

GIFTS AT WORK

A Positive Environment Sustainability Keeps the College Vital

When William and Mary students care about an issue, they put their heads together — and their wallets. And they get right to work.

A case in point is the College's initiative, launched in 2008, to address environmental sustainability on campus. The challenge — ensuring that a 316-year-old college can create a self-perpetuating model of sustainable learning. The problem — how to pay for it.

Realizing the importance of such a project, students overwhelmingly volunteered in spring 2008 to pay an annual \$30 Green Fee to support sustainability projects and research, and to create a "Green Endowment."

The Green Fee raises more than \$200,000 per year toward student research grants, facility improvements and building the endowment. The fee also provides several summer research grants that support students' close collaboration with faculty in research applied to sustainability on campus.

During Convocation in fall 2008, President W. Taylor Reveley III lauded students for approving the Green Fee and affirmed the College's commitment to sustainability.

"My hope — and my expectation — is that William and Mary will quickly become a model for other schools, showing that real progress can be made on sustainability even by colleges and universities that are not awash in income," Reveley said.

Student sustainability projects may involve research or studies that provide new and useful information that will aid decision-making in the future. Of particular interest are proposals that require seed money or start-up costs leading to larger efforts involving extramural funding. Also important are proposals for equipment or projects that retrofit or renovate existing facilities to improve energy efficiency, landscape management practices or operational transformations.

Even before the Green Fee was announced, the College had been taking steps to ensure sustainability. That included making sure that LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Certification became the standard for campus construction in new buildings like the Jamestown residence halls and Alan B. Miller Hall, and in renovated buildings like the Recreation Center.

In Morton, Jones, McGlothlin-Street and James Blair halls, energy use was closely monitored and improved with new lamps, ballasts and occupancy sensors. College Housekeeping likewise installed metering stations that measure set amounts of cleaning products, including new green cleaning products.

Perhaps the best aspect of the program is that it involves students, faculty and staff.

For example, Professor of Physics Keith Griffioen and students placed solar cells on Small Hall's roof. Another project involved

HVAC replacement in Tyler Hall, which will improve energy efficiency. Yet another supported a student-faculty study replacing disposable take-out containers with permanent, reusable containers.

Summer Research Grants are open to the College's undergraduates and graduate and professional students. Four awards are made in amounts up to \$5,000 each. [See sidebar next page.]

The Green Fee is helping fund this modest number of projects, but more private support is needed to fund additional exciting ideas and proposals. That's why all donations to sustainability — large and small — are important.

As are the repercussions beyond campus. Upon graduation, students will take their work elsewhere, allowing communities to be more efficient, create less waste, and, ultimately, save money — lots of it.

"This is a unique and very challenging opportunity for the College to transform itself in order to meet the challenges and demands of a sustainable future in ways that educate as well as adapt," says Dennis Taylor, professor of biological sciences at the Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences and co-chair of the Committee on Sustainability.

That's because, when it comes to sustainability at William and Mary, green is gold.

— David F. Morrill M.A. '87



Left: Students work on an ongoing biofuel project at the College's Keck Environmental Field Laboratory. Above: President W. Taylor Reveley III announces a coordinated sustainability effort during Opening Convocation ceremonies on Aug. 29, 2008.

Committee on Sustainability Guides College's Green Effort

With the commitment of William and Mary students to initiate and financially support the student Green Fee, the need for a structure to help identify and fund projects, explore further fundraising opportunities and establish a long-term direction for sustainability at the College was necessary.

The Committee on Sustainability (COS), led by co-chairs Interim Dean of the Law School and Chancellor Professor Lynda Butler and Virginia Institute of Marine Science Professor Dennis Taylor, seeks to do just that by involving faculty, students and administrators.

"The COS is a new structure designed to leverage the strengths of the College in a way that is consistent with its teaching, research and service missions," Butler says. "It is the president's structure, and involves a network of people set up to encourage the flow of ideas vertically and horizontally, and to get ideas and actions moving quickly."

The goal of the sustainability committee is to develop and recommend a program "that is based on sound principles of environmental science and policy in a way that leverages the intellectual capital and actively promotes the educational mission of the College."

The organizational structure of COS is "designed to create an interactive management process that links science and policy-based working groups with operations and finance working groups and with partici-



Susie Gilligan, central copy manager, loads recycled paper into a copy machine in the office of procurement. In collaboration between the office of procurement and the Committee on Sustainability, the College recently made the switch to using recycled paper, a move that reduces the College's carbon footprint by approximately 90 tons of carbon dioxide emissions annually.

pants from the academic programs, student body and staff. By bringing the full complement of the university's intellectual strengths to bear the question of how to best achieve sustainability, the College can develop a campus sustainability program that truly integrates teaching, research and service into the fabric of the program, creating a self-perpetuating model of sustainable learning."

— John T. Wallace

Supporting the Irreplaceable

There is no shortage of great ideas when it comes to implementing sustainable practices at William and Mary. Thanks to the Green Fee that students initiated, several projects have been launched to put into practice the many aims that the Committee on Sustainability (COS) has identified for the College.

The Committee on Sustainability [see sidebar above] administers the fee that supports these projects, which pair students with faculty or staff. Projects currently underway include:

- The Eco Ambassadors Program — A pilot program to enlist and educate student and staff volunteers (Eco-Ambassadors) to work cooperatively in teams of two to initiate and promote sustainability efforts in units, department and divisions across the College.

- The Green Roof Feasibility Study — A study evaluating green roof design and maintenance characteristics. The project will allow projections of cost and continuing maintenance requirements needed to evaluate feasibility.

- The Reusable Takeout Container Pilot Study — A pilot study with the residents of Eco-House replaces disposable take-out containers with permanent, re-usable containers.

- The Waste Receptacle Pilot Study — A single dormitory study to ensure that students are provided with both waste and recycling containers in dorm rooms. The pilot study will also explore whether this action increases recycling and decreases misuse.

In addition, the COS has approved several proposals for Green Fee Summer Research Grants. The projects include a campus recycling program, GIS mapping and inventory of campus ecological elements, and a sustainable food procurement program. Each grant provides \$3,500 and an additional \$1,500 if housing is required.

"This first competition for proposals gave us several strong options to pursue," says Dennis Taylor, co-chair of COS and professor of marine science at the Virginia Institute of Marine Sci-

ence. Although this summer's recipients of the research grants are all undergraduate students, the committee hopes to grow the applicant pool in the future to include students from all academic units. "We need the creativity that comes from the different disciplines and perspectives of all our students," Taylor says.

— John T. Wallace



The Solar Cells On the Roof of Small (SCORS) committee, a part of the William and Mary Society of Physics Students, is devoted to the creation of a solar power facility on the roof of Small Hall. The group has designed and is constructing a solar cell testing station with funds from COS to measure the electrical performance of different solar cell technologies.

TOP PHOTO: COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY RELATIONS; BOTTOM PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE SCORS COMMITTEE