

Official College Color: Green Campuses Stepping Up Efforts in Sustainability

Washington's independent colleges and universities share a mission-driven commitment to be good stewards of the environment. Programs in environmental science are growing in popularity among students. But "sustainability" crosses academic and administrative boundaries to become truly interdisciplinary as colleges embrace the concept throughout their curricula, recognizing the power of integrating economic, social, and ecological systems. Students graduate from these rigorous liberal arts colleges with a penchant for leadership and the skills and creativity to solve problems, including those facing the environment. Colleges strive to practice what they teach, too, seeking to mitigate the environmental impact they have on their communities and be leaders on sustainability questions.

Winning Awards to Go Green

Independent colleges are taking on the challenge of environmental sustainability with vigor. **Seattle University** was recently named the greenest college in the state by *Washington CEO*, for which it garnered a "Green Award," the first given to an educational institution in the state.



University of Puget Sound students conduct research on Commencement Bay

"We're a Jesuit institution and ecological justice is part of the Jesuit heritage and mission," said Tim Leary, SU senior vice president. "Seattle University is a great place to be ecologically minded and focused on sustainability."

Seattle University received the honor for a variety of innovative practices, including caring for its 48-acre campus without the use of pesticides, and for custom building a compost facility for food waste, already composting 17 tons of food waste. The sand-based athletic fields switched from synthetic fertilizer to an application that includes compost tea and organic fertilizer. This produced a healthier turf and reduced water usage by 26 percent in the first year.

Additional innovative green practices at SU include the purchase and use of new renewable wind energy, and the installation of high efficiency

showerheads and faucet aerators in residence halls and academic buildings.

University of Puget Sound has also been recognized for its contributions to the arena of sustainable living. Citizens for a Healthy Bay, a group whose mission is to engage the community to clean-up, restore, and protect Commencement Bay's waters and surrounding habitat, has presented the university with an award for Excellence in Environmental Education, citing the university's dedication in providing excellent environmental education programs for the next generation.

"Environmental education is extremely important here at Puget Sound, both inside and outside the classroom. The development of sustainable practices and the commit-

ment to improve the health of our community is more than just a list of prescribed practices or operational changes - it is a way of critically thinking about our role in the world and preparing our students for leadership in solving environmental challenges," President Ron Thomas said.

It's not only entire institutions receiving awards for environmental work. Dedicated professors are a hallmark of independent higher education and Assistant Professor of Environmental Policy and Decision Making at University of Puget Sound Dan Sherman is one that inspires students to engage with questions of sustainable living in creative ways. Sherman is the recipient of the first Green Tacoma Partnership Recognition Award. Green Tacoma is a coalition of city and private groups working to develop a restoration and management plan for natural areas in Tacoma.

The Tacoma Chamber of Commerce recognized **Pacific Lutheran University's** commitment to sustainability with the 2008 Tahoma Business Environmental Award.

The annual award recognizes an entrepreneurial effort that meets a high standard of excellence for environmental preservation and protection.



The LEED Gold certified Morken Center for Learning and Technology at PLU

Building Green

Facilities are a major part of the green philosophy at **Pacific Lutheran University**. The Morken Center for Learning and Technology is a LEED Gold certified building, and the recently renovated University Center is certified LEED Silver. The Martin J. Neeb Center, the new home for KPLU radio, which is now under construction, will be Gold certified. Additionally, the campus master planning documents set lofty goals for PLU to be carbon neutral by 2020, and reduce energy and water use by at least 20 percent by 2011.

Gonzaga University opens a major new green facility this year: the 29,000-square-foot PACCAR Center for Applied Science. A key to the design of the structure is “daylighting,” an approach managing daylight throughout the building. The PACCAR Center, expected to receive a



The New PACCAR Center for Applied Science at Gonzaga

LEED Silver certification, will house sophisticated technological laboratories dedicated to robotics, artificial vision, and transmission and distribution engineering, as well as classrooms and offices. The Center will feature solar shading devices, which help control heat in the building, and CO2 sensors to control ventilation rates in occupied spaces.

Heritage University will dedicate the first new classroom building in its 25-year history this fall. The 35,000 square foot science and technology building will house classrooms, a nursing lab, technology and distance learning services, faculty and staff offices, a student lounge, and a large public meeting area.

Heritage built the facility with low-emittance windows throughout, which help control heat energy, used brick veneer – not wood – and metal roofing, both of which last longer and help heating and cooling. A four-pipe closed-loop system allows them to use the same water to heat and cool the building. Rob Carroll, director of facilities at Heritage, said the system was expensive to build, but they expect to make that back in energy savings in eight years.

The wood used in the building is some of the most sustainable around. Much of the paneling is bamboo, while the doors, door frames, and some molding is Lyptus, a salmon-colored wood that is a hybrid of two species of eucalyptus. Like bamboo, Lyptus is highly renewable; a tree can grow to usable size in just five years.

At **Walla Walla University** they’re looking at some sustainable technologies to solve two problems. The university’s indoor swimming pool puts out so much humidity that it’s starting to cause structural damage to the building in which it sits. In addition, the pool is heated by a 1964 system that uses natural gas to heat steam, which is then piped about a quarter of a mile to the pool. This isn’t very efficient.

Chelsea Patten, a senior communications major with a strong interest in environment and developing grant-writing skills, is working with Jon Cole, chair of the university’s growing environmental science program, on an elegant solution. They’re seeking funding for an energy-efficient system that will include a dehumidifier for the swimming pool air, a heat exchanger to channel the captured energy back into heating the pool, and roof solar panels to supply primary energy.

Patten is also a proactive force behind the campus recycling efforts, helping the university lead by example. “When others see that they can make a difference, maybe they too will do something,” she said. “As a university in a small town, we have significant impact on the community.”

This fall five **University of Puget Sound** students moved into a new campus home that also will serve as a learning center for the community. Following completion of its first “green” building, the LEED Silver certified science laboratory facility Harned Hall, the university is looking at how environmentally friendly and sustainable building practices work in a residential environment.

The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System is a suite of standards for environmentally sustainable construction. For more information visit the U.S. Green Building Council at <http://www.usgbc.org/>

Putting Sustainability into Practice

Whitman College students have responded to the growing concern about the environment with direct action. Whitman students voted for the Renewable Energy Initiative, which requested the Board of Trustees to increase semester tuition by \$5 beyond its normal level beginning in the 2006-2007 school year with the sole purpose of purchasing renewable energy through the Blue Sky Program, which uses only renewable power sources, like wind energy. This initiative is still in place and growing through other student initiatives including fundraising and incorporating environmental responsibility into new student orientation.

Next up for Whitman's green energy minded students? This year, they are providing matching funds for a \$140,000 grant to install solar panels on the roof of the science building and a residence hall.

For more information visit <http://www.Whitman.edu/content/news/greenpower>

The Facility and Project Management Department at **Seattle Pacific University** are helping the environment as well as their bottom line by trying to introduce more electric-powered vehicles into the university's fleet.

"In five years, we will try to move 50 percent of the fleet to electric," said Dave Church, assistant vice president of facilities management. About \$23,000 was spent on gasoline for vehicles in the 2006-2007 school year. Electric vehicles are much cheaper by contrast. It only costs about \$200 a year to run power to an electric truck.

At SPU they are finding that good environmental policy translates to good economic policy. "The whole idea is to produce a long-term, solid solution," Church said. "If we are using a finite resource to sustain ourselves, that is not good... and not good for the environment."



The mascot of the Whitworth Sustainability Challenge: The Green Pirate

To help educate and motivate students, faculty, and staff, **Whitworth University** held its first Sustainability Challenge in April. Over three weeks teams of two earned points by engaging in a variety of activities that benefited the environment. Competitors won points by using cloth shopping bags, drying their laundry on a line, turning off the lights when they left the house, and by spending time educating themselves about environmental issues. For their efforts contestants won prizes like free bike tune ups, book store gift certificates, and organic foods.

"For Whitworth, sustainability is a way of life, and the Sustainability Challenge hopes to inspire the Whitworth community to look at their actions and make some positive changes," says Assistant

Director of Housing (and member of the Sustainability Committee) Alan Jacob.

For more information visit: www.Whitworth.edu/sustainability.

Saint Martin's University made its campus more environmentally friendly this year by adopting a composting program on its main campus. The program places specially marked FoodPlus containers next to the regular trash receptacles in SMU's St. Gertrude Dining Hall. Diners can separate their compostable trash, into the FoodPlus containers, which will be transported to a state-of-the-art commercial composting facility near Rainier.

"Being able to turn these materials into a usable product is very exciting," said Susan Leyster, director of campus ministry. "The objectives of this recycling program — being responsible with our resources and taking care of the earth — align with many of the Benedictine values we embrace at Saint Martin's."

This is not the first step that Saint Martin's has taken in the dining hall. The University has been using biodegradable food service items for quite some time, including potato-based utensils known as 'spudware' and corn-based cups, lids and straws.

With innovative practices such as these independent colleges like Saint Martin's will continue to be on the forefront of technological advances in sustainability.



Much of Whitman's power through the Blue Sky program comes through wind turbines. Whitman recently increased the amount of wind energy it buys from 180,000 to 2,202,000 kilowatts per month



Puget Sound Energy Supports Green Student Research

Puget Sound Energy (PSE) has recently renewed its support for ICW's Energy Efficiency Research Program, committing \$10,000 annually for the next three years to support student research in energy efficiency.

"PSE is dedicated to supporting the development of future energy-saving technologies, applications and education," said Cal Shirley, vice president of Energy Efficiency Services for PSE. "We find that one of the best places to provide that support is through energy education. This is vital to helping us meet our energy efficiency goals and to protecting the environment." The students receive valuable real-world research experience.

The PSE grant is awarded through a competitive bid process to students from Western Washington independent colleges in PSE's service area. Last year the grant supported research into environmentally controlled LED lighting by a team of students from Seattle Pacific University. The "Helios Team" impressed PSE staff when they presented their research findings to the utility in July.

"Research projects like these could ultimately turn out to be the think tank that patents the next lifestyle-changing technology for our customers," added Shirley.

PSE has been a consistent and reliable supporter of students, having contributed more than \$600,000 to ICW over the last 48 years.

Eaton is Chair of ICW Board of Directors

Philip W. Eaton, president of Seattle Pacific University, became chair of the ICW Board of Directors in July. The all-volunteer board consists of the presidents of the 10 member colleges, and 25 business and community leaders from around the state.

ICW also welcomes Anne Cassidy, our new director of development. You can reach Cassidy at 206-623-4494 or Anne@ICWashington.org to find out about named scholarships and other donor benefits. You can also give on-line at <http://www.ICWashington.org/donors/donate.htm>.

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