

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



Wells has again been recognized by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority for our commitment to advancing clean energy initiatives on campus. As a member of the *REV Campus Challenge*, we are recognized as an Achiever institution for our energy efficiency and energy conservation efforts.

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Spring Sustainability Events

Each semester, we program a significant number of sustainability-related events and activities. Below are the events scheduled at press time. We invite you to check out our webpage for the most up-to-date event information: <https://www.wells.edu/academics/center-sustainability-environment/events> All events are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted.

The *Sustainability Perspectives* series talks, which feature regional experts on a variety of sustainability topics, are offered on Mondays from 12:20—1:20PM in the DeWitt lecture hall, Zabriskie Hall Room 106.

February 4 **Sustainable Architecture: exploring and unraveling elements of healthy, livable and resilient buildings and communities**

Dennis Andrejko, head, Department of Architecture, *Golisano Institute for Sustainability*
Sustainable architecture provides an opportunity to provide cutting-edge design that is high performing, energy efficient, environmentally sensitive, and contextually driven. This presentation shares ideas centered on forward-thinking built environments that enhance health, well-being, and resiliency.



February 11 **Change is in the Air: Global Climate Change from a NY Perspective**

Art DeGaetano, director, *Northeast Regional Climate Center*
Historical climate observations and climate model projections will be used to show how global climate change is affecting New York and the Northeastern United States. An introduction to the Earth's climate system and the basic working of a modern climate model will be discussed.



February 18 **The State of Environmental Policy and Sustainable Land Use Policy in NY**

Rachel Partington '13, J.D., attorney, *Knauf Shaw LLP*
This Wells alumna will explain the current state of environmental policy in New York State and how state policies can serve as a backstop to the rollbacks of environmental protections by the Trump EPA and how land use policy can create more sustainable communities.



February 25 **Be an Informed Consumer: How purchases we make affect health & the environment**

Due to circumstances beyond our control, this talk has been canceled
Kate Winnebeck, senior program manager, *NYS Pollution Prevention Institute*
Gain valuable information about where toxins may be in our everyday lives, what's being done to reduce them, and best practices to make informed decisions about products we buy.



March 4 **Fashion Sustainability Optimism: On Pace for a Healthier Fashion Industry**

Laura Taylor, instructor of Fashion Business Merchandising, *Genesee Comm. College*
This presentation explores current industry, business, academic, and consumer contributions to a sustainable fashion industry that can encourage small changes in our behavior.



March 25 **Recycling is Mightier than the Sword**

Theresa Evans, recycling specialist, *Onondaga County Resource Recovery Agency*
The Chinese government recently announced a "National Sword" campaign to cut down on recycling contamination; this has caused many U.S. municipalities to rethink their recycling programs. Learn about current and future recycling trends, and actions you can take at home to ensure that recycling remains strong.



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President Gibraltar on statewide sustainability conference panel

For the closing plenary session at the *State of New York Sustainability* conference at Colgate University on November 8, President Gibraltar was part of a panel with other educational institution leaders to discuss "The View of Sustainability from the C-Suite". Marian Brown, director of the *Center for Sustainability and the Environment*, moderated this panel discussion, which explored how senior level collegiate administrators view sustainability in terms of institutional importance and value. President Gibraltar was joined by SUNY Cobleskill president Marion Terenzio, Trish St. Leger, vice provost for Administration and Planning at Colgate University, and Mark Lichtenstein, executive director of sustainability and chief of staff for the president at SUNY School of Environmental Science and Forestry.



Goin' Buggy

A new 3-credit Environmental Studies Topics course was approved for Spring delivery by instructor Ann Herzig. ENVR 385 **Insect Ecology and Global Change**

A critical examination of the ecology of insects in the context of human-caused global change. Humans have altered landscapes, introduced non-native species across the globe, and changed the global climate. Insects dominate the animal kingdom. On land, they constitute the majority of biomass of animals and about 85% of all described animal species. After an overview of the importance of insects to community function and the ecosystem services that they provide, students will independently explore one aspect of insect ecology as it relates to global change. Students will present their research and engage the class in a discussion on the topic. Students will learn how to identify the major insect orders. We will use insects as bio-monitors to assess the health of different streams and different soil types by sampling the insect communities in these different environments.



Curriculum Mapping

Professor of Psychology and Sustainability **Milene Morfei** was on a well-deserved sabbatic leave in Fall 2018. Part of her time away was spent conducting a curriculum map of the sustainability academic program, to determine how well the various courses in the major cover needed content and help our students develop knowledge, skills and abilities to be most successful as graduates. The faculty group contributing courses to the sustainability academic program will review Milene's report to identify any gaps or areas of curricular overlap to refine and improve the program for the future.



Assistant professor of Business **Erinn Ryen** reached out to the *Center for Sustainability* to see if her spring BUS 230 *Innovation and Creative Problem Solving* class could work with the Center as the class "client" this semester. Erinn's challenge for the class is to study the opportunities for and obstacles to improving the college's performance this year in the annual *RecycleMania* competition. *RecycleMania* is a friendly competition among several hundred colleges and universities to see who can recycle the most material during an 8-week period, starting February 3. The Center director presented to the Innovation class early in the semester, providing information about the college's past performance history since rejoining the *RecycleMania* competition in

Studying Recycling Innovations



2015 and educating the class on some of the opportunities and challenges related to the college's ongoing efforts to integrate recycling and composting programs. The class received a primer on proper recycling practices then were quizzed on properly sorting a prepared set of mixed materials. Then they were turned loose on a "trash sort" of actual trash and recycling bags collected from various areas on campus so they could learn first-hand about some of the issues with getting members of the campus community to properly prepare and separate their recyclable materials from landfill-bound trash.



Sustainability-related Internships

During the Internship Fair for Fall or J-term student experiences, we noted a couple of interesting sustainability-related internships:



Stephanie Marte '19 was spotted explaining her internship with the Aurora Farmers Market during the Fall semester to Michele Vollmer (left) and Kelly Brown (right) from our Advancement office. Stephanie assisted the student market manager with market setup/teardown each week plus she performed some additional market analysis to find out about Wells students' awareness of and interest in the weekly market. Among Stephanie's findings are that Wells students need

more education on how to cook with fresh produce.



Ashley Lopez '19 took full advantage of her Fall semester studying abroad in Belize to gain insights into local agricultural practices from her work on a research farm. We are delighted to have Ashley back on campus for the spring semester, resuming the role she had last year as our *Sustainability Program Assistant*, placing Sustainability Center event flyers and posters and mounting new *Installments* in bathroom stalls each month. She also handles tasks under that job description catch-all phrase: "and other duties as assigned".

We helped arrange for two other students to conduct sustainability-related internships for the upcoming Spring semester.

Mariah Tobias '19 will oversee the *Wells College Seed Exchange*, which will open in mid-February. She will take responsibility for

organizing the seed exchange cabinet and promoting the exchange to the local community.



Crystal Pena '19 will work with Hallmark Dining staffers as a Sustainable Dining intern., doing research on sustainable food spending, and organizing *Weigh the Waste* educational events and other research and outreach intersections among her interests in sustainability, health, and nutrition.

Spring Sustain-a-Cell Competition

Professor Jackie Schnurr reached out to the Center for Sustainability as she was preparing lab activities for her spring semester delivery of *Biology of Organisms*. Jackie decided to reprise the *Sustain-a-Cell* lab exercise that Christina Schmidt had devised for her Fall semester class. In this exercise, students are tasked with creating animal or cell models made entirely of recycled or repurposed materials found on campus. The Center director provides info on where to find such materials and incents the best efforts with Dining Dollar prizes. The Grand Prize in this spring round was won by Emily Baker '19 for her exceptionally detailed model that inventively used folded Capri Sun juice pouches as endoplasmic reticuli and a used rubber lab glove to represent the Golgi Apparatus.



Round and Round We Go...

During Textbook Buyback in December, three cartons of used books were purchased for return to Nebraska Book Company. For the spring semester, Bookstore manager Rich Kloster estimates that 50-60% of the texts offered sport bright yellow USED stickers. Rich indicates he always tries to obtain used texts first, in an effort to make these classroom resources more affordable for our students.

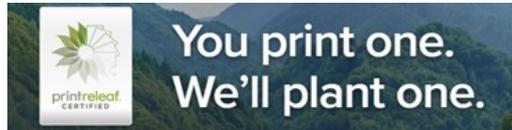


Replenishing in-room bins

Earlier this fall, we learned that a number of recycling bins purchased for all student rooms had gone missing. We purchased replacements for Res Life to distribute to make sure all rooms have these bins, especially as we move into *RecycleMania*. Res Life promises to include these bins in the room furnishings check-out process so if any go missing again, room occupants will be billed for replacements. We suppose that one way to think about this is that students found these recycling bins so useful, they took theirs with them into their new, more sustainable lives.



Tree Replanting Continues



As part of our ongoing relationship with Toshiba Print Management's *PrintReLeaf* program, the company commits to replanting trees equivalent to the number of pages we print or copy in our campus computer labs or networked print rooms. *Print ReLeaf* informed us that for the period from July—December, we printed over 225,000 pages. On our behalf, *PrintReleaf* supported the planting of 27 trees by the reforestation partner we selected, the Trees, *Water and People* project on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. An Oglala Lakota Native American Reservation, Pine Ridge encompasses 3,468.85 square miles, making it the eighth-largest reservation in the U.S.

Could you EPEAT that?

According to Dan Wentworth, director of Information Technology, during the latest round of technology renewal, the college leased 65 HP PCs and 10 HP laptops. All these units are certified to meet the EPEAT Silver standard. EPEAT, a program of the Green Electronics Council, is the leading global ecolabel for Information Technology products (computers, servers, monitors, etc.). EPEAT helps purchasers of all sizes reduce their environmental impact, because it looks at upstream (material choices) and downstream (end of life recyclability) impacts of the manufacture of computing equipment.



Hallmark supports compostables

At the Thanksgiving dinner provided for students not able to return home for that break, *Hallmark Dining* General Manager Mark Robinson offered compostable takeout containers for the worlds of leftovers from that terrific meal provided by volunteers. Mark also plans to phase in compostable serviceware and takeout containers in the *Well* this spring, which will greatly simplify waste separation in the campus pub. Everything will be either reusable or compostable. **YAY!!**



More water fill stations

We took advantage of a special early winter sale from our distributor on Elkay *EZH₂O* water bottle fill stations and water filter cartridges. We purchased another four fill stations for placement around campus—locations for these newest stations are still under consideration. When they are installed, that will bring us up to 12 units total, all dispensing chilled, additionally filtered drinking water. Each unit features an LED display of the number of disposable water bottles eliminated through the dispensing of water directly into reusable water containers.



A more sustainable view

A major part of the significant renovation of Sommer Center was replacing the arched windows opening into the Community Room. The brickwork was extended to accept longer windows, providing more natural light. These new *Pella Architect Reserve* units were designed to match the originals, but feature much higher energy-saving glazing, as measured by the *National Fenestration Rating Council*, whose CEO is Wells alumna Deb Callahan '85. Deb spoke about NFRC's energy efficiency rating work in our *Sustainability Perspectives* series last fall.



Express-ing our Sustainability commitment



We were delighted to note in the latest issue of the *Wells Express*, the inclusion of this statement about the sustainability of the publication's printing: "In keeping with the College's commitment to environmental sustainability, this magazine is printed at the QMC Group, an environmentally conscious facility run by 100% wind power, using paper from sustainably harvested tree farms. Through *PrintReleaf* there will be enough trees planted to offset the amount of trees harvested for this publication. Nearly all wood, paper, plastic and metal is recycled at the facility, and the company's new LED UV ink press uses only a fraction of the ink and chemicals compared to traditional lithography." Thanks, folks!



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The Center for Sustainability provided a Green Goodie Basket for the Aurora Masonic Lodge's Silent Auction held during

Christmas in Aurora. Proceeds of the Lodge's auction, totaling over \$1,100, benefited the Aurora Historical Society (AHS), whose Town Historian is Wells faculty emeritus Linda Schwab. In November, AHS mounted an exhibit titled "The Work of Our Hands: Heritage Skills Then and Now" showcasing the work of local small farms and artisan crafters, some of them Aurora Farmers Market vendors.

Center director Marian Brown has been asked to serve on the Advisory Council for the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE), the professional organization for collegiate sustainability professionals. The AC provides guidance on strategy as well as specific programs and services. Marian will serve on the Technical Committee overseeing modifications to the Operations category of AASHE STARS, the system we use to evaluate our campus sustainability progress.

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

Spring Sustainability Events, continued from page 1

April 1 **"God's in his heaven— All's right with the world": The power of story in communicating climate change**



Fae Dremock, asst professor, Department of Environmental Studies and Sciences, Ithaca College
 What's happening to the ecosystem as a result of global climate change is terrifying. We will take a look at the power of story as a tool to undermine science— and as a tool to fight back.

The **Sustainable Business** speaker series is a collaboration between the Center for Sustainability and the Sullivan Center for Business and Entrepreneurship. Three series talks have been scheduled; all will be at 7pm in the deWitt Lecture Room, Zabriskie Hall Room 106 on the date noted.

April 8 **Alive or Undead? Wild Food Foraging and the Fear of a Zombie Apocalypse**



Taylor Reid, assistant professor of Applied Food Studies, Culinary Inst of America
 This talk will explore the links between two recent phenomena: the popularity of the zombie genre, and surging interest in wild food foraging.

March 21 **What Businesses Can Do to Reduce Their Climate Change Impacts**



Mark Buckley, One Boat Collaborative
 This former VP for Environmental Affairs for Staples Inc., will speak about his work helping businesses and organizations "operationalize" their energy and carbon commitments within their operations.

April 15 **Veganism is Environmentalism**

Demosthenes Maratos, Communications Director, Sustainability Institute, Molloy College



This presentation will demonstrate how adopting a vegan diet and ethical framework can have far-reaching implications for all life on Earth.

March 27 **Integrating Sustainability into Small Medium Sized Businesses in NYS**



Hormoz Movassaghi and Narges Kasiri, faculty, School of Business, Ithaca College
 This duo will share results of their survey of over 650 businesses about motivations to integrate sustainability and challenges.

April 22 **The Promise of Silvopasture**

Steve Gabriel, farmer, extension specialist, Cornell Small Farms Program
 The agroforestry practice of silvopasture combines trees, animals, and foraging in a symbiotic and dynamic ecosystem.

April 17 **Sustainable Wine Making in the Finger Lakes: Challenges and Opportunities**



Peter FitzRandolph, Finger Lakes Sustainable Strategies
 This talk will review the importance and relevance of the concepts of sustainability and the Triple Bottom Line in the state wine industry. A free biodynamic wine tasting will be offered for those over age 21.

Hosting Community Learning Events

On November 28, the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network hosted a Public Information Meeting in the Center for Sustainability classroom to learn about progress to treat the highly invasive aquatic plant *Hydrilla*, a large infestation of which was found in Cayuga Lake just south of the Wells College dock in Fall 2016. (Ironically, this problem was noted when the Wells Campus Greens student club members were aboard the Discover Cayuga Lake Floating Classroom vessel for a "bonding activity"; they were learning about doing "rake tosses" to collect aquatic samples when they pulled aboard some *Hydrilla* plants from a 30-acre stand of this fast-spreading invasive plant). Dr. Niamh O'Leary from our Environmental Science program worked with Watershed Network Steward Hilary Lambert (whose office is in Stratton Hall) to coordinate this event, which featured speakers from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Finger Lakes Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISM), Finger Lakes Institute, Racine-Johnson Associates (which does verification of samples and conducts testing in the south end of Cayuga Lake), and the *Hydrilla* Hunters volunteer network. Over thirty members from communities around Cayuga Lake attended. Mike Greer with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (in photo) has been leading the treatment effort in Aurora for the past two seasons. He reported that in 2016, there was a 57% frequency of *Hydrilla* being present when aquatic plant samples were pulled out of the lake. By this fall, after two rounds of herbicide treatments, *Hydrilla* was found with only 1.3% frequency, a dramatic drop. *Hydrilla* is a particularly difficult invasive plant to completely eradicate because of the many ways in which it can propagate, but the results show that the local herbicide treatments are having a significant impact on the infestation.



Cayuga County Administrator Justin Woods presented our closing Sustainability Perspectives series talk of the Fall semester. He delivered an intriguing presentation on how we might employ pluralist commonwealth principles to rethink economic development in our county.