

Keeping it Green

Notes from the SUNY Cortland Sustainability Office

December 2018

Green Ambassadors Tour Campus Sustainability Features

On November 14th, fifteen Green Ambassadors had the opportunity to get a closer look at what makes SUNY Cortland one of the greenest campuses in New York. Campus Energy Manager, Matthew Brubaker led the tour of the Student Life Center describing how its energy use, water management, and landscaping were designed to meet the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards, and recently received a LEED Silver certification.

The tour went places most folks on campus don't go, to look behind the scenes in boiler rooms and



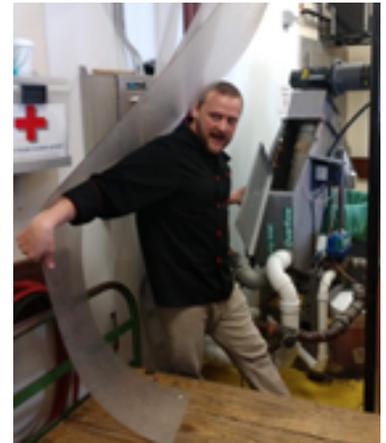
Green Ambassadors examine the Student Life Center's green roof, which helps manage storm water, conserves energy, captures carbon, and increases biodiversity and habitat.

drainage systems and see how many small design choices add up to a big energy savings on campus.

At Neubig Hall, Terry Baker, Director of Dining Services, described the measures they use to help eliminate food waste. ASC has adopted *Lean Path*, a program that tracks pre-consumer food waste during food preparation. A computer tablet hangs on the wall above a kitchen scale allowing cooks to easily calculate and categorize everything that can't be served. This data helps them fine tune their kitchen procedures to

prevent as much food as possible from going to waste.

The majority of food waste at Neubig is post-consumer, or what diners leave on their plates. With such a variety and abundance of food, it's easy to take more than you will eat, but getting rid of



the trays in the semester of year has really cut down on this problem. Diners are still encouraged to take as much food as they care to eat, but without a tray, they're less likely to end up with more than they real

When food does come back to the kitchen, staff is still working hard to keep it out of the landfill. Neubig eliminated straws and other items that could contaminate the food waste so that everything on the plates can be turned into compost. Waste is ground in a huge machine called a pulper. The mushy substance that is produced then goes to an extractor, which removes most of the liquid. The remainder goes to a nearby composting facility where it becomes a sustainable natural fertilizer.



Left and above: Neubig Executive Chef, Chris Pecone demonstrates some strategies for eliminating food waste.

Faculty and Staff Support Sustainability

SUNY Cortland's Green Ambassadors are a network of staff and faculty who are committed to supporting a more sustainable institution. This network of volunteers comes together once or twice a semester to discuss SUNY Cortland's ongoing sustainability work and consider new ideas to improve the sustainability of our campus infrastructure, operations, and academics.

Part of the Campus Sustainability Office, the Green Ambassadors program was designed to include members from every area of campus who will serve as liaisons between the Campus Sustainability Coalition and their divisions or departments. Green Ambassadors educate their colleagues and the larger community about sustainability resources, promote sustainability initiatives, and collaborate on finding solutions to the challenges we face in greening our campus and community.

You can bring your questions and your ideas for greening campus to any Green Ambassador, or consider becoming a Green Ambassador for your division.

RED IS GREEN

If you have a question or comment about sustainability at SUNY Cortland, an idea for a story, or a sustainability-related event you want to share, connect with us at Sustainability@Cortland.Edu



Senior Alaina Lynch, holding a sesquicentennial reusable bag.

Energy Conservation Starts with YOU

A desk top computer running idle uses about 10 Kilowatt hours per week, or about \$1 worth of energy. Printers, copiers, and other office appliances also draw a small amount of power. Multiply that by all the computers on campus and all the folks who will be away from their office over the winter holiday. That's a lot of energy!



Set a calendar reminder today to save energy before you leave for the holidays.

- Completely shut down computers, printers, and copy machines.
- Unplug coffee pots, microwaves, and other energy "vampires."
- Turn out lights
- Make sure windows are shut tightly

If you do work on campus during the break, remember that many building thermostats will be set to a lower temperature than usual, so dress in layers and be prepared!

Freshmen Bag It!

Around the world, we use enough plastic bags to encircle Earth *seven times every hour*. Most are used for only a few minutes, but they will last for over 1000 years and nearly all of that plastic waste ends up in the environment, polluting water and killing wildlife.

To help combat the problem, the Campus Sustainability Office and Residence Life gave every member of Cortland's 150th class a reusable shopping bag. The bags, which were provided through a Sesquicentennial grant, Facilities, and the Sustainability Office, are lightweight and small enough to easily fit in a pocket or purse.

Over 1,000 bags were handed out in the first weeks of class. They are already showing up in checkout lines around Cortland and Green Reps have reported seeing a reduction in plastic bags collected in the dorms.