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quarterly review

summer 2012:
innovations in campus sustainability

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The Association for the Advancement
of Sustainability in Higher Education

Cover:
A mosaic of campus sustainability innovations.

Photos courtesy of:
Boston University (STARS Silver)
Elon University (STARS Silver)
University of Alaska, Fairbanks (STARS Gold)
University of Alberta (STARS Silver)
University of Kentucky (STARS Silver)
University of Saskatchewan (STARS Bronze)

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Table of Contents

University of Alberta

California State University, Monterey Bay

University of Saskatchewan

A Shift in Consciousness

"In the course of history, there comes a time when humanity is called to **shift to a new level of consciousness**, to reach a higher moral ground."

– Wangari Maathai, Kenyan environmental & political activist

Education plays a central role in cultivating innovative ideas that move society forward. Ironically however, inequity, exploitation, and environmental degradation are the unintended consequences of many of society's most innovative achievements. While anticipating the needs of the future is an important aspect of sustainable innovation, Maathai's statement goes a step further, calling for a shift to a new level of consciousness at a higher moral ground. With such a shift, concepts like "innovation", "development", and "progress" may be redefined to address the combined impacts of our achievements on all members of society, not just those that stand to benefit.

For a dramatic shift in consciousness to occur, the critical connections between education, innovation, and sustainability must be understood and further developed. AASHE's second STARS Quarterly Review (SQR), *Innovations in Campus Sustainability* highlights the unique ideas and solutions within higher education that positively impact current and future generations.

Described in Elon University's IN entry #1, the Elon Academy supports the education of academically promising underserved youth in the local community.

The STARS Innovation Category

The Innovation (IN) category within the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System™ (STARS) recognizes innovative solutions to sustainability challenges in higher education. These may include new and ground-breaking practices that are not covered by other STARS credits or that exceed the highest criterion of a current STARS credit.

To effectively manage the large amount of information within IN, AASHE recently developed a STARS Innovation Inventory. The first step in this process involved identifying 'tags' to objectively classify sustainable innovations. Such tags included relevant sustainability topics, measurable outcomes of implementation, and the presence of social, environmental, and economic dimensions of sustainability. Each IN credit was then classified using these tags, and the final step involved reviewing this information collectively. Representatives of STARS Institutions can access the latest version of the inventory, along with a detailed description, in the My Resources section of the STARS Reporting Tool. In developing the inventory, a valuable resource was created to help tell the story of innovation in campus sustainability. This edition of the SQR tells that story, and is based on STARS reports submitted through June 1, 2012.

A Look Ahead

The STARS Innovation Inventory is a first step to enhancing access to campus sustainability innovations. With the launch of STARS 2.0 expected in 2013, AASHE will host a public comment period to obtain feedback on all proposed changes in STARS. In the meantime, readers are encouraged to send thoughts and ideas on the IN category, the SQR, and all other aspects of STARS to stars@aashe.org.

Leaders in Sustainable Innovation

"Innovation distinguishes between **a leader** and a follower."

– Steve Jobs, co-founder, Apple Inc.

"We are not lacking in the **dynamic forces** needed to create the future."

– Thomas Berry, American author, *The Great Work*

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295 STARS Institutions
- 185 Rated Institutions
- 110 Institutions pursuing a rating

193 reports submitted
- 8 Institutions submitted a 2nd report

An important criterion for innovation credits is the fact that any new, unique, or uncommon practice in campus sustainability may take an institution's region or school type into consideration. As such, the IN category in STARS encourages any institution to become a leader in campus sustainability innovation. Through transparency of data and publication of innovative best-practices, institutions are encouraged to draw from the dynamic forces surrounding them to continuously raise the bar on sustainability innovations.

As of June 1, 2012, 469 Innovation credits have been submitted by 185 rated institutions. Since STARS launched in 2009, three-quarters of all rated institutions pursued at least one Innovation credit. 77% of 4-year institutions and 65% of 2-year institutions submitted at least one IN credit. On average, institutions pursued 2.4 Innovation credits in each STARS report.

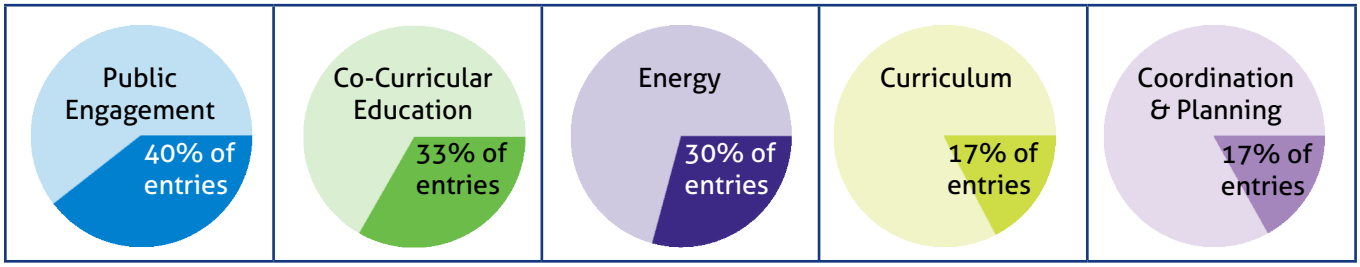
(Sub)Categories of Innovation

Preceding the IN section of STARS are three categories: Education & Research (ER), Operations (OP), and Planning, Administration & Engagement (PAE). These categories are further segmented into 17 subcategories such as Curriculum, Water, and Human Resources. To gain an understanding of the sustainable innovation topics that have been submitted, descriptive fields in each credit entry were tagged with up to 6 STARS subcategories that tied closely to that innovative practice. Most entries related to at least two subcategories, and 13% linked to subcategories in each of the three STARS categories. Below is an overview of the most common subcategories in IN.

2.0 SNEAK PEEK

The latest draft of STARS 2.0 includes IN text fields that will allow institutions to select from a list of sustainability topics.

5 Most-Common Subcategories Identified in IN



60% of total innovation entries pertained to either the Co-curricular Education or Public Engagement subcategories, or both. The fact that over half of all innovations include a significant outreach component with members of the campus community and the general public is not surprising; this level of engagement is integral to many institutions' mission and vision, and is increasingly useful for widespread promotion of sustainability concepts and ideas.

Although most innovation entries could be easily classified into STARS subcategories, the one area that defied classification was related to innovations in information technology (IT). For this reason during data analysis, a tag was created to classify IT-related innovations as a separate topic, similar to the tags for each STARS subcategory. In total, 44 IT-related entries were identified, representing about 10% of all IN credit entries.

STARS FACT

Human Resources, Diversity & Affordability, and Transportation were the 3 least-common subcategories identified in IN.

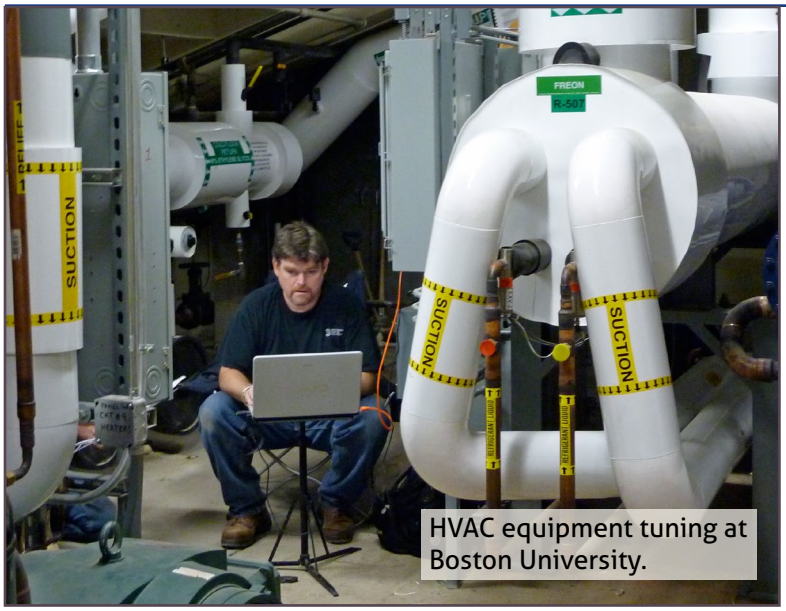
Circles of Exchange

"Innovation arises from ongoing **circles of exchange**, where information is not just accumulated or stored, but created."

– Margaret J. Wheatley, American author, *Leadership and the New Science*

In driving innovation in a learning environment, the role of information technology (IT) is especially important. Wheatley's quote suggests that innovation results in circles of exchange that continuously raise the bar for new ideas and innovations. This is particularly true for innovation related to IT in higher education.

Combining IT with energy management is a popular area of innovation in campus sustainability today. While 9% of all IN entries were IT-related, a number of these IT entries (37%) dealt with interactive, web-based energy management systems. Institutions have found that such tools not only help to reduce energy consumption, but also serve as high-impact resources for education, research, and engagement.



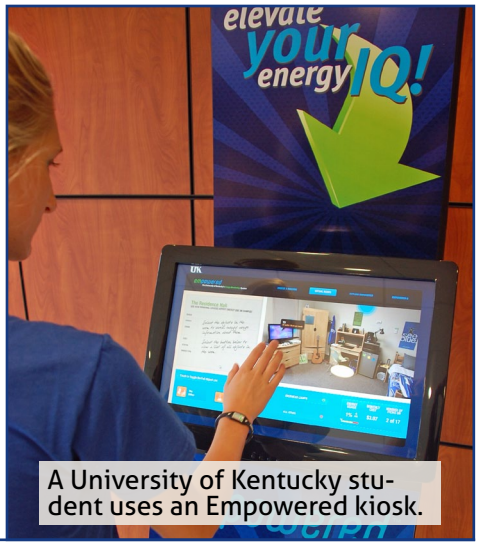
HVAC equipment tuning at Boston University.

Boston University's award-winning sustainability@BU website is designed to engage the entire BU community through layers of information and methods of interaction. It is intended to be the sustainability clearinghouse for the university, where the entire community can reliably find useful information and be a part of culture change at BU and beyond.

(STARS Silver, Dec. 2011, IN #1)

The **University of Kentucky's** Empowered energy monitoring system is a multi-layered, interactive program with the dual goal of elevating the campus energy IQ and inspiring individuals to participate in a culture of conservation. The program uses real-time energy feedback from the campus as the delivery platform for an integrated suite of features and programs.

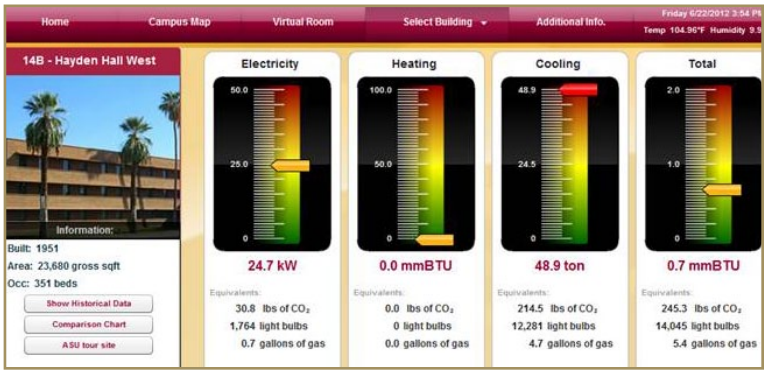
(STARS Silver, Feb. 2012, IN #2)



A University of Kentucky student uses an Empowered kiosk.

The Campus Metabolism project at **Arizona State University** is an interactive website that displays real-time energy consumption data for 20 campus buildings as well as the energy production of 21 photovoltaic sites on the Tempe campus. Campus Metabolism website visitors compare the energy use of buildings with one another; and compare hourly, daily, weekly or monthly data for different time periods.

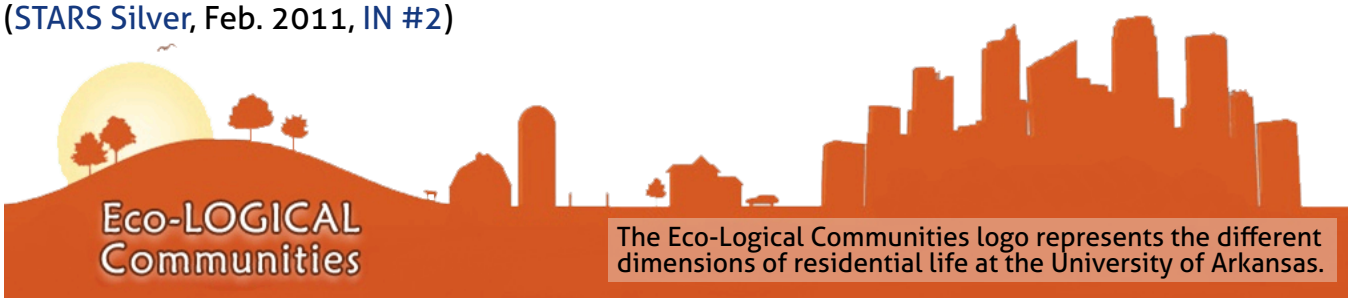
(STARS Gold, July 2011, IN #1)



Arizona State University's Campus Metabolism website provides graphic and tabular data displays to meet management and technical data needs.

The **University of Arkansas'** Eco-Logical Communities project shows energy and water consumption and waste generation by household. The goal for the program is to enroll as many households as possible; to monitor their home energy use, water consumption and waste generation; and to reduce resource use by generating awareness and bringing competition to residential resource use patterns.

(STARS Silver, Feb. 2011, IN #2)



The Eco-Logical Communities logo represents the different dimensions of residential life at the University of Arkansas.

Creative Extremism & the Triple Bottom Line

"The question is not whether we will be extremists, but what kind of extremists we will be... The nation and the world are in dire need of **creative extremists**."

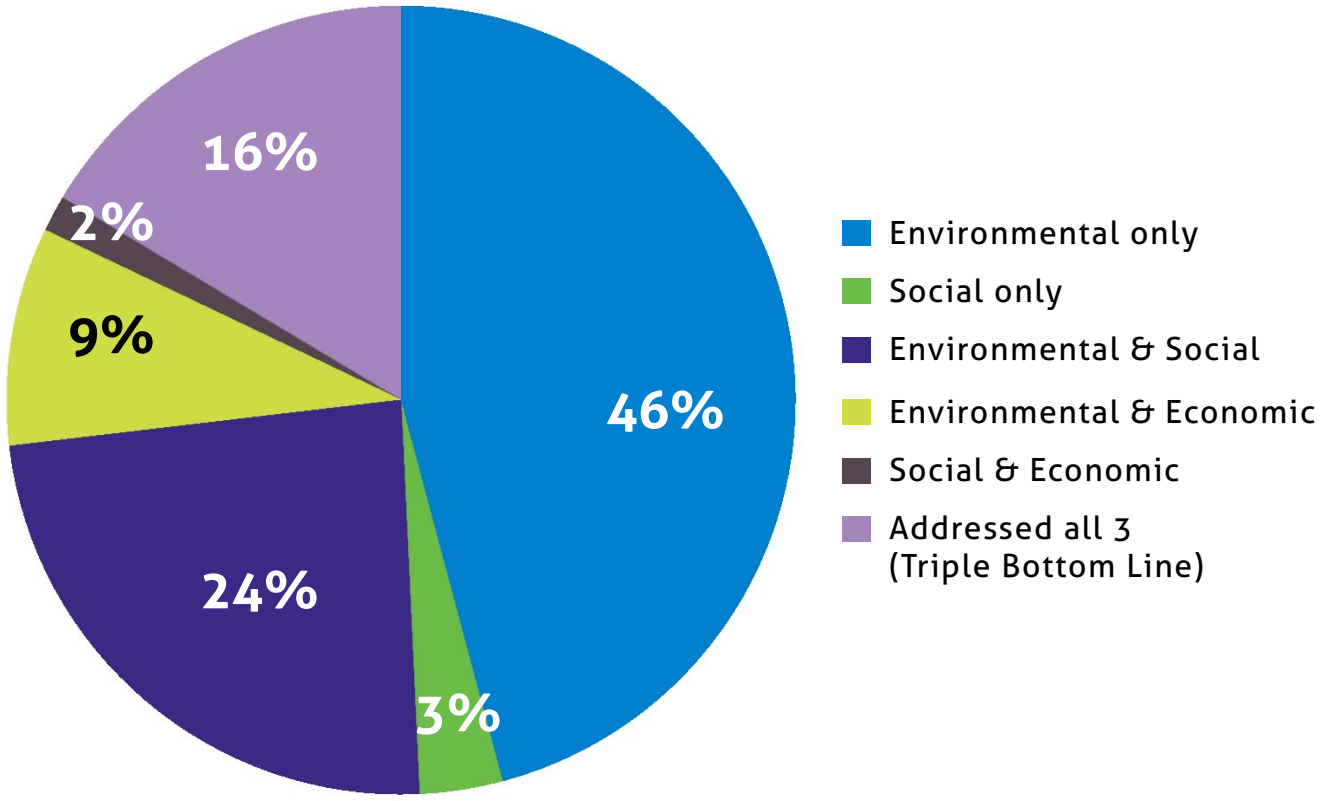
– Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., American civil rights activist

STARS FACT

32% of STARS-rated institutions submitted one or more IN credits that collectively addressed the social, environmental, *and* economic dimensions of sustainability. Such triple bottom line entries constituted 16% of total IN credits.

Often referred to as the "triple bottom line", or "three pillars", activities that collectively address social, environmental, and economic dimensions of sustainability have greater breadth and depth of impact, possessing the potential to significantly change our ways of thinking. Dr. King's concept of "creative extremism" provokes a sense of urgency in creatively promoting justice. As young members of society enter adulthood struggling to meet their own needs, applying the concept of creative extremism across all dimensions of sustainability becomes an increasingly relevant topic in higher education.

To gain insights into how higher education institutions address the triple bottom line, IN credits were reviewed to identify the presence and significance of social, environmental and economic dimensions in campus sustainability practices. If IN entries included direct impacts in any of the three dimensions, this information was tagged for further analysis. Results of the IN triple bottom line analysis, depicted on the following page, show that the environmental dimension of sustainability dominated within IN credit entries in comparison to social and economic dimensions of sustainability.



Nearly half of all innovation credit entries highlighted the environmental dimensions of innovative practices exclusively. One-quarter highlighted environmental and social dimensions, while only 16% of IN entries touched on all three dimensions. 5% of IN credits excluded mention of environmental impacts, instead focusing on social or economic dimensions of sustainability.

IN entries that addressed every dimension of sustainability were not only found to have greater depth and breadth of impact, but were also found to be more content-rich than those entries that addressed one or two dimensions. The following pages highlight innovative practices among STARS-rated institutions that collectively address the social, environmental, and economic dimensions of sustainability.

REPORTING TIP

To fully capture an innovative practice's breadth and depth of impact, be sure to highlight how it addresses social, environmental, *and* economic dimensions of sustainability.

SQR Highlight: Innovation & the Triple Bottom Line

University of Alberta's Green & Gold Community Garden

(STARS Silver, Feb. 2012, IN #2)

Courtesy of University of Alberta.

The Green & Gold Garden at the University of Alberta is a community garden with a global perspective. Produce is grown and harvested by over 30 volunteers and is then sold in the local community through an e-mail list-serve of over 500 customers. By purchasing local produce from the garden, members of the Edmonton community help bring greater social and economic independence to women in Rwanda. All proceeds from the sale of produce go to Tubahumurize, a non-profit organization that supports female survivors of the Rwandan genocide through counseling, vocational training, and health education. Tubahumurize also promotes economic stability for Rwandan women by offering skills training and through the distribution of micro-credit loans for income-generating activities.

In 2010, $21,587 was raised from sale of produce, and an additional $3,175 was raised from the sale of handicrafts made by the women of Tubahumarize. An estimated 200 to 300 socially and economically marginalized women have benefited from Tubahumarize's support. The integration of local and international community development demonstrates the innovativeness of this socially-just and environmentally-sustainable endeavor.

SQR Highlight: Innovation & the Triple Bottom Line
California State University, Monterey Bay's Chinatown Renewal Project

(STARS Gold, July 2011, IN #1)

The Chinatown Renewal Project is a comprehensive community-based revitalization effort in the Chinatown neighborhood of Salinas, California. In partnership with a number of other organizations, CSUMB has provided leadership, energy, vision and resources to support this dynamic collaborative process of community revitalization. Over the past 12 semesters, 762 CSUMB service learning students and over 20 CSUMB faculty and staff have made a significant contribution to the multi-dimensional project, including: starting a Green Jobs Corps, building a community garden, creating a sustainable energy demonstration project, delivering courses and workshops in natural building and organic gardening, conducting oral history interviews and collecting historic artifacts, creating job opportunities for the homeless, and opening a computer training lab.

The role of CSUMB in this revitalization effort has been significant, as noted by one community partner: "CSUMB has been the engine making this whole effort possible. Alone, as community volunteers, we would not have been able to accomplish nearly as much." By encompassing social, environmental, and economic dimensions of sustainability, the Chinatown Renewal Project brings comprehensive solutions to a region of California that has experienced serious sustainability challenges.

Salinas Chinatown Community Garden. Photo by Dan Fernandez.

SQR Highlight: Innovation & the Triple Bottom Line

University of Saskatchewan's Pisim Project

(STARS Bronze, Oct. 2011, IN #1)

Pisim Project participants. Courtesy of University of Saskatchewan.

The Pisim Project is an innovative community outreach program that engages Saskatoon aboriginal youth in sustainable housing construction. Combining tradition and technology, an energy-efficient house was designed and built by a team of high school students within the same footprint as homes of a century ago. The highly efficient, low-cost home showcases innovative energy-efficient design features such as double stud wall construction and passive/active solar heating. The project was facilitated by the Office of Outreach and Transition Programs at the University of Saskatchewan's College of Engineering.

The Pisim Project has built bridges between the university and youth who otherwise might never have considered a university education. Although the impact of the project on the Cumberland House community was significant, the youth participating in the project perhaps received the greatest benefit of all: "A small group of northern students were able to enter a world unknown to them. The experience opened doors most would never have dreamed they could approach." The Pisim Project establishes a new benchmark for actively involving aboriginal youth in remote northern communities in sustainable housing projects that foster important skills, build community relationships, and help to secure a greener future for all. A documentary on the project was made by two Saskatoon film-makers.

Outcomes of Innovation

"Think left and think right and think low and think high. Oh, the thinks you can think up **if only you try**!"

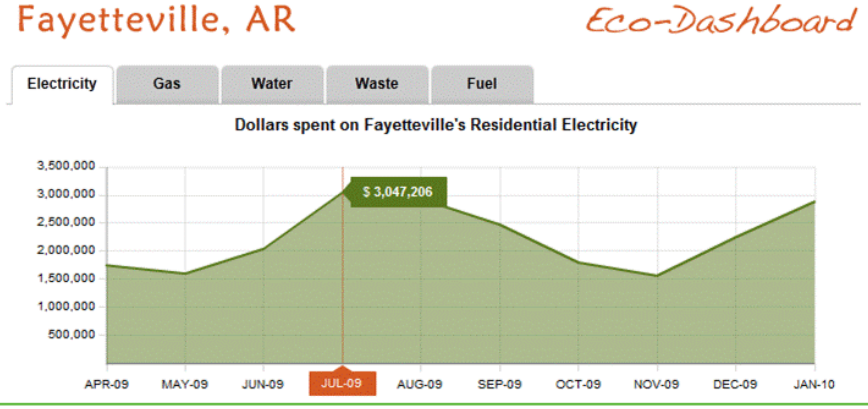
– Dr. Seuss, author, *Oh, the Things You Can Think!*

Once innovative sustainability practices are implemented, colleges and universities are encouraged to track the measurable impact of these actions to gauge effectiveness and to help determine next steps. Examples of measurable outcomes as a result of implementing innovative practices may include but are not limited to the following:

- Unit reduction in energy or water consumption
- Amount of material diverted from the waste stream
- Number of people directly affected
- Dollars saved as a result of implementation

2.0 SNEAK PEEK

The latest draft of STARS 2.0 includes IN text fields that capture measurable outcomes from implementing innovative practices.



Eco-Dashboard from the University of Arkansas reveals that in Fayetteville, AR, over $3M was spent on residential electricity during the month of June.

Eastern Iowa Community College District (EICCD) is a member of the Iowa Waste Exchange (IWE), one of the nation's premier materials exchange programs. The IWE is a free and non-regulatory service to assist Iowa business & industry with smart waste management alternatives that keep by-products and wastes from landfill disposal. In 2010 alone, EICCD diverted **12,431 tons** of waste through the program, and saved **$436,893**.

(STARS Silver, June 2011, IN #1)

Tracking Waste. Courtesy of EICCD.

Conceived of and run by students, the Energy Challenge at **Indiana University Bloomington** is an annual competition to see which campus unit can most reduce its energy and water consumption based on a 3-year baseline. In total, the four Energy Challenge competitions since 2008 have conserved **2,753,850 kWh** of electricity and **6,061,365 gallons** of water, avoiding **4,392,252 lbs.** of CO_2 emissions and saving **$199,469**.

(STARS Silver, Jan. 2011, IN #4)

E-waste recycling. Courtesy of Indiana University.

Youth participate in a challenging math activity. Courtesy of Elon University.

In the local community, **Elon University** supports the education of academically promising underserved youth through the Elon Academy. Based on a four-phase model, the academy promotes college access and success, improves transitions to college, and provides an alumni network program. To date, Elon Academy graduates have been accepted at almost **60** colleges and universities. **100%** of program completers have enrolled in college, and **98%** of the students who started a postsecondary education remain in college.

(STARS Silver, Dec. 2011, IN #1)

The **University of Alaska Fairbanks'** Review of Infrastructure, Sustainability, & Energy (RISE) Board reviews proposals from students on how best to use funds generated by the SIREN fee to benefit UAF students. Preference is given to projects that invest in energy efficiency and renewable energy projects, and proposals are accepted 3 times a year. In 2011, **27 student-led projects** were approved, totaling over **$250,000** in allocated funding.

(STARS Gold, Aug. 2011, IN #3)

Student employees sell vegetables from the campus organic garden. Photo by Todd Paris.

Revolutionary Increments of Action & Change

"There are **risks and costs to action**. But they are far less than the long range risks of comfortable inaction."

– John F. Kennedy, American president

"A small group of thoughtful people could **change the world**."

– Margaret Mead, American cultural anthropologist

2.0 SNEAK PEEK

Along with the release of STARS 2.0, AASHE will introduce website updates that enhance accessibility and visibility of STARS data.

For society to experience a collective shift in consciousness toward a more just and sustainable world, actions that bring significant change must be taken. Future generations and the environment surrounding them will be harmed most by our own inability to act and bring necessary change. Fortunately, as Mead's statement demonstrates, significant resources are not always needed to revolutionize our way of thinking, doing, and feeling. Positive change can happen in increments.

By submitting innovation topics through STARS, institutions are encouraged to share their stories on the actions they are taking to promote positive change. Whether an institution is large or small, well-funded or under-resourced, in an arid climate or in a cold climate, each is uniquely positioned to bring about both incremental and revolutionary change.

In recognizing the importance of sharing innovative practices to encourage the growth of new ideas, AASHE continuously looks to introduce new features within our online resources and tools that strengthen the circles of exchange that advance sustainability and promote positive change. As always, we encourage our readers to send feedback and ideas to stars@aashe.org.

Index of Rated Institutions

June 1, 2012 Count: **185**

34 Gold - G

90 Silver - S

48 Bronze - B

13 Reporter - R

Agnes Scott College - S
American University - G
Anne Arundel Community College - S
Appalachian State University - G
Arizona State University - G
Babson College - S
Ball State University - S
Bard College - S
Berea College - S
Boston University - S
Bowdoin College - R
Brandeis University - B
Brunswick Community College - B
California State Polytechnic University, Pomona - S
California State University, Channel Islands - S
California State University, Monterey Bay - G
Carnegie Mellon University - R
Central Carolina Community College - S
Chapman University - R
Cleveland State University - S
College of Lake County - S
College of Saint Benedict - S
Colorado State University - G
Cornell University - G
Dalhousie University - S
Delta College - S
DePaul University - R
DePauw University - B
Dickinson College - G
Drew University - S
Duke University - G
Earlham College - R
East Tennessee State University - B
Eastern Iowa Community College District - S
El Centro College - DCCCD - R
Elon University - S
Emory University - G
Estrella Mountain Community College - B
Evergreen State College, The - S
Florida Gulf Coast University - S
Florida State University - S
Furman University - S
George Mason University - S
Georgia Institute of Technology - G
Gettysburg College - S
Goshen College - B
Grand Valley State University - S
Green Mountain College - G
Haverford College - B
Haywood Community College - G
Illinois Central College - B
Illinois Institute of Technology - S
Illinois State University - B
Indiana University Bloomington - S
Ithaca College - G
Judson University - B
Kankakee Community College - S
Keene State College - S
King's University College - B
Lakeland Community College - R
Loyola Marymount University - S
Luther College - S
Macalester College - S
Maryville College - B
Michigan State University - S
Middlebury College - G
Missouri State University - B
Moraine Valley Community College - B
New Mexico State University - B
New York University - G
North Carolina State University - R
North Seattle Community College - B
Northern Alberta Institute of Technology - B
Northern Arizona University - S
Northland College - S
Oberlin College - G
Okanagan College - S
Oklahoma City University - B
Oklahoma State University - B
Old Dominion University - B
Onondaga Community College - S
Orange County Community College - B
Oregon Institute of Technology - B
Oregon State University - G
Pace University - B
Pacific Lutheran University - S
Pacific University - B
Pennsylvania State University - S
Pittsburg State University - B
Pomona College - G
Portland State University - G
Princeton University - S
Raritan Valley Community College - B
Red River College - S
Rice University - R
Richland College - DCCCD - S
Richland Community College - B
Rio Salado College - S
Rocky Mountain College of Art + Design - B
Royal Roads University - S
Saint John's University - S
Saint Louis University - B
San Jose State University - S
Santa Clara University - S
Shoreline Community College - B
Simon Fraser University - S
Slippery Rock University - B
Southern Oregon University - B
St. John's University - G
State University of New York at Brockport - S
State University of New York at Cortland - S
State University of New York at Fredonia - B
State University of New York at Oswego - S
State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry - S
Swarthmore College - R
Taylor University - B
Texas A&M University - S
The New School - S
The University of Arizona - G
Thompson Rivers University - S
Truman State University - B
Tufts University - S
Unity College - S
University of Alaska Anchorage - B
University of Alaska Fairbanks - G
University of Alberta - S
University of Arkansas - S
University of British Columbia - G
University of Calgary - S
University of California, Los Angeles - S
University of California, San Diego - G
University of California, Santa Barbara - G
University of Colorado Boulder - G
University of Colorado Colorado Springs - S
University of Dayton - B
University of Denver - G
University of Florida - S
University of Houston - S
University of Illinois, Chicago - R
University of Kansas - B
University of Kentucky - S
University of Louisville - S
University of Massachusetts Amherst - G
University of Michigan - S
University of Minnesota, Duluth - R
University of Minnesota, Morris - G
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities - S
University of Mount Union - B
University of Nebraska at Kearney – R
University of Nevada, Las Vegas - S
University of New Hampshire - G
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill - S
University of North Carolina, Greensboro - S
University of North Texas - S
University of Northern British Columbia - S
University of Northern Iowa - G
University of Notre Dame - S
University of Oregon - S
University of Ottawa - S
University of Saskatchewan - B
University of South Carolina - G
University of South Florida - G
University of Tennessee at Knoxville - S
University of Texas at Arlington - B
University of Texas at Austin - S
University of Texas at San Antonio - B
University of the District of Columbia - B
University of Utah - B
University of Virginia - S
University of Wisconsin-Green Bay - S
University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh - G
University of Wisconsin-River Falls - S
Vassar College - S
Virginia Tech - S
Wake Forest University - S
Washington and Lee University - B
Washington University in St. Louis - S
Weber State University - B
Wellesley College - S
Western Kentucky University - B
Western University - S
Westminster College - S
Wilfrid Laurier University - B
Williams College - S
Yale University - S

STARS Would Like to Thank...

STARS is the result of countless hours of effort and hundreds of people's expertise. We would like to recognize all of those who have contributed feedback and advocated for STARS. The STARS Governance Structure provides a framework for the STARS Steering Committee, Technical Advisors, and Partner Organizations to support and guide STARS. Additionally, we are grateful to the many individuals who contribute to our improvement outside of that structure. AASHE is proud to say that STARS is a program that has been developed by those within the higher education community, the community STARS serves.

STARS Technical Advisors

AASHE recognizes its team of over 70 STARS Technical Advisors, the primary source for input and insight on STARS credit content.

STARS Steering Committee

William Brown * - Director of Sustainability, Indiana University

Julian Dautremont-Smith **** - Chief Sustainability Officer, Alfred State University

Amy Dvorak *** - Sustainability Manager, Lewis & Clark College

Jeremy Friedman * - Manager, Sustainability Initiatives, New York University

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Nurit Katz * - Sustainability Coordinator, University of California, Los Angeles

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Dave Newport **** - Director, Environmental Center, University of Colorado at Boulder

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Cindy Shea **** - Sustainability Office, Director, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Ron van der Veen ** - Principal and Senior Designer, DLR Group

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Paul Rowland - Executive Director

Meghan Fay Zahniser - STARS Program Manager

**** Served 2010 - Present
*** Served 2011 - Present
** Served 2010 - 2011
* Served 2012 - Present

Partner Organizations

STARS sponsorship provides an outstanding opportunity for campuses to demonstrate their support of campus sustainability. Please email stars@aashe.org to inquire about becoming a STARS Partner Organization.

Association of College & University Housing Officers – International

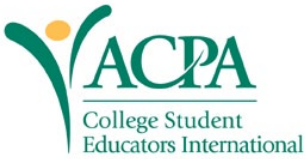
Council for Christian Colleges & Universities

National Association of College and University Business Officers

Advancing Campus Activities in Higher Education

Second Nature
Education for Sustainability

Society for College and University Planning
INTEGRATED PLANNING FOR HIGHER EDUCATION



AASHE is helping to create a brighter future of opportunity for all by advancing sustainability in higher education. By creating a diverse community engaged in sharing ideas and promising practices, AASHE provides administrators, faculty, staff and students, as well as the business that serve them, with: thought leadership and essential knowledge resources; outstanding opportunities for professional development; and a unique framework for demonstrating the value and competitive edge created by sustainability initiatives.

AASHE defines sustainability in an inclusive way, encompassing human and ecological health, social justice, secure livelihoods, and a better world for all generations.

STARS is a program of AASHE.

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The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education