



## IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 LEED Gold Certification
- 2 New Environmental Justice Intern
- 3 Faculty Spotlight:  
Dr. Nicholas Bussberg
- 4 Staff Spotlight:  
Leslie Bosse
- 5 Student Spotlight:  
MJ Volpe '25
- 6 Earth Week
- 7 Resources



Founders Hall and Innovation Hall, the first two buildings in the Innovation Quad, received LEED Gold certification.

# ELON SUSTAINABILITY NEWSLETTER

## Founders Hall and Innovation Hall awarded LEED Gold Certification

BY: KELLY HARER

Founders Hall and Innovation Hall have received LEED Gold certification, marking Elon's 33rd LEED certification. LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) was developed by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) and is the preeminent green building rating system internationally. LEED for Building Design and Construction assesses projects on a point-based system that considers sustainable site development, water efficiency, energy efficiency, materials and resources, indoor environmental quality, innovation and elements of regional priority. The buildings have numerous sustainable features, including low flow plumbing fixtures and energy efficient systems. Compared to standard plumbing fixtures, the low flow fixtures in the buildings are expected to reduce potable water usage by about 36 percent. The energy cost savings for the buildings is about 26 percent compared to buildings that just meet the standard building energy code. Learn more about the sustainable features of Founders Hall and Innovation Hall on the [Office of Sustainability's website](#).

# NEW ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE INTERN: LUCY GARCIA '23

It's senior spring, and I'm finally involved with the Office of Sustainability! It feels very full circle because the Office was a huge part of why I chose to come to Elon. I'm an environmental and sustainability studies major with minors in GIS and policy studies and have interests in environmental justice, (creative) writing, urban planning and sustainable design. I've co-written a book chapter on queer adolescent literature in English classrooms, been a new student orientation leader, served as a tour guide for Admissions, hosted a WSOE radio show, worked at the community garden, studied abroad, and on and on; but this Office has made me feel empowered to work towards sustainability like no other experience.

I feel lucky to be the second intern in the newest position at the Office of Sustainability, the Environmental Justice (EJ) Intern. It's a paid internship focused on building programming and education around EJ on campus. I was thrilled when I saw this was a position, especially since internships in my field are often unpaid. So far, I've found that students don't come out in droves to learn about EJ, as it can be a depressing topic, and many don't understand what it is, which is okay! It's the simple idea that everyone deserves access to a clean and healthy environment, but not everyone has it because of legacies of inequality. I'm trying to brainstorm and create events that pull Elon students in and get them interested in this issue, while also providing them with opportunities to share and laugh and spend time outdoors, where the fight for EJ begins and ends.

My current passions are in community-building and sustaining the planet by sustaining ourselves. I'm a big advocate for mental and physical health, as it allows for a more sustainable and long-lived movement towards social justice. I'm excited to have a couple of months to think about Elon students' relationship to EJ and how it can be improved. My hope for my time in this position is that I will be able to elevate programming that already exists, created by Eco-Reps and Office of Sustainability Interns, as well as create my own.

I held a roundtable at the Black Solidarity Conference to talk about EJ and histories of inequality in Burlington. I'm co-creating a panel for Asian Pacific Islander month, which Elon celebrates in April; and I have a podcast in the works with El Centro, plus Earth Week programming. It's a lot, but I'm excited to get paid for my time and have my voice heard.



## UPCOMING EVENT:

### THE MISSING (PI)ECE: Pacific Islanders and the Environmental Justice Movement

We will discuss what is often left out about the climate movement in the Pacific + more over Ni Armor's Hawaiian & Polynesian BBQ.

**April 24 | 6-7:15 pm**  
[Click here](#) for details

# FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: DR. NICHOLAS BUSSBERG

BY: EMERSON WELLS

Nicholas Bussberg serves as an assistant professor of statistics in the Mathematics and Statistics Department. He began working at Elon in Fall 2020. Initially drawn to studying biology and music education, Bussberg studied at Indiana University (IU) at Bloomington with an interest in an ecology-centered broader perspective and marine sciences. He later went on to receive his master's degree in environmental sciences where he was required to take a statistics course as part of the program. It was that course and later doing statistics work with a professor that drew Bussberg to statistics, ultimately receiving his PhD in statistical science from IU Bloomington.

"I can continue to look at the same data and come to the same conclusions, but am able to use more sophisticated tools and analyze in different mindsets," says Bussberg.

Most of Bussberg's current research is centered around environmental statistics. Working with students, he has examined Elon University's water usage and how water trends changed related to the pandemic. He has also looked at how short-term changes in the environment impact species, such as Greensboro's "stay at home order" and how depopulation of people in common spaces impacted bat populations.

As a scuba instructor and diver, Bussberg has also worked with a conservation non-profit to examine and use ten years of citizen science data on divers collecting trash from marine sites.



"Sustainability is defined quite broadly now, and most of the projects I work on have ties to sustainability," explains Bussberg, emphasizing conservation work as sustainability work.

"With math and stats, these tools... can be used to solve real problems, and sustainability has so much data," says Bussberg. "To answer questions of 'how do we move forward with sustainability' and to make informed decisions, we need to use and analyze the data that is at our disposal... and statistics provides access to tools that most people don't have access to."

Bussberg's work is a reminder of how interdisciplinary sustainability truly is.



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# STAFF SPOTLIGHT: LESLIE BOSSE

BY: LAUREN HILL

Leslie Bosse serves as the sustainability coordinator for Elon Dining. A recent graduate of High Point University, Bosse has already brought her bubbling passion for sustainability to Elon's campus through several new campaigns. Bosse aims to educate students on sustainable food practices, as well as working towards reducing Elon Dining's food waste and incorporating more sustainable management practices. Bosse oversees the Leanpath in dining halls, which is a food waste tracking device that weighs and captures everything coming into the kitchen. The "Just Try It" campaign is a new practice in dining halls that encourages students to ask for a sample of a dish before receiving a full portion. Bosse also addresses the food waste that ends up on the dish return through compost training for all new staff members in the dining halls.

Bosse explains that waste diversion and sustainability are not just one-person problems; they are campus-wide problems that we need to work together to solve. While individual changes may seem insignificant, she emphasizes that small changes together make a huge impact. "It's through making conscious decisions, that you become more aware of the impact that you have," Bosse adds.

Outside of work, Bosse practices her own ways to combat food waste with meal planning and incorporating plant-based meals into her diet. Conscious decisions such as these will inspire others around you to acknowledge their own impact.



Nobody wants to make a negative impact. No one wants to harm the planet. Sometimes they just need that little push, and Bosse is happy to provide that for students. You might find Bosse in her office in Clohan or outside McEwen with a sustainable trivia prize wheel. Go ahead and give it a spin.

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**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT ELON DINING'S SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS, [CLICK HERE.](#)**

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# STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: MJ VOLPE '25

BY: SAMANTHA SCHWAMBERGER



MJ Volpe is a sophomore at Elon, double majoring in environmental and sustainability studies and public policy. Volpe grew up in Colorado, where she spent a lot of time outside, but didn't realize how central the environment was to her life until moving to Maine for prep school. It was there that she began to realize that so many of her friendships and favorite activities focused on spending time in nature and valuing Earth's natural resources. Outside of her love for the outdoors, Volpe is also inspired to make change following the recent wildfires in Colorado that were dangerously close to her home. Seeing the damage that an environmental disaster, caused by the climate crisis, can create so close to home influenced her to change her mindset from "I'm doing this for my kids," to "I'm doing this for me."

Volpe spent her first year at Bentley University, where she majored in business, before transferring to Elon. As a business major living outside of Boston, she did not feel that she was as connected to the environment and sustainability,

which prompted her to transfer to Elon.

Since coming to Elon, Volpe has become the Ambassador of the Sustainability Living Learning Community (LLC). In this position she helps host events, such as Vegan Sundaes on Sunday in the Colonnades Neighborhood. Outside of the LLC, she enjoys participating in discussions about sustainability on and around campus, such as the Kernodle Center Civil Dialogue session on our actions and sustainability and attending city council meetings to voice her concerns on per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in local water supplies.

Volpe is a firm believer that the best way to make sustainable change is through diplomatic action and policy change. She recognizes that sustainability on an individual level can be difficult for those who lack access to resources and education. Knowing this, Volpe still tries to make sustainable changes in her own life, such as not eating meat one day a week and not shopping fast fashion for a whole semester, with hopes that they will inspire her friends to do the same.

# EARTH WEEK IS APRIL 17-23

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER: PETER KALMUS



**THERE'S  
PROBABLY  
NOTHING  
MORE  
MEANINGFUL  
THAN ACTING  
ON CLIMATE**

With the planet heating up and ecosystems dying, it's hard to think of anything more meaningful than contributing to humanity's transition into biospheric balance. Peter Kalmus is a climate scientist at NASA's Jet Propulsion Lab (speaking on his own behalf) and author of *Being the Change: Live Well and Spark a Climate Revolution*. During this keynote, Peter will discuss how we can engage more effectively in the greatest challenge humanity has ever faced based on his experience as a climate scientist and an activist. Bring your questions!

**APRIL 18 | 7:30-8:30 PM | MCKINNON HALL**



**FOR A FULL LIST OF  
EVENTS AND DETAILS,  
[CLICK HERE](#) OR SCAN  
THE QR CODE**

## A FEW EVENT HIGHLIGHTS:

### MONDAY 17TH

Mindful Eating | 5:30 pm\* | *Loy Farm*

### TUESDAY 18TH

Campus Kitchen Cooking Shift  
5-7:30 pm\* | *Lakeside Dining Hall*

### WEDNESDAY 19TH

Planting Seeds for Mental Health  
11:30 am-1 pm | *Medallion Plaza*

### THURSDAY 20TH

Party for the Planet  
5-7 pm | *Medallion Plaza*

### FRIDAY 21ST

Community Garden Work Hours  
1-4 pm | *Elon Community Garden*

### SATURDAY 22ND

Sustainable Day of Service: Lake  
Mackintosh Kayak Clean-Up  
8:30-11 am\*  
*Meet in front of Center for the Arts*

### SUNDAY 23RD

Campus Kitchen Farm Shift  
11 am-1 pm\* | *Loy Farm*



# RESOURCES

## SHARE THE RIDE



### What is it?

STRNC is a free, secure and user-friendly online tool that helps find ridesharing options for commuting or single trips to the airport, beach or wherever else you travel. It also allows users to log their trip to learn about dollars saved and emissions reduced. Sign up [here!](#)

### How to Join:

**REGISTER:** There is an Elon-specific program for students, faculty and staff. Using your Elon email, register for a free account and create a profile!

**FIND A RIDE!** Enter some info about where you want to go so you can view and communicate with potential matches through the system.

## EMERGENCY RIDE HOME PROGRAM

This program reimburses eligible faculty/staff commuters for a qualified emergency ride home a maximum of 4 times in a fiscal year.

### To be eligible, participants must:

1. Be a part-time or full-time employee **and**
2. Have carpooled, biked, walked, taken the train or a bus to work on the day a ride is needed.

### It's available for commuters when:

1. They or an immediate family member gets sick or has a crisis
2. Their carpool driver has to unexpectedly leave early or stay late OR
3. They must work unscheduled overtime

Learn more [online!](#)

## SUBMIT TO THE DATABASE!

### What is it?

Online platform of past or current student projects related to sustainability

SUSTAINABILITY PROJECTS DATABASE  
STRENGTHENING SUSTAINABILITY AT ELON



### Why submit?

This is an opportunity to showcase your work and offer research ideas to interested undergraduates

### How to submit:

1. Go to [“The Sustainability Projects Database”](#)
2. Log in with Elon username & password
3. Click “To add a project click here”



Elon has partnered with UCapture, a green-tech company that funds environmental projects and applies coupon codes, at no cost to you, when you shop with online partners.

### How Does It Work?

When you shop using UCapture, partner stores pay commissions. UCapture uses 66% of these commissions toward high-quality, third-party verified carbon offset projects, which are then retired on Elon's behalf, reducing Elon's carbon footprint.

### Follow These Steps to Utilize UCapture:

**Step 1:** Visit [www.ucapture.com/elon](http://www.ucapture.com/elon)

**Step 2:** Click 'Add UCapture' to install the browser extension and set-up your account

**Step 3:** Activate UCapture when you visit online partner stores

## CONTRIBUTORS

**Elaine Durr**  
Senior Director of Sustainability

**Kelly Harer**  
Assistant Director of Sustainability  
for Education and Outreach

**Hannah Miller '23**  
Communications Intern

**Samantha Schwamberger '23**  
Sustainability Intern

**Lucy Garcia '23**  
Environmental Justice Intern

**Emerson Wells '23**  
Outreach Intern

**Lauren Hill '24**  
Volunteer Intern