

JMU Announces 2009-2010 Environmental Stewardship Highlights



OVERVIEW

JMU formally adopted environmental stewardship as a characteristic that defines its community: "The university

will be an environmentally literate community whose members think critically and act, individually and collectively, as model stewards of the natural world." The campus goals for environmental stewardship are minimizing materials impact, emissions, toxins, solid waste, and consumption; conserving, stewarding, and restoring natural systems; and, advancing environmental literacy and engagement through research, education, and community programs.

A Campus Energy Assessment, Climate Action Report, and draft Environmental Stewardship Action Plan were developed. The Climate Action Report was submitted to the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment organization. Environmental policies were adopted for procurement, construction, water use, bottled water, travel, and energy.

JMU received the Governor's Environmental Excellence Gold Award and was named in the Princeton Review's "Guide to 286 Green Colleges". From the Continuing Students Survey, 77% of students have perceived JMU as either a "leader" or "improved in its commitment" to environmental issues. 78% of the students reported that thoughts on environmental issues had at least led them to make some change in lifestyle.

Examples of specific programs and their estimated environmental benefits follow.

ENERGY CONSERVATION

- The sustainable construction policy is estimated to save more than 1,100 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO₂E) annually. JMU's East Campus Dining Hall received Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) gold-level certification. The Wayland Residence Hall renovation, which includes JMU's first geothermal use, is also targeting platinum-level certification. Three dining facilities have received Virginia Green restaurant certifications.

- Building Dashboards, which provide instant on-line water and energy use data, have been installed in 15 buildings. Up to a 10% reduction in electricity and water use in these facilities is projected. A grant-funded study of the impact of the systems is ongoing.

- JMU has increased from 5% to 20% biodiesel-blended fuel for vehicles.

WASTE REDUCTION

- Recycling training was implemented, football and basketball waste reduction programs expanded, and industrial-scale shredding replaced burning of most confidential materials. JMU's recycling rate increased from 30% three years ago to 34%.

- JMU is composting food waste from its largest dining hall with an agreement to expand to most dining facilities on campus. This is anticipated to save approximately 1,800 MTCO₂E annually.



The Arboretum Collaborative Fellows conduct fieldwork in Spring Semester 2010.



Architectural rendering of the exterior of JMU's platinum LEED registered Wayland Hall.

■ ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION

- The Campus Accessibility Committee built a transportation portal, developed a surplus bicycle program, and facilitated development of the student bicycle library. Bicycle infrastructure improvements, such as increased rack space and covered parking, have begun, and an additional free transit shuttle has been added. Online rideshare matching and guaranteed rides home will be initiated in Fall 2010.

- Transit ridership has increased by an average of 7% annually over three years.

■ ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY

- Benchmarking of JMU's environmental education and research programs was completed. 287 courses representing 32 academic departments have some element of environmental stewardship; there are 36 courses across the 5 clusters of the general education program that include some element of environmental stewardship; and there are 268 recent or on-going environmental stewardship scholarly

projects led by 103 faculty. Many projects occurred in international settings and non-traditional disciplines.

- A faculty professional development group is fostering sustainability across the curriculum in 10 courses outside of traditional environmental areas. Training sessions were offered to employees on the campus emissions inventory, Princeton's Climate Wedges project, greening the office, water stewardship, and sustainability in the curriculum.

- JMU initiated a new research institute, the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research (IEER), to address the faculty research and community outreach aspects of environmental stewardship. The IEER is executing the Virginia Clean Cities alternative transportation and 25% Renewable Energy by 2025 (25x25) collaborations, which together include over \$10 million in grant funding for alternative energy deployment.

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