

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

Generous NFRC Support for Sustainability Speaker Series

Visual artist Amos Paul Kennedy Jr. was in residence from March 22—April 19. His *Visual Noise* exhibit in the String Room Gallery, comprised of more than 750 small and large poster prints, used the “old-fashioned” letterpress print medium to offer powerful, up-to-the-moment statements about race, inequality, literacy, poverty, food

justice, and many other sustainability-related issues. Thanks, Amos!

NEVER
buy what
you don't
want
because
it is cheap.

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When we issued the call several years ago for members of the campus community, including alumni, to join our Sustainability Advisory Committee, which guides and is kept abreast of *Center for Sustainability* activities, Deb Callahan '85 was one of the first to respond. While Deb's work demands increased to the point that she was unable to stay engaged on our committee, she stayed in contact with us. In Deb's role as CEO of the *National Fenestration Rating Council*, she has steered her organization's move beyond its valuable mission to offer consumers, architects and builders an objective system to evaluate the energy efficiency and performance of windows and doors. Deb has set *NFRC* on its own trajectory toward becoming a more sustainable organization. Deb spoke about some of those activities during her Fall 2018 *Sustainability Perspectives* series talk titled “Opening More Sustainable Doors (and Windows)”, which was very well-received.

Fenestration refers to all things related to windows, doors, and skylights. It originated from the Latin word “fenestra,” meaning “opening.” ~ from *NFRC* website

We were most surprised and delighted when Deb reached out to us in 2017 to offer a significant gift from the *NFRC* to assist the on-going work of the *Center for Sustainability*—she asked what our needs were. One program we had to set aside in recent years was our *Sustainability Speaker* series, intended to bring national-level sustainability speakers to campus to educate our community and further burnish Wells' profile in the region as a sustainability leader. When Deb presented on campus in October, she brought *NFRC's* generous donation, which is enabling us to revive this speaker series this Fall. At press time, we are negotiating final arrangements with an important speaker —stay tuned!

We caught up with Deb (photo center) following her inspiring, authentic, humorous and thought-provoking talk titled “Grit and Gumption: Tales from a Storied Career”, delivered at Wells' *Women and Leadership* conference in February. Deb (center) is flanked by Marian Brown, director of the *Center for Sustainability* (left) and Una Moneypenny '85, who lives locally but also works for *NFRC*, and is the very proud mom of Eamonn Moneypenny Hall, who graduated in May.



2019 Sustainability Academic Program Graduates

Curtis Davis graduated *cum laude* with a double major, earning Distinction in Environmental Science **and** Distinction in Sustainability. Students earning Distinction in their major field of study – in *both* majors, in Curtis' case - show outstanding ability (GPA of 3.50 or above) in major course work, show the capacity to do independent work with a high degree of initiative, genuine intellectual curiosity, and a sense of responsibility; and are recommended by faculty in their major field(s). Based upon his very strong academic performance in all his sustainability classes, the faculty awarded Curtis this year's Sustainability prize. Curtis presented his Sustainability capstone project, “The Misconceptions About Non-Native Species”, in a public talk in late April; he explained how we confuse non-native species with invasive species, and how some non-natives can actually benefit all aspects of sustainability. Curtis is joined in the center photo below by classmate Cameron Davis, who also graduated *cum laude* and earned Distinction in Environmental Science; Cam was awarded the Cayuga Watershed Prize in Environmental Science. Yequarah Conner (*second from right*) finished up her studies at Wells in December 2018, completing her major in Business, and double minors in Sustainability and Sustainable Food Systems. And while she wasn't in our sustainability academic program, we send all our best wishes with Ashley Lopez (*far right*), who served as our Sustainability Programs Assistant for several semesters; Ashley graduated with Distinction in Sociology & Anthropology. *Congratulations, everyone!*



Milene Morfeï retires

We bid a very fond farewell to professor of Psychology and Sustainability Milene Morfeï, who has been a popular and inspiring educator for more than two decades. Milene was one of the two faculty architects of the sustainability academic program and the vision that ultimately became the *Center for Sustainability and the Environment* in 2014. Milene was named Faculty Emerita at Commencement. We will sorely miss her sage counsel and sense of humor.



Erinn Ryen, assistant professor of Business, co-published the chapter titled "Policy landscape and recommendations to inform the adoption of food waste-energy technologies in *Sustainable Food Waste-to-Energy Systems*. Erinn asked the Center director to serve as the client for her *Spring Innovation and Creative Problem Solving* class. Teams worked all semester on ways to improve Wells' waste management systems. Ideas presented included: revising Dining Hall food take-out containers to include information on proper portion sizes and balanced food choices based on nutrition food pyramids; web-based information on proper recycling; an on-campus container redemption program; and revising how the Grind Café stores and serves its bagels.

Kent Klitgaard, professor of Economics and Sustainability, presented a paper titled "Integrating Economic and Biophysical Limits to Growth," at the 88th Conference of the Southern Economic Association. Kent, on sabbatic leave this spring, has been hard at work on a book on ecological economics.



Sustainable Business competition winners

In the *Be Your Own Boss* business idea competition in late February, two finalists envisioned business concepts with interesting sustainability aspects. **Patience Korpo Koenig '22**, an international student from Liberia, proposed *PK ECO Storage*. Patience explained that, in her home country, up to 50% of perishable foods (especially fruits and vegetables) are lost post-harvest because communities lack the ability to safely store those food products to preserve their quality. Her business idea is to create refrigerated perishable food storage for communities back home, using repurposed shipping containers and providing electricity using solar panels and high-capacity batteries. Patience won first place in the Social Impact competition category and the first place Sustainability prize, underwritten by the *Center for Sustainability and the Environment*. **Nate Pieper '19** won first place in the For-Profit Business competition category for following his personal passion for craft brewing to develop *Black Magnolia Brewing*. The *Center for Sustainability* awarded Nate the second place Sustainability prize for his focus on local production, showcasing the unique "terroir" of the Finger Lakes and using all-local ingredients, and for his operational focus on energy efficiency. Both winners plan to use their prize money to implement their business plans and leverage additional financial support.



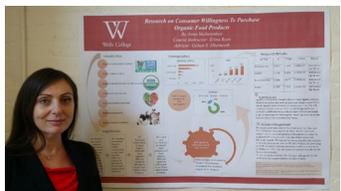
Sustainability-related Internships and Senior Theses

The spring semester always offers myriad opportunities to check out what students have been working on. Here are a few:

LeAnne Weber '19 presented her internship on ways to recycle fabrics to make the Theatre Costume Shop more sustainable.



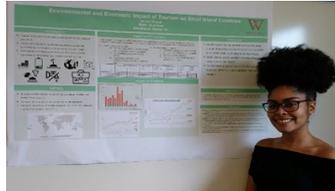
For her senior Business thesis, Anna Shcherenkov conducted a research study of *Consumer Behavior and Willingness to Purchase Organic Food Products*. She found that younger respondents were more aware of the benefits and willing to purchase organic foods.



Soc/Anth senior Courtney Good presented her thesis on a unique poetic look at the culture of the Haudenosaunee, the indigenous people of upstate NY.



Senior Mariah Tobias presented her internship managing the college's *Seed Exchange* (see more pg 4).



(Below left) Business senior Stephanie Marte presented on the waste management challenges posed to two island nations by tourism.

For his Business thesis, Ramon Solano compared lifecycle costs of electric vehicles to conventional fuel cars.

Business senior Matt Mabee's thesis looked at developing an electronics waste recovery firm.

Crystal Peña '19 completed her internship conducting *Weigh the Waste* demonstrations, instructing diners in the Dining Hall on proper collection of compostable food waste. She posted prior waste weights to improve performance.



New Fall Classes

BIOL 364L Lab in Advanced Ecology. In this lab, accompanying BIO 363 Advanced Ecology, students will explore an ecological topic by performing lab and field work.

ENVR 103 Introduction to Geographic Information System (GIS) will introduce GIS concepts and provide foundational knowledge in analytical cartography and expose students to how geographic information can be used to answer questions and solve problems in many applications.

HS 285 Bioethics will introduce ethical issues involved the biomedical and life sciences. Students will consider respect for autonomy, nonmalficence, beneficence and justice as they relate to bioethical dilemmas such as the public health crisis of Ithaca's 1903 typhoid epidemic, GMOs, and human gene editing.

Wellspring

Golf Course Recycling Support

New Wells Golf Course superintendent Scott Winkelman reached out to the Center for Sustainability to inquire if we could support his desire to improve recycling separation on the course. We were happy to set the course up with recycling containers for each of the nine holes, as well as two sets of trash/recycling containers and instructional signage for the clubhouse. **Fore!**



Sustainable Swag

At a national sustainability conference we attended last Fall, we were introduced to the EcoPlum company, which specializes in more sustainable promotional products. We worked with EcoPlum to design custom imprinted pens to give to prospective students and put in our speakers' gift bags. The pens are made from recycled disposable water bottles. Recipients seem to like them and we were surprised that EcoPlum's version is less expensive than the generic, non-imprinted pens we have purchased from our office supply vendors.



RecycleMania 2019



The results are in, and Wells again did well in this annual competition among over 100 institutions to see who can recycle the most in an 8-week period. In the *Diversion* category, we posted a 51.4% recycling rate, ranking #31 among schools nationally; we were #2 among participating NY institutions. This was a big jump up for us from our 44.8% diversion rate in 2018. In the *Per Capita* category, with 39.5 pounds of recycling reported per person, we placed #11 nationally and finished #1 in the state. In *Food Service Organics* (compostables), we generated over 15,000 pounds of food waste, or 23 pounds per person, placing us #59 nationally and #5 among NY schools entering data in this category.

New Catering Waste Stations

In a similar vein, *Hallmark*, our contract food service operator, asked if we could help them acquire waste separation stations for catering events, to allow them to easily separate compostable food waste from recyclables or landfill trash. We found these mobile separation stations that are consistent with our two-bin waste station format (gray/black landfill trash left, blue recycling right), but these add the green bin for compostables. Everyone's favorite Dining employee, Becca, shows off a new mobile waste station.



Treasures Abound

During our *Trash2Treasure* move-out waste diversion effort, we place special bins in res halls where students can place still-usable-but-no-longer-wanted clothing, bedding, crafts and housewares. Everything is brought to the Sustainability Center, where we weigh and sort it, retaining items to restock our free *Bargain Basement* and *RUMPUS Room* (school/office supplies). Of the 1,180 pounds of "stuff" diverted from landfill trash, we kept much for campus reuse. The rest - 46 full bags and boxes - was



taken by Finger Lakes ReUse.

Treasures sorting room

Dining Sustainability Efforts

Hallmark Dining undertook two notable activities that in the Dining Hall:

- They changed the old, dim fluorescent bulbs in the chandeliers to LED lamps, which light up the space nicely, and slash energy costs.
- For *Earth Day*, Dining's chefs served meatless Earth Burgers.



Lather Up!

Building Care manager Steve Gelsi showed us the *Ecoessential* guest soap Facilities will now supply to college visitors who stay in residence halls for events like Alumni Reunion. Applying the analysis of ingredients in personal care products the students in the SUS 101 *Introduction to Sustainability* class perform, we conclude that this soap formulation is pretty safe for human health and the environment. (Green = safe; Red = hazard). The only questionable component, fortunately in tiny quantities, is the lemongrass fragrance.



Sodium Palmitate	2	Pretty solid choice overall, guys. Well done!
Sodium Cocoate	1	
Water	1	
Glycerin	2	
Fragrance (Lemongrass)	8	
Titanium Dioxide	1-3	
Tetrasodium EDTA	2	

Did we "getcha"?

We partner each year with the management team for the student-run *GRIND Café* to incent our campus community to carry and use the reusable mugs we give everyone when they join Wells. *Wells Campus Greens* club members, who serve as our "spotters", give all those seen using their own bottles or mugs a *GOTCHA* Being Green card, redeemable for a free hot or cold drink refill in their own container. The Center issues new *GOTCHA* cards for each academic block; over three blocks, *GRIND* staff redeemed 248 *GOTCHA* cards out of the we 1,000 issued.



GRIND Café Sustainability

During *Earth Week*, the *GRIND Café* sent a reminder about their sustainable practices:

- Biodegradable bagel & muffin bags
- All cups/lids made from recycled materials
- Compost their coffee grounds
- Bolivian and Wells Express coffees are 100% Fair Trade and Organic-certified
- *GRIND*-ers used this opportunity to announce their latest operational change:
- Strawless lids for cold cup drinks



Wells community members and a campus visitor enjoy the new strawless cold cups



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Wells Center for Sustainability and the Environment



@Wells Sust Center

The Center for Sustainability donated a Green Goodie Basket for the silent auction fundraiser for Camp Gregory, a 75-year-old community camp on Cayuga Lake.



We also provided a Green Goodie Box for the silent auction at the Skaneateles-based Masterworks Chorale gala. These gift boxes, packed with more sustainable housewares and cleaning products, have proven quite popular.



Marian Brown, director of the Center for Sustainability, delivered mock sustainability classes for prospective students attending the Scholarship Celebration in March and an Admitted Students visitation in April. She delivered a shortened form of her lecture on making more sustainable choices about personal care products given to students in her *Introduction to Sustainability* course. In February, Brown was invited to serve as a luncheon discussion facilitator for the *Women and Agriculture* conference in Auburn, and was invited to present on Wells' sustainability efforts to the Lansing-Ithaca Rotary Club.

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

Spring semester sustainability talks



Rachel Partington Schramel '13, newly minted lawyer working for *Knauf Shaw* in Rochester, returned in February to speak in our *Sustainability Perspectives* series about how environmental policies in New York State are providing a backdrop for rollbacks in environmental and human health protections at the federal level. An *Auburn Citizen* reporter covered Rachel's talk for the paper.

We were delighted to welcome two Ithaca College School of Business faculty to our *Sustainable Business* series to share the first public presentation of the findings from their 2-year-long research study of how small and medium-sized businesses across the state view sustainability. Hormoz Movassaghi and Narges Kasiri kindly acknowledged the Center for Sustainability director for her early consultation on ways to reach out

to get over 650 businesses statewide to take their research survey. They found that a majority of businesses surveyed perceive integrating sustainability into business operations to be positive for their bottom line.



Mark Buckley, former VP for Sustainability for *Staples Inc.* and founder of the *One Boat Collaborative* (so named because we are all in the same climate change boat) was a special guest for the *Sustainable Business* speaker series. Mark instructed students on strategies businesses can employ to assess and reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, which contribute to climate change.

Partnerships for Sustainability Outreach

The Sustainability Center played host to two end-of-the-semester student club activities. During *Earth Week 2019*, Wells Campus Greens hosted a jewelry making workshop (photo right). *Earth*



The Straw Seen Around the World
 The straw seen around the world... This year, all responsible citizens should...
 Why skip the straw?
 • You can't recycle straws. We don't have...
 • They're not biodegradable. They're...
 • They aren't sustainable. Single-use plastic...
 What can you do?
 • Ask for a reusable cup. Reusable cups...
 • Don't buy bottled water. If you must have...
 • Reduce, reuse, and recycle. The first step...
 Think before you drink!
 Declare your very own Straw War!



Week culminated with a *Sustainability Film* screening of a new film called *A Quest for Meaning*, which attracted attendance by several members of the area community. *Greens* helped prepare the free organic popcorn and butter served to filmgoers. The *Friends of Recreation, Conservation and Environmental Stewardship (FORCES)* club hosted a workshop in the Center to offer participants the opportunity to make woven keychains (photo left). The Alternative Spring Break group held a redeemable container drive to raise funds to help defray their travel costs to Sumter SC for their weeklong *Habitat for Humanity* project participation. Hailey Uribe, director of Student Activities and Leadership, reported that the group collected 560 redeemable bottles and cans. The Center also partnered with the *GRIND Café* to promote *National Skip the Straw Day* on February 22.



The Sustainability Center partnered with the leadership of the *Southern Cayuga Garden Club* to host Jennie Cramer, horticulture program manager for Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County, to present a seed starting workshop. The workshop on February 18, held in the Long Library computer classroom (left), was timed for the night before Wells College's Seed Exchange opened to the general public. Workshop participants got "first dibs" on the bounty of our free Seed Exchange, which is located near the Library circulation desk. Seed Exchange intern Mariah Tobias '19 (at left in the RH photo) was on hand to help workshop attendees navigate the way she had organized our exchange. This year's Seed Exchange included more than 1,800 packets of various vegetable, herb, and flower seeds donated by 22 seed companies from around the country. The total value of donated seed was estimated at over \$4,850, for which we paid a little under \$220 in shipping and handling costs. **Get growing!**

Seed Exchange Grows Local Friendships



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ASB Wants You
 To Donate Your Cans & Bottles!

Support our trip to Sumter South Carolina to help Habitat for Humanity

Look for special bins & listen for a knock on your door!