geraniums were replanted in landscaping this spring. Grounds supervisor **Jim Button** reports that **120** cubic yards of double cut mulch have been installed, "So far". Jim says this is half again more mulch than they placed around trees and landscape beds in prior years. His crews have created several new beautiful landscape beds; the mulch holds moisture and helps reduce weeding.



Greening IT

Information Technology director Dan Wentworth has made great strides to integrate sustainability into IT operations. Because of our commitment to buying electronics with minimal environmental impacts, Wells has been named an EPEAT Higher Education Purchaser by the Green Electronics Council. Our STARS purchasing assessment showed that, in FY15, **89%** of the computer equipment IT specified was EPEAT GOLD certified. IT recycles used electronics; in our April pickup, just under **one ton** of electronics was properly disposed of. In recent upgrades of network printers and the Papercut system, print jobs now default to greyscale and duplex printing, saving ink and paper. A print release system reduces paper waste. Fewer network printers are now shared by more users, saving energy and toners.



A Sustainable Bookstore



Rich Kloster inventories over **20** sustainable products in the Bookstore, including *Positively Green* greeting cards, printed with soy ink on FSC- and Green Seal-certified, 100% post-consumer recycled fiber at an *EnviroStar* printer utilizing green power.

During Spring textbook buy-back, 9 cartons (**450 lbs**) of wholesale books were purchased from students; these still usable texts go to Nebraska Book Co. for resale as used texts at other colleges around the country. One carton (**47 lbs**) of recycled books went to *OnePlanet Books*, which works with various partners to maximize reuse and minimize landfilling of books.

RecycleMania Improvements

Over winter break, we distributed over **500** 7-gallon blue recycling bins to each residence hall room, bathroom, and laundry room to help facilitate residents' separation, collection and transfer of recyclables to their building's trash/recycling area. The upshot of this added recycling infrastructure—the only significant change we made between 2015 and 2016—is that our *RecycleMania* numbers spiked upward:

- * **31.8%** recycling rate (up 35% over 2015)
- * 12,654 lbs of recycling per person (up **45.5%** over 2015)
- * 8,673 lbs of recyclables collected (an impressive **55.7%** jump from 2015!)



It's Electric!



Facilities Director **Brian Brown** has negotiated a new electricity supply contract that will net us an **8% reduction** in cost/kWh plus **100%** of the power supplied will be Green-e certified as coming from wind power. This 4-year supply contract will begin in December 2016. We expect to save about **\$20K** per year through this favorable agreement. We could save even more if/when we integrate solar energy generation on campus so we purchase less grid electricity and make our own. Toward that end, Wells is the only non-municipal entity among 20+ towns and villages participating in a 5-county regional bulk request for proposal process for solar power purchase agreements, to be issued this summer.

Chew on this...

In our STARS assessment of sustainable food purchasing practices for both Wells Dining and the GRIND Café, we were pleased that the dining program spent **12%** buying "sustainably produced" food and beverages products (Fair Trade certified, organic, local, and/or community-based). The GRIND Café, which specializes in more sustainable products, including Fair Trade, locally roasted coffees, posted a much higher percentage, **73%**. Both Wells Dining and GRIND management teams are actively seeking new vendors and products to help them increase these percentages.



Walk that off!

Staff Forum held its second annual *Aurora-to-Aurora* employee walking challenge. This six-week fitness competition takes its name from the 700 mile distance between Aurora NY and Aurora IL. Participating teams were encouraged to walk at least that number of miles during the challenge. Five of the nine teams exceeded the 700-mile cumulative goal—**6,177** miles were logged by all the teams together. All **35** challenge participants received an A2A T-shirt. The Center for



Sustainability collaborated with Staff Forum to cover the small extra cost to buy **100%** organic cotton shirts.

Left: Outgoing Staff Forum chair Nicole Pellegrino models the A2A challenge T-shirt.

We're drinking to less waste



Last fall, the Center for Sustainability, Student Activities, and Wells Dining together purchased over **800** reusable beverage containers, issuing one to every campus community member. This spring, the Center for Sustainability, 2016 Collegiate Cabinet, and the Office of Facilities partnered to purchase **four** Elkay EZH₂O water bottle fill stations to replace standard drinking fountains in Cleveland, Macmillan, and Sommer Center. These fill stations automatically dispense chilled, filtered water into reusable containers. The units feature LED digital counters of the number of water fills, roughly equaling how many disposable water bottles were avoided through these reusable container refills. As of May 31st, the screen counts on the four bottle fill units totaled **5,276** fills.

K-Cup Round-Up Results



During *RecycleMania*, we rewarded all those who turned in a quantity of new or used K-Cups and who pledged to "kick the K-Cup habit" with a reusable filter for their K-style single cup brewer and a package of specialty ground coffee. **167** K-Cups were rounded up. RA Chelsea Carlin led a residence hall floor activity to recycle those collected K-Cups, first emptying out the spent coffee grounds into the bins the Grind Café uses to collect their coffee grounds for worm composting. The now-empty plastic cups were filled with potting mix and residents planted flower seeds to brighten their rooms.





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Wells Center for
Sustainability and
the Environment



@Wells Sust Center

Trash2Treasure

At the end of the semester, we again set out collection bins in the residence halls to catch any items that graduates or continuing students might want to dispose of. From the halls, materials came to the Center for Sustainability for sorting and evaluation. A number of still-usable items made their way to the King Ferry Food Pantry, Finger Lakes ReUse, or right back onto the shelves in the Bargain Basement (costumes, craft items, housewares, clothing, room décor) or the RUMPUS Room (office and school supplies) for other students to use. Collected textbooks and other trade books were donated to the Aurora Free Library for their fundraising book sale. This year, we weighed all the donated materials; we diverted over **660** pounds of material from the landfill.



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

Reaching out about sustainability



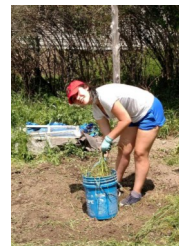
Shania Dauphinais '18 has been hired as the student market manager for the Aurora Farmers Market. Shania will be on hand every Saturday morning to meet with vendors and the public during the extended market season this year, starting June 4 and running through October

29. In 2015, during an abbreviated 13-week market season, we had **19** participating vendors at various times and over **1,700** market shoppers come through. We expect to beat those numbers all hollow this season! We received a second health promotion grant from the Cayuga Community Foundation to enhance the market's onsite image in order to recruit more vendors and attract more market visitors.

Following his April 28th Sustainability Perspectives talk on composting, Japanese lecturer and certified Master Composter **Kurt**



Pipa offered a hands-on activity, to harvest composted material from his home worm composting bin. Students from Ernie Olson's Culture and Gardens class and other interested passersby worked to separate the worms, their newspaper bedding, and the finished "worm casting" compost created as the worms feed on the organic material put into their bin. Kurt inoculated the bin with .21 pounds of red wiggler worms last April. He and the students harvested over **18.5** pounds of compost to use as a gardening soil amendment along with now over a **half pound** of worms to inoculate new worm compost bins,



Lexi Castiglione '18 is this summer's Campus Garden Assistant. She will be working to maintain and further develop the McGordon House Languages Garden, the medicinal and culinary herb beds around Zabriskie, and some other planned garden spots, including creating a dye

plant bed to support a planned Fall educational activity with an outside artist on natural dye-making and fabric dyeing techniques.

Wells Campus Greens

held a spring sale of plants they started in the Zabriskie greenhouse (with plant tending help from professor Jackie Schnurr, Science lab coordinator Cheryl Lewkowicz, and HR assistant Nancy Baidon). The club had **266** house plants to sell—they sold fast! (Photo: Greens members Liz Reeve and Natalie Jay).



Twelve Wells students attended the Model U.N. at the United Nations headquarters in New York. The UN is a leader on sustainability research, whether ecological, economic, or social.

The focus of this year's Model UN was to improve sustainability efforts worldwide and to ensure a smooth transition between the Millennium Development Goals and the Sustainable Development Goals. Model UN attracts over 5,000 college students, more than half from outside the U.S., and provides the opportunity for students to learn about international politics and diplomacy by taking on the role of a UN member country; the Wells team represented the nation of Sri Lanka.



Wells is named a First Mover

Wells College was recognized by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority for being among the REV Campus Challenge First Movers. According to NYSEDA, "These **46** outstanding public and private, urban and rural institutions have demonstrated commitment to clean energy and leadership among colleges and universities in New York State. By being among the first to join the Challenge, these institutions have set themselves apart from their peers."

Wells is listed among the group of REV Campus Challenge Achiever institutions. Center director Marian Brown was invited to participate in a REV Campus Challenge regional workshop to provide feedback to NYSEDA on how to improve the program.



NYSAR3 Grant Award

Wells College was **one of four** New York institutions to be awarded a grant to fund innovative environmental projects as part of the recently completed round of the College Council Grant Program conducted by the New York State Association for Reduction, Reuse and Recycling (NYSAR3). We were awarded **\$360** to implement our in-bathroom and laundry room recycling bin program during RecycleMania. Our experience is especially instructive because conventional wisdom in recycling circles is that placing recycling bins in such common areas in residence halls attracts more trash than recycling. Our experience doesn't bear that out, so the higher education recycling community is interested in leaning more from us.

