

# ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP CENTER OF WARREN WILSON COLLEGE

## HIGHLIGHTS OF PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

### JULY 1, 2009 TO JUNE 30, 2010

*The mission of Warren Wilson College is to provide an education combining liberal arts study, work, and service with a strong commitment to environmental responsibility and experiential opportunities for international and cross-cultural understanding in a setting that promotes wisdom, spiritual growth, and contribution to the common good.*

#### Introduction

*The mission of the Environmental Leadership Center (ELC) is to raise awareness of local, national and global environmental realities and to inspire caring citizens - especially our youth - to reflect, to communicate, and to act as responsible caretakers of the earth.*

Since its founding in 1996, The Environmental Leadership Center (ELC) has supported the College's mission with programs inspire the campus community to fulfill its commitments to environmental responsibility and sustainability; provide leadership experiences for students; build regional partnerships and foster progress toward just and sustainable community through outreach that uses the campus as a demonstration site for best practices.

In 2007, President Sandy Pfeiffer became the first college president in North Carolina to sign the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment. The ELC manages this pledge to climate neutrality and sustainability education.

Warren Wilson is committed to educating young leaders capable of creating a just, resilient, and sustainable future for the generations to come. The ELC plays a key role in achieving this mission.

#### External Motivators

*ELC programs respond to the following national trends and needs.*

- From the Kellogg report, "Leadership Reconsidered: Engaging Higher Education in Social Change," 2000: *If the next generation of citizen leaders is to be engaged and committed to leading for the common good, then the institutions which nurture them must be engaged in the work of the society and the community, modeling effective leadership and problem-solving skills, demonstrating how to accomplish change for the common good. This requires institutions of higher education to set their own house in order, if they expect to produce students who will improve society.*
- From a survey of employers commissioned by the Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2006. *There is an intellectual gap around solving an emergent class of high-profile problems that cut across sectors and require integrative knowledge derived from many professional fields. This is exactly the kind of knowledge-building opportunity universities should embrace, especially to give leaders an enriched portfolio of competencies.*

#### Infrastructure

*The Environmental Leadership Center (ELC) is supported by a student crew of 16 to 20 and the following staff positions: Executive Director (and Chief Sustainability Official); Education Director; Administrative Assistant; Director of Community Outreach; faculty advisors assist with these initiatives: INSULATE! (Lucy Lawrence, social work), Mountain Green Sustainable Communities Conference (Ali Climo, social work), The Swannanoa Journal (Catherine Reid, undergraduate writing), Sustainability Speakers Series (Laura Lengnick, environmental studies), and the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory (John Brock, chemistry)*

## **Highlights of Program Activities: July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010**

### **Campus Greening Seed Grants**

*The ELC provides three grants each year for up to \$500 each, through a competitive process that awards innovation and sustainable problem solving on campus. Previous Campus Greening Seed Grants helped to launch the CowPie Café, the EcoDorm permaculture landscaping, and the Garden's tinctures and salves.*

Awarded grants in 2010 to construct a living roof on the recycling center's new cob shed and to purchase shower timers to reduce water usage in dorms

### **Climate Action Initiatives**

*In 2008, WWC pledged to the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment to carbon neutrality and sustainability education.*

- Managed the College's pledge to the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment (ACUPCC) to become carbon neutral
- Managed formal climate change partnership with the City of Asheville

### **EcoTeam**

*This science-based, third grade curriculum, developed in 1997 in partnership with the Jane Goodall Institute's Roots & Shoots program, is taught by Warren Wilson's ELC crew to Buncombe County students.*

- Taught EcoTeam curriculum in Buncombe County and Asheville City schools to 63 classes that engaged 1,400 students in lessons – 75% of the third graders in the county - at Black Mountain Primary, Carolina Day, Charles Bell, Claxton, Emma, Evergreen Charter, Glen Arden, Hall Fletcher, Haw Creek, Johnston, Sand Hill Venable, Woodfin, Vance, W.D. Williams, West Buncombe, Art SpaceCharter
- Secured a \$2,000 grant from Progress Energy to develop and field test two new EcoTeam units on Energy and Climate

### **Fundraising**

*WWC supports approximately 58% of the operating budget of the ELC. The ELC worked closely with Advancement in 2009-2010 to coordinate its fundraising and secure the remainder of its annual operating budget from individuals, foundations, and corporations.*

### **Green Walkabout©**

*This guided tour of campus sustainability practices is offered to the public once per month and to interested faith-based, corporate, community, and higher education groups as requested.*

- Delivered 34 Green Walkabouts© to 617 participants including campus groups
- Provided custom Walkabouts for many diverse groups including the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations trustees, Waste Reduction Partners, Rotary delegation from Nigeria, Mountain Green Conference attendees, and several colleges and universities

### **INSULATE!**

*Inspired by student interest, the ELC has developed a community weatherization program to address the needs of people living below the poverty level. Community partners donate materials and expertise.*

- 110 WWC students weatherized 12 homes equaling over 1,249 hours of service
- Progress Energy awarded a \$5,000 grant to support a BUILDINSULATE! training program for colleges, universities and municipalities interested in developing their own weatherization program; thirteen representatives attended this ELC weekend workshop from institutions eg the University of Vermont and Furman University

### **Mountain Green Conference**

*Since 2007, the ELC has held this annual conference to promote sustainable community practices.*

- Hosted 186 attendees at the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual 2010 *Mountain Green* Conference, with 45 vendors
- Featured keynote speakers, visionary gerontologist Dr. Bill Thomas and biomimicry expert Barry Patterson

**Publications/Website/Green Calendar**

*The ELC produces Catalyst newsletter and the Internship Portfolio annually for distribution to friends of the College; internal guides to encourage sustainable campus practices; and the regional Green Calendar which links from the Asheville Citizen Times, NC Conservation Network, MAIN, the Mountain Xpress, and other sites to the WWC web*

**Sustainability Internship Program**

*Each year, the ELC selects up to 24 WWC students to serve as paid interns with some of the finest environmental and sustainability organizations in the nation. Students claim these internships are transformative learning experiences that galvanize their career goals.*

Internships were provided for 24 Warren Wilson students with 19 partners: the City of Asheville Transit Office, Asheville Design Center, Asheville HUB, Montreat Conference Center, The Wilderness Society, The Nature Conservancy – Outer Banks, the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, The Nature Conservancy- North Carolina, The Nature Conservancy -Long Island, Audubon Seabird Restoration Project, Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont, North Carolina Coastal Federation, Dogwood Alliance, Western NC Alliance, WildSouth, City of Asheville Energy Coordinator Office, CooperRiis, Black Mountain Community Garden and Interfaith Power and Light.

**The Swannanoa Journal**

*The ELC has produced the public radio program The Swannanoa Journal since 1997. In 2009 – 2010 students produced 52 Swannanoa Journals (5-minute environmental public radio essays) and broadcast them weekly to a 5-state region on two public radio stations - WNCW and MAIN-FM*

**Sustainability Speakers Series**

*Throughout the academic year, the ELC brings national experts to campus to address the most pressing issues of our time.*

- Offered 8 monthly seminars with such leaders as Grammy award winning singer Kathy Mattea, Dennis Quaintance, CEO and owner of Proximity Hotel - the nation’s only LEED-Platinum hotel, Robert Glennon, and Naomi Tutu
- Developed the *Heartstone* Earth Day Event featuring Janisse Ray