

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

The irony is not lost on us that we consume a **lot** of paper to spread our sustainability message. We do use electronic media but tallied some of our print items:

 1,000 **GOTCHA** cards (250 new cards are distributed each academic block to those spotted using their reusable mug)



1,800 *Installments* (200 each of nine monthly issues—one goes inside each bathroom stall)



900 event flyers (30 each for 30 events posted around campus)

~400 copies of this quarterly newsletter. We don't print many; the PDF version of the current issue is available on our website.

In this issue:

Out and About....	2
Goodbye Wells—Hello World	2
Spring Gardening class	2
Sustainable Business theses	2
Finger Lakes Project Sustainability Curriculum Development Workshop	2
Wells is a Trail Blazer	3
Bookin' It	3
Successful Composting Pilot	3
Lightening our Footprint	3
RecycleMania Results	3
Trash2Treasure Collection	3
Print Releaf Program	3
Recovering the Past	3
REV Campus Challenge	4
Oh the myriad ways through which we reach out	4

Sustainability Center's Year-end Wrap-up

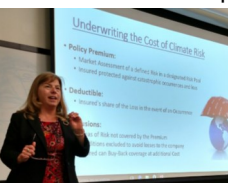
The *Center for Sustainability and the Environment* was busy again this year, programming a large number of educational and outreach events, in addition to the continuing work we do behind the scenes to advance more sustainable decision making in campus operations.

We annually track how many participants we attract to our various programmed events. This year, we had a total of 1,004 participants in our activities: 738 on-campus attendees and 266 who came to join us from off-campus.

Our *Sustainability Perspectives* series brings in local and regional experts to talk about sustainability-related issues from a variety of viewpoints. We program the most events in this speaker series, which is held on Mondays at 12:20PM. For the Fall *Perspectives* series, we offered eight presentations on topics ranging from renewable energy, watershed protection, outdoor education, food sustainability, permaculture, to a fascinating talk about the language of sustainability and how that can impact behavior, offered by our very own Psychology professor **Deb Gagnon**.

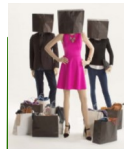
During the spring *Sustainability Perspectives* series, we hosted speakers to talk about the Paris Climate Accords, composting, GIS mapping, sustainable investing, invasive species, adaptive reuse, political activism, and media literacy around sustainability. Petra Page-Mann from Fruition Seeds presented on her company's focus on regionally adapted seeds.

For the *Sustainable Business* speaker series, our collaborative educational programming effort with the *Sullivan Center for Business and Entrepreneurship*, we invited in three regional speakers who have experienced success developing sustainable businesses. Wells alumna **Darlynn Overbaugh '01**, owner of *Life's So Sweet Chocolates*, spoke on "Sustainable Sweets—improving the candy industry one truffle at a time". Darlynn gave a rousing talk about her work to embed sustainability practice into her business—her free chocolate samples were a huge hit.

 **Vita DeMarchi**, co-founder of *Synapse Partners LLC*, an environmental insurance firm, explained "How Money Responds to Climate Risk". Pat Govang, co-founder of *EZE Materials*, which makes furniture from agriculture

waste products, discussed "Fit, Fits, Foils and Fortune: Freestyling with Venture Capital around the Triple Bottom Line." Pat shared his fascinating "warts and all" story of trying to develop a sustainable business start-up and attract venture capital in the midst of the major economic downturn of the 2000s.

We held three *Sustainable Film* series events: "The True Cost", about the environmental and social price of "fast




THE TRUE COST

fashion"; "Just Eat It", about food waste; and "Age of Consequences" about climate change impacts from the perspective of the U.S. military. For each event, we offered attendees organic popcorn and butter as a snack and *Wells Campus Greens* held a debrief discussion following the film.


The Center was a co-sponsor for a number of other campus events, including the *Peachtown Native American Festival* and the *Activism Symposium*. This year, Peachtown's weeklong festival offerings in mid-September stretched forward to Labor Day when we had the opportunity to host Cody Two Bears from the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, whose battle over the Dakota Access pipeline project was just becoming major national news. We co-sponsored several talks in the *First Nations and Indigenous Studies* speaker series, including "Why I Went to Standing Rock", a reflection by climate activist and Air Force veteran Colleen Boland.

As a bonding activity for *Wells Campus Greens*, we supported an early fall cruise aboard the *Cayuga Lake Floating Classroom*, during which club members conducted lake sampling. Unfortunately, this activity resulted in the unexpected discovery of a large infestation of the highly invasive aquatic weed *Hydrilla* just to the south of the college dock which now requires treatment to try to eradicate.

 The *Aurora Farmers Market*, which runs from June through October, is a project of the Center. In 2016, we moved to a student market manager model, but retained market interns as well. The 2016 market grew substantially over the 2015 season, growing the number of participating vendors by 36% and the number of patrons by 135%.



We hosted textile artist Sarah Gotowka for an interactive Natural Dye workshop, using some dye plant materials collected on campus and learning how to employ different artistic techniques to dye silk scarves.

 We joined two dozen other NY campuses to observe *Campus Crunch* in October, a celebration of local food. We gave out free apples for folks to take and "crunch" into at their leisure.

Out and About ...

Professor of Economics and Sustainability **Kent Klitgaard's** paper, "The Struggle for Meaningful Work," was published by the Great Transitions Initiative in February 2017. In February, Klitgaard spoke at Colorado Mountain College-Glenwood Springs on the topic of "Biophysical Economics and Sustainability."



Jaclyn Schnurr, professor of Biology and Environmental Science, was chosen as the Faculty Spotlight for the most recent FORCES newsletter. Jackie wrote an article describing how NY State Parks have influenced her career as well as the activities of the FORCES club on the Wells College campus.



Lindsay Burwell, assistant professor of Chemistry, was an author on a paper accepted to *The Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* titled, "Erythritol is a pentose-phosphate pathway metabolite and associated with adiposity gain in young adults". Lindsay worked with collaborators in the Division of Nutritional Sciences at Cornell University to identify metabolic markers associated with weight gain in college freshmen. One marker, *erythritol*, a low-calorie natural sweetener isolated from plants, was found to be elevated in the freshman population that gained weight.



Kent Klitgaard, Jackie Schnurr, Lindsay Burwell, and Milene Morfe, professor of Psychology and Sustainability, all served as expert presenters for the *Finger Lakes Project* sustainability curriculum development workshop (see more at right)

Goodbye, Wells—Hello, world!

May is always bittersweet, as we bid a fond farewell to some great student leaders. The good news is that there always seems to be really great students stepping up to take their place.



Natalie Jay has been a member of and club officer for *Wells Campus Greens*; she oversaw the club's successful fall Apple Pie fundraiser (we hope you left behind your apple pie recipe!) and organized campus cleanups. She graduated *magna cum laude*, earned the Nancy Ann Reed '50 Chemistry Prize, and was inducted into the *Phi Beta Kappa* honor society, which recognizes students who have distinguished themselves academically, and have broad scholarly and cultural interests.

Melissa Molina served as the *Sustainability Programs Assistant* for the past two years. We literally could not have done our job without her quiet, efficient work. She placed hundreds of event flyers on bulletin boards across campus and visited every bathroom stall in academic/administrative buildings each month to replace our *Installments* informational newsletters.



Elizabeth Reeve served as co-president of *Wells Campus Greens* and was also a member of *FORCES*. Liz was a past *Aurora Farmers Market* intern, and she organized the fundraising and logistics for the bus taking Wells students to the *People's Climate March* in Washington DC.

Ana Toumpas was active in both *Wells Campus Greens* and *FORCES*. Ana graduated *magna cum laude* with Distinction in Environmental Studies. She won the *Cayuga Watershed Prize in Environmental Studies*, awarded to a student with an outstanding academic record in Environmental Studies, who has engaged in significant professional activities during her/his undergraduate years, and who shows promise for future professional development in the field. Ana was inducted into *Phi Beta Kappa* and also listed in *Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges*. Nominations and selection for *Who's Who* are based on academic achievement, service to the community, leadership in extracurricular activities, and potential for continued success.

**Spring Gardening class**

FOOD 285 Introduction to Spring Gardening continues to take advantage of the talents, expertise and experience of different faculty. This spring's teaching team included *Sociology* professor **Laura McClusky** (food issues), *Women's Studies* and *First Nation and Indigenous Studies* professor **Vic Muñoz** (seed starting), *Theatre* professor **Siouxsie Easter** (garden bed construction), and *Biology* professor **Jackie Schnurr** (botany). The class constructed three raised beds in the Theatre scene shop, and used the Zabriskie greenhouse to start seedlings they later transplanted into the beds sited at the Sommer Center entry.



Newly planted beds (below); beds at press time →

Sustainable Business theses

Business seniors defended their thesis research in early May. Students presenting on sustainability related topics included:

Ashida Cooper - Corporate Social Responsibility and Its Relationship with Organizational Financial Performances

Christopher Courtney - Business Ethics

Marissa D'Arpino - The Unsustainable Consumption of Fast Fashion

Erin Hampson - Corporate Social Responsibility in Hospitality: Helping Themselves or Helping the World?

Kendra Thomas - Factors that drive people toward Alternative Medicine: Comparative Analysis and Marketing Techniques for a Successful Alternative Medicine



Photo: Business seniors

Finger Lakes Project Sustainability Curriculum Development Workshop

With a generous grant from the *Jephson Educational Trust*, the *Center for Sustainability and the Environment* delivered this well-received workshop at the end of May to educators interested in learning how to infuse sustainability content and practice into curricula across disciplines. We welcomed over two dozen faculty from institutions across the state, including Wells College, Syracuse University, Ithaca College, Elmira College, Cornell University, SUNY Fredonia, SUNY Geneseo, SUNY Potsdam, and teachers from two K-12 schools: Ithaca Montessori and New Roots Charter School. Some of the Jephson funds are set aside to support mini-grant awards to workshop participants who demonstrate that they have applied what they learned in our training program in the syllabus they present to us for their new or revised sustainability curriculum.



Wells is a Trail Blazer



We received a nice certificate from Zimride, our ridesharing platform, for our participation in the "Blaze New Trails" fundraiser for the Active

Trails program of the National Park Foundation. During Earth Month, for every new user or new ride posted, Zimride and its parent company, Enterprise Holdings Inc., each donated \$1 to the Active Trails Program, which promotes community engagement and preserves national park trails and resources. With support from the Finger Lakes Regional Rideshare Coalition, of which Wells College is a member along with Cornell, Ithaca College, and TC3, Zimride and Enterprise donated over \$18,000 to the effort.

Bookin' it!

Rich Kloster, our Campus Store manager, reports that during the Spring textbook buyback period, Wells students sold back 205 still-usable class textbooks, recouping \$1,700 in value. Of that number of volumes sold back, 42 titles will be used again by Wells faculty for classes in the fall. Those books will bear a "USED" sticker and a lower purchase price tag. 163 books were sent to Nebraska Book Company, which makes these used texts available to students at other campuses in their network whose faculty will use them for their courses. Rich



filled three cartons with other books without domestic reuse value to send to One World Books, which supports the education of students in third world countries.

Successful Composting Pilot

During *RecycleMania* (more results below), Wells competed in the category of Food Service Organics for the first time since starting our dining hall compost collection program last October. Out of 134 schools, Wells scored #10 nationally and #2 in New York State! We diverted 18,571 pounds of compostable food waste per person from landfill trash. Early in the semester, we were awarded a grant from the NYSAR3 College Council to also integrate composting into *The Well*, our campus pub. The grant paid to replace petrochemical plastic items with compostable bioplastics and begin compost pickups. *The Well's* new compost volumes were added to our *RecycleMania* stats, contributing to our really good showing in this category.



Lightening our Footprint

The March issue of *Wells Notes* Alumnae and Alumni Newsletter included this statement about Sustainability Practices: *Wells remains committed to environmentally responsible practices. This piece is printed at Cayuga Press, an environmentally conscious facility run by 100% wind power, with vegetable inks, and on paper from tree farmers with sustainable harvesting methods. They practice sustainable production methods in which nearly all waste paper, plastic, wood and metal is recycled. The facility is the first in New York State to regenerate press chemicals in-house to reduce output of chemical waste by 90%.*



RecycleMania Results

We again competed in this friendly competition for college and university recycling programs and performed quite well. In the *Diversion* category (recycling as a percentage of overall waste generation) we posted a 54.05% rate, ranking is #26 nationally and #1 in New York State! This was a 70% increase over our 2016 recycling rate of 31.80%, which was itself a 35.7% increase over our first-year diversion rate of 23.44% in 2015, the first semester after integrating our comprehensive campus recycling program. In the *Per Capita* category (combined paper, cardboard, bottles and cans on a per person basis), we ranked #86 out of 244 participating schools; #9 in New York. In the *Waste Minimization* category, schools compete to see which produces the least amount of recyclables, food organics, and trash on a per person basis. Wells ranked #100 out of 135 participating schools, posting a total of 57.797 pounds per person; #7 among New York State schools. Wells participated for the first time in the *E-CycleMania* electronics recycling competition, which tracks the amount of computers, printers, consumer electronics and other scrap or refurbishable eligible materials collected across campus. Only 39 schools competed in this new category; Wells came in #9 with 968 pounds and ranked #2 among New York State schools.



Trash2Treasure Collection

We conducted our end-of-the-school year move-out collection to divert still-usable materials from the landfill. Students donated clothing, housewares, room items, non-perishable food, etc., placing items in collection bins in their residence halls. Items were then moved to the Sustainability Center for sorting and re-use evaluation. We collected 1,368 pounds of reusable materials this Spring! Our *RUMPUS* Room was refilled with office and school supplies, and we reloaded the *Bargain Basement* with other items. Non-perishable food was delivered to the *King Ferry Food Pantry* and, happily, *Finger Lakes ReUse* accepted everything else, even coming here to campus to pick it all up!



Print Releaf Program

Our Information Technology group contracts with *Toshiba Print Management* to provide network copiers; together, they have rolled out a new feature called *PrintReleaf*. Based on the number of pages Wells prints, for every tree's worth of paper used, a *PrintReleaf* reforestation partner will plant a tree. Based on their formula, we consume 17 trees per month or 204 trees annually. We were allowed to choose our *PrintReleaf* partner organization. We surveyed the student body and the overwhelming choice was U.S.-based *Trees Water & People*, a non-profit working with the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota to reforest the reservation and provide local workforce training to plant and maintain the tree seedlings. *TW&Ps* goal is to plant 30,000 trees in 2017.



Recovering the Past

The old, tired upholstered furniture in the Macmillan Hall lobby and in the Faculty Parlors in Main were all removed and sent to the Harden Furniture factory near Syracuse. The wood frames of all these furniture pieces were still in good condition, but the Faculty Parlor window seat grouping padding and upholstery were definitely showing their years. All were stripped down to their bones, and new padding and cushions mounted onto them. More updated upholstery fabrics were selected to provide a fresh, new look to each seating area.



Macmillan Lobby



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 is a member of the *REV Campus Challenge* (REVCC), an initiative to showcase and support the work of higher ed institutions actively reducing climate-changing greenhouse gas emissions. REVCC considers Wells as an "Achiever", based on the work we have done to integrate energy efficiency measures, encourage conservation, and explore renewable energy strategies. REVCC has solicited our input on new member support programs, especially a new funded effort to conduct geothermal feasibility studies. Marian Brown consulted to a student team from New York University's Stern School of Business working with REVCC to develop and refine outreach materials for institutions interested in exploring the feasibility of geothermal heating and cooling for campus buildings.

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

Oh, the myriad ways through which we reach out



Wells College played host to the 3rd Annual FORCES Summit on April 9th. FORCES stands for Friends of Recreation, Conservation and Environmental Stewardship. A program of the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, FORCES was launched almost a decade ago with the intention of boosting and growing volunteerism within state parks. FORCES creates opportunities for a wide range of mutually beneficial partnerships that enhance state parks while providing students real world experiences and the opportunity to further their academic programs, gain valuable resume experience, and develop personal connections to state parks. While 29 higher ed institutions are affiliated with FORCES, only six—including Wells—have active FORCES clubs. 35 student and faculty representatives attended the summit from FORCES affiliate institutions, including SUNY Morrisville, SUNY ESF, SUNY Geneseo, SUNY Oneonta, LeMoyne College, Hartwick College, Ithaca College, and Niagara County Community College. Of course, our own Wells FORCES club members were out in full force, accompanied by their faculty advisor, Jackie Schnurr. The Center for Sustainability worked with the FORCES Program Coordinator and Wells Dining to provide compostable serveware and compost collection for the event catering.



The Center for Sustainability was invited to table at the first annual Earth Fest at the Cayuga Museum in Auburn on Earth Day, April 22. We joined several other area non-profits offering information on permaculture and watershed protection. We offered Fest-goers the popular Water Challenge, our blind drinking water taste test, pitting City of Auburn tap water, Aquafina bottled water (which is filtered municipal tap water from Syracuse), and Poland Spring bottled spring water. Auburn's city water didn't fare as well as our college tap water usually does in this taste test. ☺

Wells Campus Greens organized carpools to get

interested students down to the Ithaca Commons for the regional March for Science in April. The following week, Campus Greens orga-



nized a bus to take Wells students down to the national People's Climate March in Washington DC.



Wells Campus Greens organized a wide array of Earth Week 2017 activities, including the very well attended Environmental Racism panel discussion that they co-hosted with

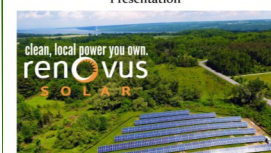
Querencia, the new student organization supporting Latin American and Caribbean language and culture.

Organizers of the Senior class semi-formal dinner solicited donations of old books, old maps, and empty wine bottles to use as centerpieces for their event. They promised to donate all books to the Aurora Free Library for their summer book sale.

We noted at the Honors Awards Dinner that the centerpieces were the same recycled beauties created from old student activities items by Hailey Uribe, associate director of Campus Life for Student Activities—these were first used for the Honors dinner two years ago. Way to keep recycling going!



Community Solar



The Center for Sustainability hosted *Renovus Solar* for a very well-attended public information session on *Community Solar* on April 5th. This new way to "go solar" offers those interested residents who lack appropriate situations for rooftop or ground mounted solar power installations of their own the opportunity to buy shares in solar "farms" being developed on optimal sites within our region.

The Center for Sustainability supported the *Solarize Cayuga 2017* campaign to county residents and small businesses, helping staff a public outreach event at Cayuga Community College in Auburn on March 13.

Marian Brown contributed to a research article written by Dana Ingalls, a librarian at McGill University in Canada. Ingalls' article, "Breaking New Ground: The Case for Seed Libraries in the Academic Library", was published in *Public Services Quarterly* and liberally cites our experience developing the Wells College Seed Exchange. Using the advice we shared with them, McGill's Macdonald Library opened its own seed library at the end of March.

The Sustainability Center was invited to participate in a Cayuga County Chamber of Commerce Business After Five reception held here at Wells on March 23, introducing Chamber members to programs and partnering opportunities here at Wells. Through networking at that event, we were invited to participate in the Cayuga Museum's *Earth Fest* (at left) and asked to consult to the *Auburn Doubledays* on making their ball park more sustainable.