



Elon Sustainability Newsletter

Elon Dining Hires Sustainability Coordinator

Sarah Teicher

Over the years Elon Dining has made tremendous strides in increasing sustainable initiatives and programming. From sourcing food from local farmers when possible, to composting 150 tons of waste during the 2017-2018 academic year, to using compostable and recyclable materials, Elon Dining has been doing incredible work within the realm of sustainability.

Most recently Elon Dining made another big step towards creating a more sustainable community when they hired Caroline Redick as their new Sustainability Coordinator. Caroline recently graduated from Michigan State University where she studied Environmental Economics and Policy with a focus on Sustainable Agriculture. Her major has helped her develop creative ideas for working with local farmers.

Caroline's job encompasses many things. On a typical day she is working on operations and student outreach, developing projects around local sourcing, and reducing food waste through student engagement and involvement. Some of Caroline's favorite sustainable programming involves Loy Farm being used in coursework on campus and incorporating community based food systems into the world of Elon Dining.



As she begins to delve into her job here on campus, students can expect new initiatives, such as a local table every Monday. The local table will be at a different dining hall each week and will feature produce from the local farms that Elon Dining works with to source produce. Students should keep an eye out for additional sustainability efforts and initiatives from Elon Dining!

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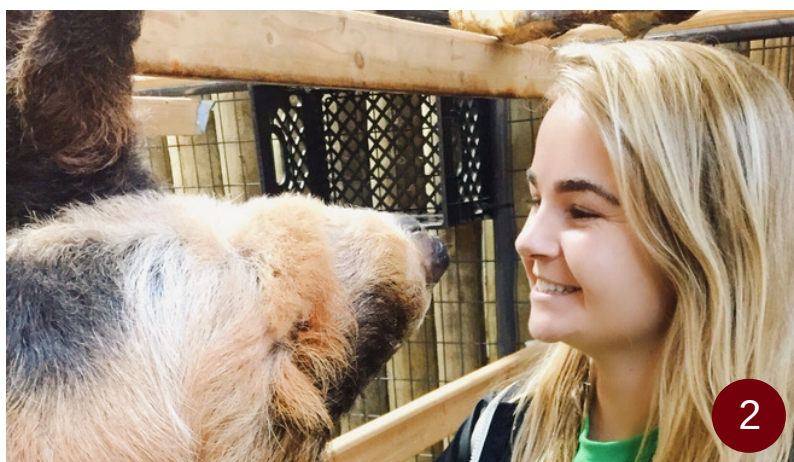
STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: MOLLY CRUSE

Cara DePan

This past summer, Molly Cruse, a senior environmental studies major, worked closely with the Creature Conservancy in Ann Arbor, Michigan. For six weeks, her role on-site was to nurture exotic animals and educate children ranging from 1st through 10th grade through curricula that promotes the Conservancy's mission: "conserving through education." Given this framework, Molly took initiative to prepare and implement presentations, lesson plans, and most importantly hands-on activities, all while educating about the importance of preserving wildlife.

Molly is currently enrolled in one of her favorite Elon classes thus far, Environmental Education, taught by Scott Morrison, Assistant Professor of Education. In this class she is further developing her knowledge about how nature-based learning is beneficial for students, the global community and ultimately the planet as a whole. Outdoor hands-on activities are proven to provide a variety of benefits for students, particularly those in early developmental stages. Such benefits include improvement of problem-solving skills, enhanced abilities to work in group settings and confidence in exploring one's personal strengths and ethical principles.

The decline in wildlife falls under the umbrella definition of environmental issues, and Molly challenges us all to think about ways we can further educate ourselves and society's youth about conserving our world around us. In her second semester of sophomore year, she decidedly assumed the status of, "vegetarian," due to the haunting takeaways from meat industry documentaries and her genuine love for animals. Molly admits that this is her "greatest sustainable life decision," and perhaps it foreshadowed her involvement with the type of organization she found exceptionally appealing over the summer. Looking forward, her outdoors education work with children and training on nurturing a variety of exotic animals is a rare expertise she hopes to utilize in future professional endeavors and in her worldly travels as a global citizen.



FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: ELENA KENNEDY

Evan Strickland

“While many people think of sustainability as relating narrowly to environmental sustainability, I consider it to be a much broader topic relating to building resilient and equitable communities,” says Elena Kennedy, Assistant Professor of Entrepreneurship. Teaching middle school math in an extremely impoverished rural community in the Mississippi Delta as a Teach for America Corps member, she saw first-hand how the lack of jobs and opportunities for meaningful work in her students’ communities made them “unlikely to invest the effort [needed] to be successful in school”, reinforcing a “cycle of poverty”. Kennedy went on to study social entrepreneurship, earning her PhD in Organizations and Social Change from University of Massachusetts-Boston. Kennedy says through this work, “I have come to know and try to support a range of socially and locally minded entrepreneurs in developing successful and sustainable business models that can improve our communities and environment.”



Since coming to Elon two years ago, Dr. Kennedy has had a tremendous impact on the mindset of entrepreneurship students. She teaches students the importance of recognizing their roles and responsibilities for creating more sustainable organizations, regardless of whether they are an employee within an existing company or starting their own. As Kennedy describes her work, she is also working to build “bridges between our entrepreneurship program and other programs across campus and in the community.”

“One of the things that most excited me about coming to Elon was the opportunity to revamp the Entrepreneurship for the Greater Good (ENT 355) class,” said Kennedy. This class affords students real world experience working with local entrepreneurs to better the surrounding community and allows Kennedy to share the results of her research in strategic decision making in social enterprises. Through a partnership she formed with The CoOperative in Graham, NC last spring, her students worked with five local businesses—Alamance Kaffee Werks, Sour Bakery, Forgotten Road Ales, The Mainline and Kindred Seedlings. Students worked on projects co-designed by the students and entrepreneurs designed to help the entrepreneurs further their business endeavors. Reflecting on the experience, entrepreneurs shared that working with Elon students helped them gain a better understanding of the student market and gave them new business ideas. These entrepreneurs noted that they would like to continue the partnership in the future.

In addition to being a star professor and inspiring community member, Dr. Kennedy practices what she preaches. She and her family strive to make their home and lifestyle more ecologically sustainable. She chose a house within walking distance of campus, and it is not uncommon to see her arriving to work on foot or taking her dogs for walks through campus. The 6 kw solar panel system she added to her home produces more electricity than her family uses and her tankless hot water heater reduces their natural gas use. Additional sustainability efforts include a sizeable home garden, compost bins for kitchen scraps and yard waste and a commercial fertilizer-free lawn watered only by rainfall. Kennedy notes, “Sustainability is a journey, not a destination, and so our next goal is to switch our primary vehicle to an all-electric vehicle.”

Two of Kennedy’s favorite aspects of Elon’s culture are the constant effort to improve and the dedication of resources to achieve strategic goals. Kennedy says, “We are not an institution that is happy treading water. As a campus we have made strides towards becoming more sustainable, but technology and practices continue to evolve. We have some major goals surrounding sustainability—most notably our commitment to become carbon neutral—and as an institution are investing resources to meet them.” Kennedy believes Elon’s next steps need to include engaging and leveraging all constituents in the effort to reduce the university’s negative environmental impact and campus waste streams.



Elena Kennedy with Innovation Challenge winning team, HiGenuises

STAFF SPOTLIGHT: DAVID WEBB, FACILITY ENGINEER AND NEIL WILLIAMSON, BUILDING AUTOMATION CONTROLS TECHNICIAN

Kelly Harer

Elon University launched "Energy Conservation in Action" in February 2018, which aims to reduce energy consumption to move toward Elon's goal of carbon neutrality by 2037 and save financial resources. David Webb and Neil Williamson, both of Physical Plant, are two of many people who work daily to ensure Elon is using energy resources wisely.

One of Energy Conservation in Action's specific targets is wasted energy used to heat and cool buildings. Reducing energy use in buildings that are not being used is especially important. Currently, ten buildings are employing features of the automation systems used to control the heating and cooling equipment to do just that. The automation system uses the daily schedules of building operations to condition them for occupant comfort when people are normally there, referred to as an 'occupied' mode. The occupied temperature settings are based on Elon temperature setting policy. Outside of those hours, the "unoccupied mode", the automation systems change the temperature settings to allow the space temperature to drift lower in the winter and higher in the summer before engaging the equipment. The key to making this work is the ability of the automation system to use the outdoor conditions, the building's daily schedule, and the occupied temperature setting to determine the optimal (i.e. energy efficient) means to have the building at the occupied temperature by the occupied time.

For even more targeted savings during normal hours, a special software application is being used that electronically reads the reservation schedules in 25Live and uses that data to automatically set spaces in the occupied or unoccupied mode. This allows individual rooms and/or areas within a building to be controlled rather than whole buildings. When classes or events are scheduled using the 25Live reservation system, the software adjusts the space conditions to maintain the occupied conditions for the time the spaces are in use. The software currently receives and acts on reservation data from 25Live for nearly one hundred spaces around campus. Neil is currently finalizing the software setups to add close to fifty additional spaces this week, which brings Elon closer to its end of the calendar year goal of having almost two hundred spaces with their temperature conditions linked to the need to use a space.

David and Neil work on a variety of efforts behind-the-scenes to ensure Elon is energy efficient. They work with WebCTRL and Energy Reports, a web-based, operational dashboard system that allows them to control, monitor, trend and affect energy consumption in real-time across campus. The WebCTRL system gathers its data from electric, gas and water consumption meters throughout campus. They're involved in engineering and implementing software controls, mechanical system controls, heating and cooling automation and lighting control automation throughout campus.

From solar energy systems to building automation energy control to LED lighting, where there's an energy related project you'll find David and Neil. It would be hard to put into numbers, but their dedication to Elon and energy efficiency clearly has been instrumental in reducing our campus' energy utilization index (BTU per square foot).

**Neil Williamson****David Webb**

SUSTAINABILITY PROJECTS DATABASE

STRENGTHENING SUSTAINABILITY AT ELON



IDEATE. INVESTIGATE. IMPACT.

Campus Sustainability Week

MONDAY

22

12-1 PM | Long Table at Lakeside:
Energy Conservation Conversation
5-8 PM | Maker Hub Colonnades:
Mend Monday
8 PM | Turner Theater: Just Eat It:
A food waste story

TUESDAY

23

4-5 PM | Meet in front of Center for
the Arts: Loy Farm Tour
6:30 PM | Elon Community Church:
Documentary Showing: Reinventing
Power

WEDNESDAY

24

11 AM-2 PM | Lakeside Dining Hall:
Weigh the Waste
9 PM | Beck Pool Patio: S'mores
with Outdoors

THURSDAY

25

9-11 AM | Clohan Patio: Fair Trade
Coffee and Chocolate Sampling

FRIDAY

26

3:30-6 PM | Check in at Alumni
Gym: Adventurequest

ENERGY COMPETITION

A key feature of the week is an energy competition. Students, faculty and staff are encouraged to compete to reduce energy. Prizes include Phoenix Cash, hammocks, solar chargers and more. A neighborhood competition will take place among on campus neighborhoods, and the winning neighborhood will earn an afternoon of Pelicans and Puppies-- free snow cones and the chance to play with dogs from Burlington Animal Services.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT CAMPUS
SUSTAINABILITY WEEK ONLINE](#)

CONTRIBUTORS

Sarah Teicher '19 - Communications Intern

Cara DePan '19 - Outreach Intern

Evan Strickland '19 Sustainability Intern

Elaine Durr - Director of Sustainability

Kelly Harer - Assistant Director of Sustainability for Education and Outreach