

ENVIRONMENTAL CONNECTIONS

TURNING COMMITMENT INTO ACTION



INSTITUTIONS of higher education are increasingly recognizing their obligation to educate students to be responsible global citizens, which includes education on environmental sustainability. Accepting a leadership role in modeling and fostering appropriate actions and building an environmental ethic on campus, Connecticut College has taken substantial steps through specific commitments and is “walking the walk.”

The College, along with 412 other institutions, has signed the Talloires Declaration to “incorporate sustainability and environmental literacy in teaching, research, operations and outreach at colleges and universities.”¹ More recently President Higdon became a charter signatory on the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment, which boasts 685 signatories. Through that commitment, the College agrees to work toward “climate neutrality” by developing a climate action plan and decreasing our institution’s emission of greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming.

There are also many on-campus indicators of our commitment. In the Strategic Priorities for the Second Century (approved by the Board of Trustees, May 19, 2007), Priority No. 24 emphasizes environmental stewardship: “Enhance the College’s historical commitment to the environment through scholarly research, management of the arboretum campus, green building techniques, increased energy efficiency and creative solutions to contemporary ecological challenges.”² The document lists assessable outcomes, including environmental reports and campus audits of our operations.

Under the direction of the Environmental Model Committee (EMC) and with the aid of consultants, an Environmental Sustainability Baseline Assessment (ESBA) was completed in fall 2009. This report provides a comprehensive look at structural and behavioral aspects of campus operations as they relate to environmental concerns. The College officially launched its sustainability initiative, rolling out elements of

Professor Julie Rivkin, associate dean of the faculty, and Amy Cabaniss, campus environmental coordinator, lead a Curriculum and Sustainability break-out session at the Teach-in on Sustainability at Connecticut College on Feb. 11, 2010.

the study to the campus community.

To guide this initiative, and to prioritize and develop a plan to implement sustainability on campus, President Higdon appointed members to the newly established Sustainability Steering Committee (SSC). After developing a vision and mission, the committee set out to define what sustainability means for the College along with guiding principles to bring tangibility to the definition. A strategic sustainability plan will be drafted by the SSC this summer. In the meantime, coordinated and complementary efforts are underway to move the campus toward enhanced sustainability.

On Feb. 11, the EMC and SSC hosted a daylong Teach-in on Sustainability at
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GOODWIN-NIERING CENTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

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Amy Cabaniss, *Campus Environmental Coordinator*
Janice Holland, *Center Assistant*

CENTER FELLOWS

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Sanjeeva Balasuriya, *Mathematics*
Robert Baldwin, *Art History*
Anne Bernhard, *Biology*
MaryAnne Borrelli, *Government*
Beverly Chomiak, *Physics*
Ann Devlin, *Psychology*
James Downs, *History*
William Frasure, *Government*
Pamela Hine, *Botany*
Chad Jones, *Botany*
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Manuel Lizarralde, *Botany & Anthropology*
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Established in 1993, the Goodwin-Niering Center for the Environment is an interdisciplinary program that draws on the expertise and interests of faculty and students in the liberal arts to address contemporary ecological challenges. The Center strives to integrate all areas of learning to deal with the issues of sustainability and the natural environment. Building on a scientific understanding of the natural world, the Center invites the social sciences, the humanities and the arts to help understand and solve difficult environmental issues.

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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



WHAT DOES SUSTAINABILITY REALLY MEAN and how can the College attain this difficult but worthwhile goal? These are just a few of the big issues that the Goodwin-Niering Center tackled this year as we continue to try to move the College toward a healthy environmental future. The Center is at the forefront of a major campus-wide sustainability movement that includes classroom discussions, public events and high-level meetings. Although the College is certainly not there yet when it comes to reaching the ideal of a zero-impact environmental campus, we are moving in the right direction.

Sustainability is not something that can just be purchased off the Web. It must be embraced by people at all levels of our academic community because it involves changes in lifestyle and investments of time and effort as much as financial commitments. Investments in renewable energy to meet some of our energy demands will only decrease the College's environmental footprint if we simultaneously reverse the trend of increased electrical use in dorms and academic buildings. A switch to more local and organic food products is a waste of time if the majority of the food ends up in the trash at the end of a meal. Conversely, seemingly small changes in our daily activities can have major positive impacts when multiplied by the thousands of people who do and will spend time on our campus. The move to trayless dining halls is a perfect example of a small change with big environmental benefits.

The Center is first and foremost a group with an educational mission. With this in mind, the Center worked this year to increase awareness about environmental sustainability and develop grassroots support for more environmentally friendly approaches to running a college. The Center played a major role in a daylong teach-in about sustainability. Attendance was excellent, with students, faculty and staff all present. We followed that up with a Common Hour event to update the campus community on progress and plans moving forward. This issue of the newsletter is another attempt to educate the broader campus community on the importance of environmental sustainability.

Popular support for environmental initiatives is critical to success, but the decisions to implement programs are ultimately made within the established organizational framework of the College. Therefore, we also worked with the Environmental Model Committee and the new Sustainability Steering Committee to develop procedures to include more environmental considerations in College decision-making at the highest levels. The Sustainability Steering Committee includes senior administrators such as the dean of the faculty, the vice president of College relations and the vice president of administration. The fact that sustainability is being discussed at such a high level in the College administration is an important and necessary step if the College hopes to meet its goal of reducing emissions and becoming more environmentally sustainable.

The campus community has responded to the sustainability initiative with a great deal of enthusiasm. New proposals for reducing the College's environmental impacts are surfacing from students, staff and faculty, and are being carefully reviewed by the Environmental Model Committee and the Student Government Association. The next step will be to prioritize the proposals and find the funding to implement the best ideas.

Ultimately, the College will need to balance requests for funding to support environmental sustainability with other important initiatives related to diversity, internationalization and interdisciplinarity. Throughout the upcoming deliberations the Center will work hard to ensure that the environmental future of the campus and the world continue to be a major consideration. Reducing the environmental impacts of the campus and the broader community needs to be a long-term goal of the institution as a whole, and the Goodwin-Niering Center is excited to help steer the College toward a greener future. We undertake this work with the firm belief that environmental sustainability will ultimately strengthen the College and benefit future generations of students.

Douglas Thompson
Karla Heurich Harrison '28 Director

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CERTIFICATE SEMINAR THEME FOR SPRING 2010: ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY BASELINE ASSESSMENT

THIS SEMESTER the Goodwin-Niering Center certificate seminar focused on issues that are very real and immediate to all members of the College community. We embarked on a much larger investigation into sustainability on campus and how Connecticut College fares when held up to intense scrutiny of all of its policies, practices and impacts. In a very eye-opening, semester-long investigation, we used the recent Environmental Sustainability Baseline Assessment (ESBA, 2009) to examine the College's environmental impact across multiple sectors — transportation, greenhouse gas emissions, energy efficiency and usage, building construction, grounds maintenance and water usage, recycling and waste management, food sustainability, and dining hall practices.

In examining these issues, the certificate students joined in a larger discussion across campus as the ESBA was introduced at the February Teach-in on Sustainability at Connecticut College, and multiple committees began to work through the findings of the study and implications for how we should proceed. In the seminar, we divided the students into groups of three (bringing together our very experienced seniors with juniors and the newly admitted sophomores) and each group was tasked with tackling a chapter of the ESBA and exploring both its findings in a particular sector and expanding the ESBA investigation even further through their own research into campus practices. In a bit of a twist, we turned the seminar format upside down this spring, handing over leadership to the student triads and letting them run the show for a change. Through this exploration of College practices, we all learned a tremendous amount about the College's many achievements in the realm of environmental sustainability — but also about the challenges ahead as we try to lessen the environmental footprint of the College and move toward carbon neutrality and a more all-encompassing sustainable community.

Throughout the semester, the certificate students fanned out across the various committees and clubs on campus, joining in the activities of the action committees of the Environmental Model Committee and the campaigns of newly formed student groups like "Oceana" and

"Forest Justice" and taking their concerns about College practices directly to the College administration and staff in an effort to bring about change on campus. Quite a bit of activity centered on dining hall practices, and a number of pilot projects (suggested by our students) were tried out in Harris Refectory — including a significant shift away from beef (with its enormous carbon and water footprints) toward more sustainable dishes.

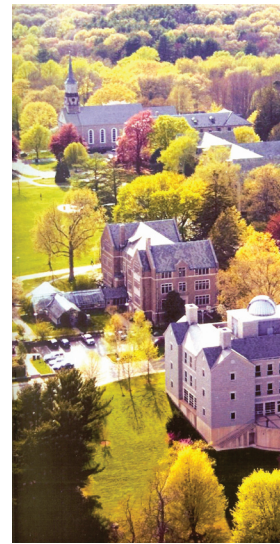
As we move forward with the seminar next fall, we will work on finding the appropriate balance between the seminar's academic focus and its role in advocating best practices at the College; all agree, however, that the role of the Center and its cohort of incredibly talented certificate students extends beyond the purely academic and that we have an important role to play in moving the entire campus community toward a more environmentally sustainable "city on the hill." Next fall we will explore cutting-edge energy technologies and ask whether any might be appropriate

ACTION

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Connecticut College. Introduced by President Higdon and attended by more than 175 students, staff and faculty, it included a series of presentations and concurrent breakout sessions that addressed ESBA highlights, challenges and opportunities in moving campus sustainability forward. Teach-in participants were encouraged to join action committees that will address and implement environmental projects, programs and policies. To further reach out to the community, the SSC hosted a Common Hour on Sustainability to highlight our progress.

Among many sustainability-oriented steps already taken, Dining Services has transitioned to Green Seal-certified cleaning products, integrated more locally sourced foods into the menu, and recently began to outsource used vegetable oil and animal fats to a local biodiesel company. Custodial Services is also purchasing Green Seal products. The College is pursuing LEED "green building" certification for the most recent construction projects. Underscoring the



Environmental
Sustainability
Baseline
Assessment
REPORT

219166.00
Connecticut College
New London, CT
June 18, 2009

Environmental Baseline Assessment Audit report from the environmental consulting firm Woodard and Curran

for adoption at Connecticut College. It promises to be an enlightening discussion. — *Jane Dawson, associate director*

College's endorsement of waste minimization, Student Life established a partnership with United Way of Southeastern Connecticut for "Spring Give n' Go," to collect and distribute end-of-the-year discards of furniture, rugs, clothes and other items. This spring students emphasized their commitment to environmental sustainability by creating an environmental chair position on the Executive Committee of the Student Government Association; creating a student Environmental Leaders Coalition to improve communication between the many environmental clubs and groups on campus; and resolving to financially support an independent study assessing renewable energy options for the campus beginning this fall.

The commitment continues and we invite you to track our progress and join us in celebrating our environmental past, present and future. — *Amy Cabaniss, Campus Environmental Coordinator*

¹Association of University Leaders for a Sustainable Future, www.ulsf.org/talloires_declaration.html

²Strategic Priorities for the Second Century (2007), p. 36.

GREEN, GREENER, GREENEST: CAREERS THAT REFLECT YOUR IDEALS

“SUNDAYS WITH ALUMNI” is a new initiative at Connecticut College that lets students hear firsthand from alumni in different career areas. On April 18 three young alumni, who are all thriving in the “real world,” returned to their alma mater to share their

and was active in campus sustainability and environmental initiatives, including the beginning of the Goodwin-Niering Center. She circulated petitions on campus for better safety at Millstone Nuclear Power Station. She worked closely with Bill Niering and remem-

toward a degree in communications management at Emerson University. She listed the pros and cons of going back to school after working for a few years, and emphasized the importance of furthering your education for yourself. While Natalie has held multiple positions, and has never been at a job more than three years, she discussed the benefits of changing jobs, explaining that people get to know and respect you more as you move through a field. She concluded on a positive note, highlighting the expansion of jobs in the environmental field: “The way we work is changing. There is more data flow and available information as organizations and people are more flexible.”

Dan Saccardi was an environmental studies major who went to work for the National Resources Defense Council right after graduation; later he decided to return to school for an MBA. “I’m happy I waited four years to get my MBA because it wasn’t a thought in my mind after Conn,” he said. He also was exposed to environmental issues in business, which became his passion in graduate school. Now Dan is at GreenOrder, a company that integrates sustainability and business practices. He discussed the importance of working for NGOs, especially right after college, and emphasized the great experience and connections you make, even if your job includes assistant work. (Coffee anyone?) At GreenOrder, Dan meets with clients, works with interns and groups, and comes up with creative approaches to solve ever-changing problems of integrating sustainability into a business-driven world.

Erica Berlinghof, a government and Slavic studies double-major, had the opposite experience after she graduated. Unsure what career path to follow, she jumped into graduate school and got a full-time job. Although there were challenges, ultimately it was a good experience for Erica because it helped her move quickly through her chosen field and into her current position in Washington, D.C. She raved about her experiences at Connecticut College, highlighting classes with MaryAnne Borrelli that exposed her to water scar-

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Dan Saccardi '00, Erika Berlinghof '05, Natalie Hildt '97 and Janan Evans-Wilent '11, left to right

experiences in different environmental careers: Dan Saccardi '00, an environmental consultant with GreenOrder; Erika Berlinghof '05, director of congressional relations for the National Association of Water Companies; and Natalie Hildt '97, the public policy outreach manager of Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships (NEEP).

The alumni talked about what it’s like to work in an environmental field and gave students advice about how they got to where they are now. I was chosen to moderate the panel since I have a background of science and public relations. I am an environmental studies major in the natural sciences track and a member of the Goodwin-Niering Center for the Environment. On campus I am a tour guide and also a manager of Phonathon, a part of the Annual Fund. I was excited to meet the three alumni (since I typically only talk to alumni on the phone) and had a great experience learning about how environmental studies can be applied to jobs post-graduation.

Natalie Hildt self-designed her major in environment and public policy

bers tromping around in marshes in the Arboretum with him when he was 74. He would turn to the varsity soccer players in the group and tell them, “Don’t worry, I have a little water in my boots too.” When she graduated she took on an internship at Connecticut College as the campus environmental coordinator, working with students and staff to raise environmental awareness on campus and get students involved in ecological issues and clubs.

Natalie stumbled into the energy efficiency field, moving to Boston and working in a one-room office for the Appliance Standards Awareness Project, an environmental lobbying group founded in 1999 that is dedicated to increasing awareness of and support for appliance and equipment efficiency standards. Now, at NEEP, a nonprofit organization, she collaborates with policy makers, program administrators and businesses to build a cleaner environment and a more reliable and affordable energy system. “Energy efficiency goes beyond partisan politics; it is just common sense,” she said. Natalie is also back in school, working

AN ENVIRONMENTALIST FAR, FAR AWAY

AFTER GRADUATING from Connecticut College in 2006, I did a bit of wandering. I worked in New York City as a paralegal, took a road trip here and there, lived in Burlington, Vt., and delivered pizzas. Eventually, I found myself living in Mali, in West Africa, where I told people that my name was B'eu Thera and worked to help expand a local NGO's outreach as part of my Peace Corps service. I never imagined my post-college jumping would end up in a faraway African village, but I am glad it did. It provided an incredible opportunity to meet new people, to learn, and to realize that environmentalism can exist anywhere.

Shortly after arriving in the country I was partnered with a local man named Jude Thera. Jude was the president and founder of Association Vigne, whose mission was to promote environmental stewardship and community development. He was also one of the most amazing and intelligent people I have ever met. He, along with a Japanese man, developed a tree-planting technique for use in the semi-arid Sahel that requires minimal post-planting watering to keep the trees alive.

The PLASA Method (PLAntation Sans Arrosage, which translates to planting without watering) allows a tree to adapt quickly to the harsh climate by directing a tree's roots to moisture deep in the soil. Jude promoted the technique as a way for farmers to protect their fields and earn additional revenue, while enhancing sustainability and reducing



Peace Corps volunteer Joel Scata '06 with Chief Drissa in Mali

the impacts of climate change. Together we held tree-planting demonstrations, attended a national conference on the environment, wrote articles, and even launched a website.

However, the best part of our time together was our discussions on the concept of environmentalism. I began to understand that such things depended on one's location and lifestyle. In Mali, the environmentalism is need-based, because people literally live off the land. With subsistence agriculture, and wood as the primary fuel source, ensuring the sustainable use of natural resources is an absolute necessity. Degradation of the land presents the immediate problem of less firewood and diminished crop output.

I remember telling Jude that trying to encourage farmers to plant trees to reduce the impact of those they harvested sounded like a sustainable yield problem in environmental economics. This provoked a laugh from him, and then the conversation turned to how to develop an "environmental conscience" (his term) among a variety of people. This idea was the crux of how he believed he could encourage better use of the environment. For example, he did not try to convince local farmers that planting trees would diminish the impacts of global warming; instead he would use an explanation that was clear and readily understandable. This was not because he believed the local farmers could not comprehend the broader impacts of global warming, but simply because making a connection to

a person's daily life was the most effective approach. We also discussed creating a multimedia project, including films like Al Gore's "An Inconvenient Truth," as a way to relate to youths who lived in the large cities, because film

would have more resonance with this age group than it would with their parents.

Reflecting on my experiences working with Jude, I find that our conversations were the most significant part of the

experience. I learned from his efforts that there are many ways to help lead people to environmental stewardship. Please visit the Association Vigne website for more information about Jude's work and his tree-planting techniques: www.methode-plasa.web.officelive.com. — *Joel Scata '06*

Editor's note: Joel Scata '06 graduated from the Center's certificate program with a major in government and a minor in economics. His senior project was "Oil Dependence: A Threat to the Future of the United States' Energy Security."

IDEALS

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city issues in the Southwest. "Flying over the deserts on your way to California, you realize, wow, there really IS no water," she said. Erica began her career at a small firm, which she said was good experience because she was given a lot of responsibility and gained some of her first congressional exposure. She reminded students, "Don't avoid the science and math, even if you want to go into government or policy. Your parents were right."

All three alumni gave students great advice for moving forward post-graduation. Natalie emphasized the importance of internships, even if they are unpaid, because they build networks and connections that can often lead to job opportunities. Dan also encouraged networking, sharing how he got his first internship by calling friends and family and asking for connections. Erika highlighted public speaking skills, taking new classes, and being proactive about internships and job opportunities. They stressed that the environmental job field is expanding at a rapid rate, and that the experience that students gain at Connecticut College will prepare them for a future and will propel them into the real world. I was happy to learn that my hours of lab work and chemistry should pay off in the long run. I want to personally thank Dan, Natalie and Erica for coming back to Connecticut College and sharing their stories with me and the other students. — *Janan Evans-Wilent '11*

CENTER AWARDS CERTIFICATES TO TEN IN CLASS OF 2010



ON SATURDAY, MAY 22, 2010, the Goodwin-Niering Center for the Environment held its ninth annual Recognition Ceremony to honor 10 exemplary graduates from the Class of 2010. President Leo I. Higdon, Jr., welcomed a group of more than 80 family members and friends of our certificate students, praising their “commitment, focus and most importantly passion — qualities which will stay with you forever.” Higdon acknowledged how the Goodwin-Niering Center students personally challenged others on campus to embrace sustainability, taking the campus to the next level in awareness. He expressed his confidence that the Class of 2010 certificate students “will continue to be a strong voice for sustainability wherever you next choose to call home.”

Doug Thompson, director of the Goodwin-Niering Center, greeted the attendees and introduced distinguished guests, including Center Advisory Board member Dr. Edward Monahan, Jean C. Tempel '65 Professor Emeritus of Botany R. Scott Warren and U.S. Coast Guard Academy Marine Science Section Chief Karina Mrakovcich. Thompson recounted a number of the Center's exciting activities, which are also featured in this newsletter. He then invited Professor Jane Dawson, associate director of the Center, to share highlights from the certificate

seminars of 2009-2010, which she led. Dawson reported that during the spring seminar, when looking closely at the Environmental Sustainability Baseline Assessment, it was the seniors who would challenge the status quo, saying, “Yes, Connecticut College prides itself on being green, but we can go greener.” The ceremony continued as Associate Director Diana Whitelaw shared personal recollections of the certificate students' journey to this important day. As she introduced each student, Executive Director Glenn Dreyer presented each with a certificate and a personalized recycled green glass paperweight engraved with the words of Richard H. Goodwin, “This world of ours has need of those who deeply care.”

When the students received their certificates, they spoke briefly of their journeys and where their careers and crusades will take them after Connecticut College. Melanie Bender is excited to continue campus activism as an advocate for the public interest with U.S. PIRG on campuses across the country. Erin Brady will pursue the passion that began well before her days at Connecticut College, grew through her junior internship and senior integrative project, and now leads her to Teach for America to help children in New Orleans learn about the environment. Ariella Cohen, a Phi Beta Kappa scholar, is looking forward to spending

The Certificate Class of 2010: Back row, from left: Andy Irwin, Sturgis Sobin and Kevin Izzo. Front row, from left: Charles van Rees, Melanie Bender, Lily Kunin, Maria Figliola, Erica Hildebrand, Ariella Cohen and Erin Brady

the summer outdoors in the salt marshes of Plum Island working with Professor Warren. Maria Figliola is seeking a position that will combine her interest in the environment and visual communication to pursue a career in graphic design and social marketing. Erica Hildebrand, another Phi Beta Kappa inductee, will head to the Pacific Northwest this fall to enroll in the cellular and molecular biology graduate program at the University of Washington. Andy Irwin, who in his senior integrative project described leveraging “sense of place” as a means to achieve resilience in small cities, will help to define place by carrying out GIS/cartography work in Maine. Kevin Izzo hopes to find a position in the renewable energy field as an environmental consultant in Washington, D.C., and appealed to the audience for networking advice. Lily Kunin hoped she would receive an offer soon for a position in a Boston-based NGO dedicated to social change. Sturgis Sobin aims to return to the D.C. area, where he interned, to secure a position in an environmental consulting firm. Charles

van Rees, a Winthrop Scholar and recipient of the Helen F. Mathieson '52 Award for Excellence in the Certificate Program, will expand his expertise in biodiversity conservation at the Audubon Center at Bent of the River in Southbury, Conn.

Finally, Dreyer introduced the guest speaker, Warren, who hardly needed an introduction. From 1970 to 2007, Warren taught courses from the freshman to senior level and supported students as summer research assistants, believing that student participation in research is a critical part of undergraduate science education. Soon after arriving at Connecticut College, he was introduced to salt marshes by his botany department colleague, William Niering, adding the perspectives of a plant physiologist to questions in salt marsh ecology. A related focus was restoration ecology of tidally restricted *Phragmites*-dominated marshes, where another colleague, Paul Fell, joined them, bringing expertise in invertebrates and fish for a broader, system-level perspective. For the past seven years Warren and colleagues from the Marine Biological Laboratory in Woods Hole and Louisiana State University have been studying impacts of nitrogen loading on salt marshes in the Plum Island Sound estuary in Massachusetts.

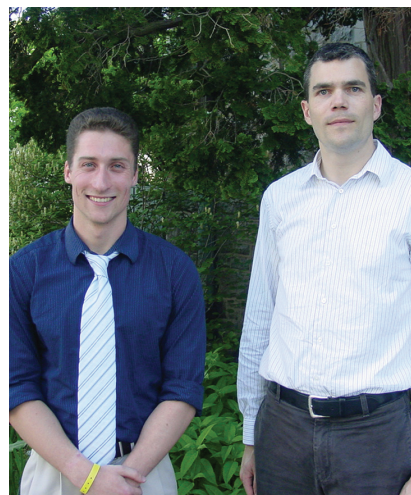
In his address to the graduating class, Professor Warren reflected on “the strength and clarity of vision that led Richard Goodwin and William Niering back in 1968 to convince a somewhat skeptical Connecticut College faculty to approve a new interdisciplinary major entitled Human Ecology. They clearly saw that humans were degrading our environment, as well as the environment of every other species on the planet. As Earth is the only planet we know of with a life support system, this degradation was a matter of some practical, as well as academic, concern and therefore an appropriate topic to be addressed by a liberal arts college.”

That vision rings even truer more than 40 years later as we face the challenge of massive environmental degradation in the Gulf of Mexico due to the vast oil leak which, on the day of our ceremony, had been gushing for more than a month. Warren lamented that all our scientific understanding about how the Gulf Coast ecosystem works and all the engineering designed to prevent disaster have done little good to prevent the catastrophic failure or to deal with its



Recognition ceremony guest speaker R. Scott Warren, Jean C. Tempel '65 Professor Emeritus of Botany, and Goodwin-Niering Center Associate Director Diana Whitelaw

consequences. He remarked that while strong science is a requisite for environmental protection, it is not sufficient, and the recent spill makes this case with brutal clarity. Years ago Goodwin and Niering argued that an understanding of the human place and role should be at least as rigorous and sophisticated as that of the natural sciences. Yet Warren decries, in spite of the strong science of the Gulf ecosystem and a significant body of literature on the social structure and functioning of the Gulf Coast communities, the spill still happened. While irrevocable damage may have been



Charles van Rees '10, recipient of the Helen F. Mathieson '52 Award for Excellence in the Certificate Program, pictured with his honors thesis adviser, Derek Turner, associate professor of philosophy and center fellow

done to the Gulf of Mexico, Warren seemed confident that, as the Goodwin-Niering Center for the Environment has expanded its vision beyond the natural and social sciences, to include insights from the disciplines of philosophy and religion, history and literature, learning to see the world from such a range of perspectives will provide a powerful way forward to protect our planet.

CLASS OF 2010: SENIOR INTEGRATIVE PROJECTS

Melanie Bender

Major: *Environmental Studies*

Minor: *Government*

For her senior integrative project Melanie studied the lobster industry in Long Island Sound. In addition to hands-on work on lobster vessels measuring shell disease, an illness attributed to a bacterial infection afflicting the local population, Melanie looked at the effects of the disease on the livelihood of the lobstermen. In her paper, “Lobstermen of Long Island Sound and the Struggle with Shell Disease,” she describes the lack of public awareness about the issues and reality of this profession.

Erin Brady

Majors: *Government and Environmental Studies*

In her study, “Closing the Achievement Gap with Ecological Literacy: An Examination of Environmentally Focused Char-

ter Schools in Urban Centers as a Tool for Education Reform,” Erin describes two challenges facing our nation: impending environmental disaster from global climate change and a public education system that is failing the needs of many children. With a deep commitment to improving childhood educations, Erin recommends implementing an ecological literacy-based curriculum, not only in environmental charter schools but throughout the elementary and secondary public school system, with the goal of preparing citizens to tackle complex environmental problems.

Ariella Cohen

Major: *Environmental Studies*

Minor: *Economics*

Through two independent case studies reported in “The Intersection of Affordable Housing and the Environment

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WELCOME TO THE CLASS OF 2012!

The Goodwin-Niering Center is pleased to welcome 10 new sophomores into the certificate program.



Class of 2012: Back row, from left: Zoe Diaz-Martin, Leah Varga, Kelsey Cohen, Daniel Seehausen and Lucy Frye. Front row, from left: Elizabeth Noonan, Bryson Cowan, Alyssa Peracchio and Anna Kaufman. Not pictured: Stephen Dworkin

Kelsey Cohen

Proposed Major: *Architectural Studies*
Areas of Interest: Green living, sustainable design

Bryson Cowan

Proposed Majors: *Government/Environmental Studies*
Area of Interest: Empowering women in environmental challenges

Zoe Diaz-Martin

Proposed Majors: *Latin American Studies/Environmental Studies*
Area of Interest: Conservation of biodiversity in South American national parks

Stephen Dworkin

Proposed Major: *English*
Areas of Interest: Experiential and scientific/environmental writing

Lucy Frye

Proposed Major: *Architectural Studies*
Areas of Interest: Historic preservation and sustainable design

Anna Kaufman

Proposed Major: *Biology*
Area of Interest: Multi-use marine sanctuaries with controlled nature tourism

Elizabeth Noonan

Proposed Major: *Environmental Studies*
Areas of Interest: Green business and environmental sustainability

Alyssa Peracchio

Proposed Major: *Biology*
Area of Interest: Effects of toxins on coral reef ecosystems

Daniel Seehausen

Proposed Major: *Environmental Studies*
Area of Interest: History and future of the alternative energies market

Leah Varga

Proposed Majors: *Biology/Dance*
Area of Interest: Effects of pollution on marine ecosystems and immorality of our actions

JUNIOR INTERNSHIPS PLANS

AS THE CLASS OF 2010 begin their post-Connecticut College lives, the Goodwin-Niering Center students from the Class of 2011 are preparing for inspirational and diverse summer internships reflecting the multifaceted and global nature of the certificate program. Watch for our Fall 2010 online newsletter to read about their experiences.

Sarah Berkley: IslandWood, Bainbridge Island, Wash.

Catherine Brookes: TerraCycle, Trenton, N.J.

Nita Contreras: Pan Himalayan Grassroots Development Foundation, Ranikhet, India

Save the Date!

Next conference theme:
Smart Growth? Environmental and Social Implications

The 2011 Elizabeth Babbott Conant Interdisciplinary Conference on the Environment will be held March 4-5, 2011. "Smart Growth" is a series of concepts developed from urban planning roots that have come to represent an alternative to sprawl. Key features of smart growth are mixed land uses, walkable neighborhoods with housing for a variety of income levels and needs, preserved open space including farmland, new development concentrated in existing communities, and multiple public transportation options.

This two-day conference will provide a broad overview of our understanding of the impact of development patterns and suggestions for more thoughtful approaches to planning. Beginning with a session defining the problems associated with historic development patterns, we will move to discussions of the environmental impact of smart growth, and conclude by considering promising directions for smarter urban and suburban development.

The mix of speakers and topics should appeal to a wide audience of college students and faculty, concerned citizens, NGO representatives, and policymakers. More information on the conference will appear in the next issue of *Environmental Connections* and on the Center website.

Flora Drury: EPA Region I Energy and Climate Unit, Boston

Janan Evans-Wilent: Dolphin Communication Project, Mystic, Conn.

Christopher Haight: TIDE Project, Plum Island Estuary, Mass.

Kristiane Huber: Tribal Link, New York City

Fiona Jensen: Appalachian Mountain Club, Pinkham Notch, N.H.

Christopher Krupenye: Dudongo Forest Reserve, Masindi, Uganda

Eric LeFlore: Global White Lion Protection Trust, Greater Timbavati, South Africa

Scott Siedor: U.S. Justice Department, Washington, D.C.

SENIOR PROJECTS

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Through the Lens of Chapter 40B,” Ariella describes the controversy and intrigue that arises when two Massachusetts towns must deal simultaneously with environmental and affordable-housing issues. She discovered that Chapter 40B is not perfect but it does provide avenues for concerned town residents to address potential environmental problems, and even prevent them, by creating an affordable housing plan. Ariella finds that it is essential to involve local environmental leaders and officials from the Department of Environmental Protection in the discussion.

Maria Figliola

Major: *Environmental Studies*

Minor: *Art*

In the introduction to her paper, “Visual Communication of Climate Change,” Maria writes that climate change is a very complex issue to communicate because it is abstract, temporal and not immediately visible. For her senior integrative project Maria examines how climate change advocacy campaigns have utilized the visual extensively in their print material or advertisements in order to grab the attention of the viewer and then transform the attention into action. She critiques these materials using a framework of visual communication theory. She discovers that while they can strongly influence the viewer to react with a behavioral response, images must be used with careful intention so as not to simplify the issue, distance the viewer emotionally or contribute to “green fatigue.”

Erica Hildebrand

Major: *Biological Sciences*

While the Great Sippewissett Marsh on Cape Cod has been studied for more than 30 years for the effects of treated sewage fertilization, the study described in “Differences in Community Composition of Ammonia Oxidizing Archaea in Control and High Nitrogen Fertilizer Plots of the Great Sippewissett Marsh, Cape Cod, MA,” is the first of its kind. Erica’s research paper compares the community composition of ammonia oxidizing archaea (AOA), microorganisms that mediate the transformation of ammonium into nitrite, in areas with nitrogen fertilization and with no nitrogen fertilization. She determines that AOA communities exposed to long-term nitrogen fertilization have lower

diversity and evenness and different community composition than control AOA communities in the same marsh. Erica concludes that regulation of nitrogenous waste and non-point source pollution is crucial to allow these microbial communities to grow and perform their ecosystem functions.

Andrew Irwin

Major: *Environmental Studies*

In his honors thesis, “Challenges and Opportunities for Climate Change Resilience in Small Cities,” Andy describes how small cities seek to maintain and enhance a quality of life through focusing on resilience. He considers two case studies of Keene, N.H., and New London, cities similar in size, in order to highlight attempts to build resilience. He reports that the former has been very successful in using a systems approach, while a multitude of barriers limit New London’s movement toward resilience. James cites political capacity, long-range planning and leveraging of unique qualities as routes to move small cities toward climate change resilience.

Kevin Izzo

Major: *Environmental Studies*

Minor: *Economics*

As an avid sports enthusiast and environmentalist, Kevin seeks to research and analyze the progressing trend toward environmentally sustainable large sporting events in his work, “A Study of Environmentally Sustainable Large Sporting Events.” Kevin provides an insight into the trends, motivations and methods for holding such events and presents case studies of environmental failures and economic incentives for implementing green initiatives. Kevin makes a compelling case that environmental initiatives and large sporting events should not be considered mutually exclusive.

Lily Kunin

Major: *Economics*

Lily argues in her paper, “Renewable Energy: Discovering and Overcoming the Barriers in Rural Areas of Developing Countries,” that renewable energy can serve as a catalyst to alleviate poverty and, more specifically, can help to realize the Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations established in 2000 by all 192 member states. Lily presents case studies on Senegal and

China, two countries with high levels of poverty in their rural regions and abundant natural resources for production of renewable energy. Although the barriers are significant, Lily puts forward a number of measures that could overcome them, promoting renewable energy as holding the potential for a profound effect on poverty alleviation.

Sturgis Sobin

Majors: *Economics and Environmental Studies*

In his study, “U.S. Green Building Policy and the Stimulus Package of 2009: Promoting Green Building in Absence of National Regulation,” Sturgis investigates the economic and environmental issues surrounding U.S. green building policies in the context of the economic climate, with special emphasis on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Sturgis argues that the impact of both the built environment and climate change on our national welfare make a strong case for the need for increasingly energy efficient and environmentally friendly building practices. Furthermore, he contends that sustainable building practices will translate into a huge source of societal benefits, including mitigating climate change. In spite of all the recent distressing financial news, Sturgis remains hopeful that current policies could foreshadow what may come for green building proliferation in the 21st century.

Charles van Rees

Majors: *Biological Sciences and Environmental Studies*

Minor: *Hispanic Studies*

Charles contends in his honor thesis, “Of Ethics and Ecosystems: A Bifocal Perspective on Biodiversity Conservation,” that while there is a general consensus among conservationists, differences in opinion abound with respect to three core issues: the nature of biodiversity, the justification for its preservation, and how best to go about preserving it. Charles employs a comprehensive literature review in the fields of philosophy of biology, conservation and environmental ethics to create practical responses to these difficult questions. He uses Costa Rica as a case study to address the question of how to conserve biodiversity and lists suggestions for future conservation management.

EARTH FEST!

CELEBRATING the 40th anniversary of Earth Day, our annual Earth Fest celebration was held on Tempel Green on Sunday, April 18 — the rain date for this big event. Despite the date change, more than 200 adults and children showed up between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. to participate in activities, view 30 tabletop displays, listen to great music by local bands and Connecticut College a cappella groups, and enjoy organic luncheon fare.



*Clockwise from top:
Hands-on activities provided by Mountain
Laurel Chapter of Wild Ones
Student club participation: Spokespeople
Organic lunch served by Sprout! and
Renewable Energy Club students*

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