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A Letter from the Sustainability Council Chair

Greetings! We at the Sustainability Council are very excited to share the news that DU has been awarded an **A-** on the College Sustainability Report Card, the first organization to provide an independent evaluation of sustainability activities at colleges and universities in the U.S. and Canada. In earning this grade, DU is recognized as an "Overall College Sustainability Leader." Congratulations to all who have contributed to sustainability efforts on campus!

This winter, a major activity of the DU Sustainability Council is hosting the Rocky Mountain Sustainability Summit (RMSS), February 17-18. The conference will focus on regional sustainability priorities. Students, faculty, and staff at higher education institutions, as well as business people, non-profit workers, and government employees throughout the Rocky Mountain region are invited to attend. We welcome and encourage participation from the DU community! Please see the RMSS website to register: <http://www.du.edu/green/rmss>.

Finally, DU has introduced the option to issue electronic W-2s for all employees. The deadline for opting in to receive your W-2 statement electronically is **Friday, January 14**. Please see page 4 of this newsletter for the complete story.

All members of the DU community are welcome to participate in our meetings; I encourage you to join us and contribute your expertise in whatever aspect of sustainability most interests you.

Sincerely,

Rebecca L. Powell
Chair, Sustainability Council
Assistant Professor, Department of Geography

From Words to Actions: What You Can Do

The Sustainability Council is asked two questions more than any others: what are we doing to promote sustainability on campus, and what can you do to help? It is our hope that this newsletter will help keep you informed about all of the incredible strides the Council is making around campus. We also invite you to learn more about our work by visiting www.du.edu/green; becoming our fan on Facebook (www.facebook.com/DUGreen); and following us on Twitter (@SustainDU).

As far as what our partners across campus can do to help, and in the spirit of the Rocky Mountain Sustainability Summit, we would like to take this opportunity to discuss some of the ways you can inspire action around sustainability priorities right here on campus.

(1) Start with yourself. The easiest way to begin thinking about sustainability is to scrutinize your own habits around the office. For example, you might try printing fewer emails and documents, keeping electronic files instead of hard copies, and/or opting to utilize public transportation more frequently. At work and at home, you can make a conscious effort to work with vendors who employ environmentally sound and socially just business practices.

(2) Expand to your department. Try speaking with the people in your office responsible for purchasing office supplies, and encourage them to look for recycled options. You might also establish a reusable paper bin for your office's internal printing needs (note, intercampus flyers make for great reusable paper stock!). Finally, you can work with your IT representatives to ensure that all computer equipment is responsibly disposed of.

(3) Stay informed about campus initiatives. The Sustainability Council knows well the power of numbers, and while our organization has many dedicated participants, we must rely on the entire DU staff to truly be successful. We hope you will consider passing this newsletter around to your colleagues and that you might encourage them to join our listserv as well (which is easily done – simply send a blank email to green-list-subscribe@du.edu). We would also welcome your attendance at any upcoming Sustainability Council meeting (see calendar on last page for dates and times).

We truly thank you for your interest in sustainability, both right here at DU and in the world beyond our campus. Creating an organization that practices and promotes environmental and social sustainability is a team effort, and we deeply value your support and participation!

DU Hosting Rocky Mountain Sustainability Summit

By Chase Squires



The University of Denver will be the center of sustainability efforts in the Rocky Mountain region for a couple of days in February. For the first time, the Rocky Mountain Sustainability Summit will be held on the DU campus, Feb. 17-18.

The summit will welcome more than 200 students, faculty and staff from DU and other Rocky Mountain universities, as well as innovators in sustainability, vendors and non profit organizations. "The theme is inspiring action around regional sustainability priorities," says co-organizer Jon Bortles, a graduate student at the Daniels College of Business. "The idea is to keep it regional, so you won't see speakers from California, the

whole idea is to focus on what's going on here. That's what makes this event special."

For years, the event has been held at the University of Colorado. But when Bortles learned CU was unable to continue in 2011, he asked the DU Sustainability Council to get behind a bid to host it in Denver. Scheduled speakers at the event include Doug Fine, an environmental journalist and author of *Farewell, My Subaru*; Auden Schendler, vice president of sustainability for the Aspen Skiing Company; Hillary Mizia, a leader in corporate sustainability solutions; and Dave Newport, director of CU's Environmental Center and an innovator in governmental sustainabil-

ity. Other speakers will involve attendees in discussions about social and environmental justice; green building; sustainable food purchases; transportation sustainability; curriculum development and more.

Major sponsors already on board include Chipotle, New Belgium Brewing, NeverStrip Floor Coatings, and SimpleSolar systems. Also, NextEra Energy Resources is providing renewable energy credits to offset carbon emissions connected to the event to ensure that it's carbon neutral.

For a full schedule of events and registration information, including information on student registration discounts go to www.du.edu/green/rmss.



Pioneers Earn A- on College Sustainability Report Card

The College Sustainability Report Card 2011 has been released, and we are thrilled to share that the University of Denver received an A- for our work to address campus sustainability.

GreenReportCard.org released its report on October 27th, after evaluating 322 colleges and universities, representing all 50 U.S. states and eight Canadian provinces. The participating organizations were assessed in nine categories, including administration, climate change & energy, food & recycling, green building, student involvement, transportation, endowment transparency, investment priorities, and shareholder engagement.

DU received top marks (an "A") for climate change & energy, food & recycling, green building, and investment priorities. With respect to these areas, the report notes that we have successfully reduced greenhouse gas emissions 5 percent from 2006 levels, our two main dining halls compost pre- and postconsumer food waste, the campus boasts two buildings which are LEED certified and six which meet LEED criteria, and that endowment funds are managed by investors who consider environmental and sustainability factors.

The University also received high marks (a "B") for our administration, student involvement, transportation, and endowment transparency. The report comments on the administration's commitment to energy reduction and green building as well as the student Environmental Team's successful efforts to reduce waste, increase the availability of local and organic foods, and the Team's execution of a major Earth Day celebration. It also commends DU for making free or heavily discounted local transit available for DU employees and students, as well as for making a list of all of the University's holdings available online to members of the school community.

Because DU's entire endowment is invested in mutual funds or other commingled investment vehicles, we are unable to vote proxies. Therefore, the University was not rated in the shareholder engagement category.

We invite you to review the entire report card online at <http://www.greenreportcard.org/report-card-2011/schools/university-of-denver>. Here you can review all of the survey data which led to these high marks, as well as compare our efforts to other colleges and universities throughout North America. In the meantime, please join us in congratulating the University of Denver on this great achievement!

AASHE Conference 2010: Student Perspective

By Daniel Powell

I am a first year student here at Denver. I think that I would consider myself fairly environmentally aware. I mean, I hardly ever, if ever, drive other than to a light-rail station. I despise single-serve bottled water. I don't eat meat. I have a window garden. I'm excited electric cars are being reborn, and I am bummed that we, the United States, not only have worse car emissions standards than China but also that we subsidize energy from gas and coal much more heavily than we do renewable energy like wind and solar. I probably spend far too much time watching documentaries and reading books: I should be out doing more.

On October 10, 2010 (10.10.10 Day), I attended the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) conference on Campus Initiatives to Catalyze a Just and Sustainable World, which happened to be in Denver this year, celebrating the nation's largest city park system, Denver's 300 days of sunshine, and an abundant list of city initiatives governor-elect John Hickenlooper led to "green" Denver. Being from the metro area, I take things like a city park at Echo Lake; snow, shine and rain all on the same day; and a mayor who launched an initiative to plant a million trees within 20 years somewhat for granted: I forget these commonplaces here are in fact rather rare and ultimately rather majestic; however, the conference, and the life it taught me is something that I will not soon overlook.

The morning of the 10th was ironically gloomy. After stepping outside for a moment, I turned around, went back inside, and threw on the raincoat my grandpa had once worn in the rainy Michigan fields. As I approached Buchtel on High St, I saw a southbound light rail pulling away: I would have to wait at least 10 minutes. "I should have walked just a bit faster," I thought to myself. Nearly half an hour passed—finally I was down at the convention center.

I'd only been inside once, a long time ago. I looked up and started to remember the huge, vaulted ceiling and the overlooking balcony. Oh yeah. The amnesia of time was clearing; déjà vu was setting in. I saw a

check-in sign and walked down a staircase. After quickly navigating the velvet rope queue, getting my seed-paper nametag and stealing a cardboard pen (which was just too neat to pass by, especially after seeing a mound of them in the corner), I ducked into a room of 500 students and looked ahead to the Student Summit Keynote who had already started.

Gretchen Bleiler was her name. Blonde. 5' 5". Though she has a laundry list of medals and contest wins in female snowboarding, including a silver medal in Torino, today she would be speaking about getting her industry to go green. Having long been one of StopGlobal-Warming.org's celebrity faces, the ideas of climate change and impending green shift are often on her mind, especially after having dealt first-hand with the uncharacteristically warm Torino temperatures that reaped havoc on the half-pipe last year. Though her speech was not what I was anticipating as it tip-toed the fine line of sales and academics, she spoke of her personal strides not accepting the typical unsustainable practices of winter clothing lines. She has led the way, in partnership with her sponsors, to a heavy incorporation of recycled materials and other more sustainable options, saving a significant amount of carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions. Aside from being overwhelmingly marketable, this will surely move the snowboarding industry towards sustainability and open the door to a sustainability race in the future to attract the business of customers who are growing ever more aware of their own footprints. Her big initiatives again left me to consider how consumeristic the green movement often is, which seems more bad than good to me, personally—though it's hard to argue with the results business so readily brings.

From the student keynote, I headed onto student breakout sessions, the first of which was essentially a panel on Waste Management of Campus. These people knew their stuff. They walked through the struggles and simple-minded solutions they had developed to underscore waste through the "free store" at Bemidji State

University in Minnesota, Yale University's Spring Salvage event, and composting at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania and trotted through a few numbers in the process. This is more what I expected conference life to be like: slightly bland and boring, but teeming with knowledgeable and inspirational people—though I found it funny one presenter advised students to go to the sustainability office that presumably every serious college has by now to support programs you want to see come to fruition. As of now, the University of Denver does not have such an office.

Going to AASHE really was a learning process for me. It was the first legitimate conference that I have personally attended. I would say that I've now adapted to the not-so-steep learning curve that involves conference life and built a framework of what to expect, including things that will be helpful as I look forward to volunteering at the Rocky Mountain Sustainability Summit on campus in February. The conference, more importantly, reminded me that the movement towards sustainability is anything but few in number and without meaning. Oftentimes, doing research and learning about issues can get a little lonely. A lot of anything I do happens late at night—alone—in a dark room in front of a computer's glow, and ideas often fall apart when it seems like a mountain of problems are in the foreground. When I fall back to the depressing, pessimistic, statistical viewing of DU as a smaller private school in a world where climate talks ultimately fail against what they need to accomplish in Kyoto and Copenhagen and Cancun: real action now. Really, it showed, I am one of many, many people in an international movement doing his part to move on towards tomorrow, walking with a recovered mother nature rather than needing to revive her (or more likely our species).

Introducing Electronic W-2s for DU Employees

Attention DU staff and faculty! January 14th is the deadline to opt in to receive your W-2 wage statement electronically. The Sustainability Council would like to join the Payroll Office in encouraging everyone to please consider enrolling in this great option. The availability of electronic W-2 statements marks a dramatic step in DU's efforts to become a more sustainable campus.

Last year alone, the University sent out 7,648 W-2 forms, which requires a tremendous amount of paper, ink, postage, and fuel. In addition to contributing to DU's sustainability efforts, you can also access your W-2 sooner, eliminate the chances of your form being lost or misplaced, and be confident that your information is protected via the same secured web site where you access your paycheck and direct deposit information.

The IRS requires employees to give their initial consent to receive the W-2 statement in an electronic format; however, once consent is provided, it will carry forward for subsequent years and does not need to be repeated. If you have not already opted in to receive your electronic W-2, please log on to <http://www.WebCentral.du.edu> before January 14th and follow these steps:

- Select Employee tab
- Select Tax Forms from the Employee Information section
- Select the Electronic W-2 Consent option
- Check the Consent to Receive W-2 Electronically box
- Click on the Submit button

You will not receive a confirmation that your selection has been received. To confirm your consent you may go back to the Electronic W-2 Consent to see that the checkmark is in the box.

Thank you for considering enrolling in this innovative option, and please spread the word to staff, faculty, and student employees in your area.

**DUING
SOMETHING**

SUSTAINABILITY COUNCIL



Council's Corner

2011 promises to be an exciting year for the Sustainability Council. DU had a remarkable presence at the 2010 AASHE conference in October, sponsoring 75 students as well as a large contingent of staff/faculty attendees, hosting tours of our beautiful campus for nearly 60 guests, and boasting more than a dozen presenters/panelists. We came back from the conference with a wealth of new knowledge and information that we are eager to integrate into our own priorities.

Many of these ideas relate to the successful execution of a major regional sustainability event. The planning committee for the Rocky Mountain Sustainability Summit is hard at work finalizing all of the details surrounding the February event. This is a tremendous undertaking for the Council, and the RMSS is sure to put the University of Denver on the map as a leader in the movement to address sustainability in the Rocky Mountain region.

While many of the Council's subcommittees are aiding with RMSS plans in these final weeks, they also have a laundry list of goals for the remainder of the school year. Included on that list are reinventing

and implementing a campus-wide furniture sharing program for University-owned furniture items; increasing our visibility across campus and within the greater sustainability community; integrating solar power into campus building projects; expanding alternative transportation options (including clearly marked bicycle routes); ramping up recycling/composting programs; and completing a comprehensive sustainability report via AASHE's Sustainability Tracking Assessment & Rating System ("STARS"). Certainly this will be a challenging and rewarding year for our group.

As always, we eagerly welcome all helping hands to join in our mission. The Sustainability Council is comprised of several subcommittees, each of which offers different ways for you to make a meaningful contribution. Please join us at a Council meeting to see all of the various ways you can get involved; or, if your schedule does not allow you to attend a meeting, please feel free to contact Council Chair, Becky Powell, or Vice Chair, Tiffany Hutchings, for more information. Upcoming events and contact information are available on the last page of this newsletter.

Stay in Touch!

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Upcoming Events



Sustainability Council Meetings (All are welcome!)

February 8th, and March 8th from 8:30 a.m. — 10:00 a.m.

DuPont Room, Mary Reed Building (February and March)

<http://du.edu/green>

Recycle Mania

February 6th—April 2nd

University of Denver Campus

<http://www.recyclemania.org/>

The Road Ahead 2011

March 14th from 8:00—10:30 a.m.

JW Marriott Denver Cherry Creek

<http://theroadahead2011.eventbrite.com/>

Rocky Mountain Sustainability Summit

February 17th—February 18th

University of Denver Campus

<http://www.du.edu/green/rmss>

Earth Month (multiple events)

April 1st—April 30th

University of Denver Campus

Please check <http://du.edu/green> for the most up-to-date information about upcoming meetings and events.

Contact Us:



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