

SUSTAINABILITY NEWSLETTER



Spring 2017

Volume 6, Issue 2

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Tree planting program supports carbon neutrality

Jessica Bilecki



Elon students planting one of the 100 trees in Price Park. Photo courtesy of Urban Offsets.

Along with staff from the City of Greensboro and Greensboro Beautiful, over 50 volunteers from Greensboro and Elon helped plant one hundred trees in Greensboro's Price Park Saturday, Feb. 25 as part of an urban tree planting pilot program.

"This is a unique opportunity to make a positive environmental impact in a local community and receive verified carbon offsets," said Elaine Durr, director of sustainability at Elon.

Elon, along with a growing number of universities, has a carbon neutrality goal. Carbon offsets generated by the tree planting will contribute toward this goal, but additional offsets will be necessary to achieve the University's carbon neutrality goal.

The urban tree planting program was developed by Duke University's Carbon Offsets Initiative (DCOI) and Urban Offsets. The Duke Carbon Offsets Initiative is responsible for helping Duke University meet its climate neutrality commitment through the

development of emission reduction projects. Urban Offsets is a North Carolina based start-up dedicated to helping institutions reach their climate neutrality commitments and cities plant trees.

Carbon Neutrality:

Net zero carbon dioxide or equivalent greenhouse gas emissions.

Carbon Offset:

A reduction in carbon dioxide emissions that is used to compensate for emissions from other activities.

This planting along with other DCOI and Urban Offsets planting projects have created the nation's first network of locally-sourced carbon offsets. Urban Offsets partnered with the City of Greensboro and Greensboro Beautiful to identify the planting location for this project. The University is interested in additional projects and locating plantings in Alamance County.

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Phoenix Cup Waste Results for Spring 2017

This spring, Elon students, faculty and staff members pledged to reduce waste from February 13 to March 3. Over the course of Phoenix Cup Waste 2017, participants diverted waste from landfills by committing to engage in sustainable behaviors. Here are the winners!



Participation Winners:

Joy Stewart (Student)
Amanda Chunco (Faculty)

Most Points:

Louisa Scholar (Student)
Ginny Brown (Staff)
Librarians on Greene (Team)

Building:

Danieley Neighborhood

Least Amount of Landfill Waste Produced:

Sophia Tasselmyer (Student)
Aaron Moger (Staff)
Librarians on Greene (Team)

[CLICK HERE](#)
[to see all the data from](#)
[Phoenix Cup Waste 2017](#)

Elon recognized for sustainability leadership in the region

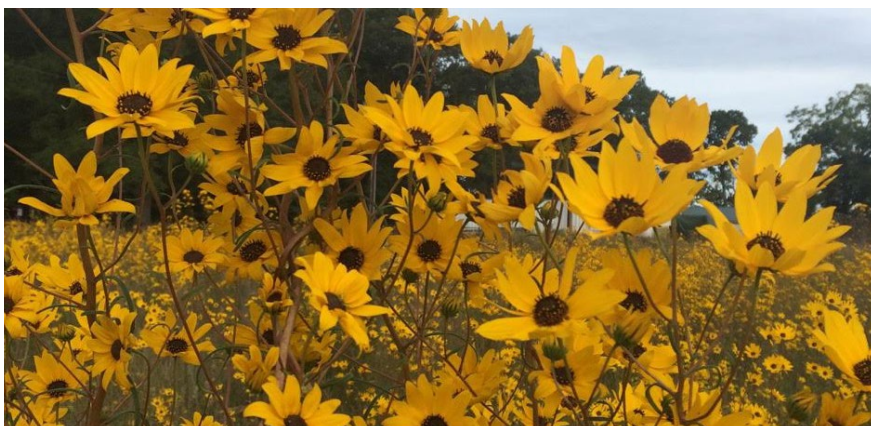
At its annual signature event on March 16, 2017, the Piedmont-Triad Branch of the U.S. Green Building Council awarded Elon University with its "A Green Apple a Day" award for integrating sustainability into the curriculum, culture, operations and student lifestyles, as well as the surrounding community.



Sustainability Research Scholars Symposium

Emma Nault

This spring, Elon University will host its annual Student Undergraduate Research Forum (SURF). Each year SURF highlights cohorts of student and faculty with themed symposiums. This year SURF will feature a Sustainability Research Scholars Symposium, a cohort of four, unique, cross-disciplinary research teams. Michele Kleckner, creator of the symposium, states the purpose of the symposium is three-fold. First, it enables students from various disciplines to view sustainability more holistically. Second, feedback from peers empowers each student to improve his/her own formal presentation experience. And third, audience members will leave with the understanding that sustainability is not just about the environment. The goal of the symposium is to highlight sustainability through four unique perspectives.



Prairie at Elon's Environmental Center at Loy Farm. Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Barker.

species composition and coverage data of various plant species occurring in the prairie at Loy Farm. The results of this project are highly applicable. The development of large agricultural fields in areas of the US, like the Piedmont, that were once prairie can devastate native plant diversity. Data on plant regrowth is essential to the future conservation of native prairie ecosystems.

Re-Establishment of a Piedmont Prairie by Plowing and Seeding

The first team stems from the Biology Department. Dr. David Vandermast and Elizabeth Barker's project, "Re-Establishment of a Piedmont Prairie by Plowing and Seeding" features Elon's very own Environmental Center at Loy Farm. Barker says the purpose of the study was to determine the success of re-establishing prairie plants on a former agricultural field using plowing and seeding methods. These methods included evaluating

Exploring Millennials' Social Media Usage and Green Consumption

The second team is from the Martha and Spencer Love School of Business. Dr. Carri Tolmie and Stephanie Bedard are "Exploring Millennials' Social Media Usage and Green Consumption". The study looks into millennials as the first generation to mature in an internationally-independent world exposed to the Internet, digital communication, and globalization. The purpose of this project is to identify the relationship between social media usage, level of online interpersonal influence, and intention to buy sustainable or "green" products. The results of the study have applications for businesses' social media strategies when marketing green products. Tolmie and Bedard's research offers a new-age managerial strategy, determining how marketers and policy-makers can match the social media habits of this generation and their increasing dependency on the Internet.



Dr. Carri Tolmie (left) and Stephanie Bedard. Photo courtesy of Stephanie Bedard.

Sustainability Research Scholars Symposium



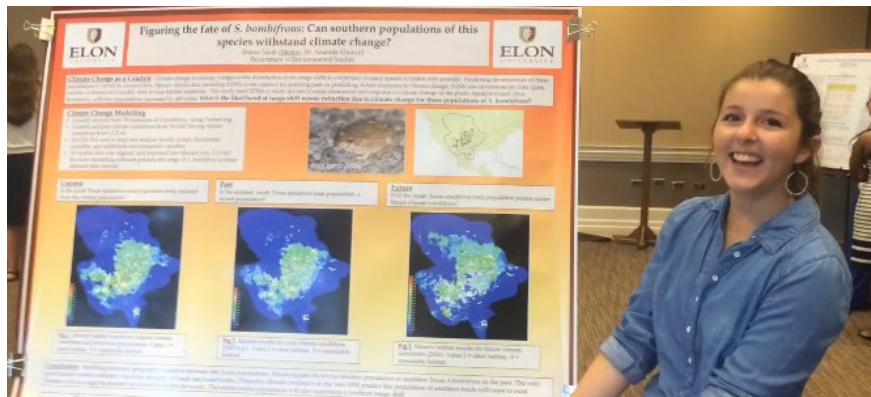
A glamour shot of a carrot. Photo courtesy of Alaina Keisel.

The Sweet Taste of Imperfection: A Visual Exploration of Unmarketable Produce

The third team is from the Art Department. Dr. Samantha DiRosa and Alaina Keisel studied “The Sweet Taste of Imperfection: A Visual Exploration of Unmarketable Produce”. Keisel is working to alter the standard of beauty for produce. Consumers often expect their food, produce specifically, to meet particular levels of perfection: smoothness, shininess, symmetry, and freedom from blemishes. Ultimately, this desire for the “perfect” piece of produce amounts to 20% loss in production in a given year—this contributes to unnecessary food waste, an increase in food insecurity, and the plight of the local farmer. Keisel and DiRosa’s work aims to critique the American food industry by using photography and text in a gallery exhibit. The gallery will feature glamour shots of these “ugly” fruits and vegetables to bring awareness to viewers about the unnecessary beautification of produce.

Figuring the Fate of *S. Bombifrons*: Can Southern Populations of this Species Withstand Climate Change?

The fourth research team stems from the Environmental Studies Department. Dr. Amanda Chunco and Emma Nault’s project “Figuring the Fate of *S. Bombifrons*: Can Southern Populations of this Species Withstand Climate Change?” features a toad species in the southernmost tip of Texas. The purpose of the study is to use spadefoot toads as a model for the effects of climate change on the range and distribution of a species. Methods include the use of species-distribution models to study environmental drivers of range disjunction and response to climate change in the subject species. The fate of the spadefoot toad serves as an example of how other species may respond to extreme changes in climate.



Emma Nault presenting her research at Elon University. Photo courtesy of Emma Nault.

The Sustainability Research Scholars Symposium will be held on SURF Day (April 25th). If you are interested in more information email Michele Kleckner (mkleckne@elon.edu).

Submit to the Sustainability Project Database Today!

What is it? A resource for students and faculty to view and build upon past and ongoing projects related to sustainability. Ideas or projects can cover environmental, social and/or economic sustainability!

Why submit? Contributing to the Database will showcase your work and facilitate completion of and improvement on projects from year to year!

Submit your sustainability projects now:

Click on “Academics: Projects Database” @ elon.edu/sustainability to submit!

Have questions? Email enault@elon.edu



Staff Spotlight: Kristen Aquilino

Jessica Bilecki



Aquilino with a student from the iMedia fly-in team and local residents in the Dominican Republic. Photo courtesy of Kristen Aquilino.

Over 70% of Elon students study abroad. While sustainability may not be the highlighted content of many of these experiences, it is often an underlying part of them.

After speaking with Kristen Aquilino, Assistant Director for Global Student Engagement, about how her work and recent experience as an advisor for the iMedia Fly-in to the Dominican Republic related to sustainability, I asked "Do you think about sustainability in your day-to-day life?"

Her eyes widened and she enthusiastically replied "Oh, all the time!" Aquilino cites her own study abroad experience as a major factor in increasing her awareness of just how much we as Americans typically consume, especially electricity, water, and material goods and how much waste we produce. "Part of the study abroad experience is seeing that many cultures live more sustainably than we do, and experiencing that lifestyle. That awareness factor, that there are other ways, I took that with me." Aquilino says some of her lasting habits developed after studying abroad include unplugging electronics, minimizing use of running water, and practicing better habits when it comes to disposing of waste. "Going abroad always reenergizes me and reminds me of alternative ways of being more sustainable."

Aquilino has advised Winter Term iMedia students participating in the COM 570: Interactive Project for the Public Good, often referred to as fly-ins, for the past two years. This year she accompanied a fly-in team to San Jose de las Matas, known as SAJOMA, in the Dominican Republic. Their project focused on building a website for the Producers Association of Controlled Environment of the Sierra Region known as APACOS. APACOS is an organization formed by farmers in the Sierra region to strengthen external marketability of local, sustainably grown products such as coffee, peppers, and wood for furniture.

Aquilino observed that similar to her experience, participating students were learning on multiple levels. Students were working intensely on the project, honing their interactive media skills, and strengthening their intercultural communication skills, while simultaneously being immersed in a new culture and adjusting quickly to a different lifestyle. Limiting electricity use and bucket showers were two aspects of this different, less resource intensive lifestyle. "The students jumped right in and did a great job!"

Back on campus the learning continues. Aquilino's position is joint between the Global Education Center (GEC) and the Student Professional Development Center (SPDC). Fittingly, one of her many responsibilities is to help job-seeking students translate their study abroad experience into professional applications. "I love engaging with students in a global context and seeing the growth that takes place; and helping students discover how these experiences will stay with them and can apply to their future."



iMedia students conducting interview with local farmer. Photo courtesy of Kristen Aquilino.

Additional Information

- [APACOS](#)
- [iMedia](#)
- [Isabella Cannon Global Education Center](#)
- [Student Professional Development Center](#)
- [Study Abroad More Sustainably](#)

What's Coming Up

Earth Week

Tuesday, April 18

- **Sustainable College Coffee**
Location: Phi Beta Kappa Commons
Time: 9:40 – 10:20 am
- **Keynote Speaker: Dr. Robert Bullard**
Location: McKinnon Hall
Time: 7:30 – 8:30 pm

Wednesday, April 19

- **Weigh the Waste**
Location: Lakeside Dining Hall
Time: 11:00 am – 2:00 pm
- **S'Mores with Elon Outdoors**
Location: Belk Pool Patio
Time: 10:00 pm

Thursday, April 20

- **Local Meal**
Location: Colonnades Dining Hall
Time: 11:00 am - 2:00 pm
- **ECC Farmers Market**
Location: Elon Community Church
Time: 3:00 – 6:30 pm
- **Your Environmental Road Trip Screening**
Location: Turner Theatre
Time: 8:00 pm

Friday, April 21

- **Party for the Planet**
Location: Lakeside Plaza
Time: 3:30 - 5:30 pm

Saturday, April 22 - EARTH DAY!

Sunday, April 23

- **Loy Farm Work Day**
Location: Loy Farm
Time: 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm
- **WALL-E Screening**
Location: Turner Theatre
Time: 4:00 pm



Don't Trash It!



**DONATE IT!
DON'T TRASH IT**

[CLICK HERE](#)
**to volunteer and
find out more
information**

MAY 10-24
ELON SUSTAINABILITY

Donation Stations:
Residential Neighborhoods
Oaks parking lot

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