



CLIFTON COMMUNITY partnership



# sustainability initiatives

## Update



EMORY

April 2012

## Earth Day Sprouts into Month-Long Celebration at Emory

**A**round the world, Earth Day is celebrated on April 22. For many years, Emory's Earth Day events have spilled beyond the day to include numerous activities throughout a month-long celebration on campus and the surrounding community. These events help to raise awareness and educate the Emory community about the environment and share practical ways to preserve it.



This year just like the previous years, there is something planned for just about everyone. Activities include a film screening about urban farming, a special farmers market featuring educational tables and vendors, a "green" eggs and ham demonstration will provide a hands-on display to graduating seniors about how to make a sustainable and nutritious omelet using farm eggs and local seasonal produce and the annual Top Sustainable Chef competition that challenges student chefs to prepare a dish using a secret and sustainable ingredient.

View the complete listing of Earth Week events [here](#).

## 'Green Jobs' Grow at Emory

**T**he slow and steady increase of "green jobs" can be seen across the economic landscape and at Emory. The University's Office of Sustainability Initiatives (OSI) was created in 2006 with its first director, Ciannat Howett, and a program administrative assistant.



Over the years, the OSI has worked diligently with many students and staff to bring **Emory's sustainability vision** to everyone on campus and beyond.

Recently, by reducing costs in administrative functions, a reallocation was made to enhance sustainability and hire Emily Cumbie-Drake

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## Emory Launches Certificate in Sustainability Program

**C**ome learn about Emory's new Certificate in Sustainability at a free information session on Thursday, April 12, at 7 p.m. Register [here](#) to attend the information session.

Embracing a sustainable future is an important objective that many of us share -- but how exactly can we accomplish this goal, and what resources will be required? How are breakthroughs in knowledge, technology, and behavior change strategies for more sustainable practices worldwide relevant locally? Come learn how in a series of classes where leaders in sustainability from across the region tell their stories and provide lessons for where you work, live, and volunteer.

### What is sustainability?

The word "sustainability" is used in a variety of ways, and the definition continues to change as the field evolves. In 1987 United Nations appointed Brundtland Commission drafted this definition: "Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

This definition is the foundation for the field of sustainability today. In addition, sustainability now includes consideration of three dimensions: equity, economy, and environment. This certificate program will cover all aspects of sustainability.

### Program learning objectives

- Knowledge of basic principles and concepts related to the three dimensions of sustainability: equity, economy and environment.
- Ability to analyze sustainability dilemmas and trade-offs.

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Issues of Emory's Sustainability Update are available at <http://sustainability.emory.edu>



# Waste Not, Want Not, Earn Gold Stars

**W**hen Emory's School of Medicine decided to clean out the labs and offices on the fifth floor of the Briarcliff Campus, leaders enlisted the help of the Office of Sustainability Initiatives and Emory Waste Management and Recycling.

Rather than tossing everything out, they were able to divert nearly 90 percent of the material from the floor to construction, single-stream, metals and electronics recycling.

The teams also collected four pallet-sized boxes of lab consumables and supplies that were directed to MedShare for distribution to developing countries. A longtime Emory and Emory Healthcare partner, MedShare is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving health care and the environment through the recovery and redistribution of surplus health supplies to those in need.

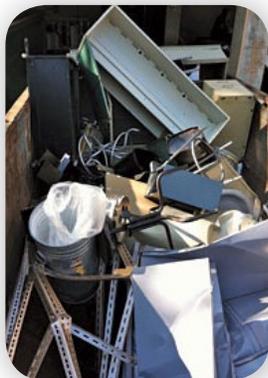
The effort was led by teams from Campus and Auxiliary Services, which includes Emory Recycles; Emory Secure Shredding; Waste Management; Staging Services; Surplus Properties; Pest Management; and the Environmental, Health, and Safety Office.

Emory's widespread commitment to campus sustainability recently earned the University a gold rating in the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System (STARS). STARS is a self-reporting sustainability evaluation tool developed by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education, with broad participation from the higher education community.

Emory's evaluation by STARS was based on a comprehensive list of credits in three major areas: education and research; operations; and planning, administration and engagement.

Of 300 schools that registered to participate in STARS, 190 have been ranked to date; Emory is one of just 18 to be rated STARS Gold, the highest rating achieved so far. "The STARS system is the preeminent sustainability rating in higher education, so this ranking is significant and an important honor," says Ciannat Howett, director of the Office of Sustainability Initiatives.

Emory received STARS innovation credit for programs that convert research animal bedding to nutrient-rich compost, allow for surgical gown reuse and sharps container recycling, and support sustainable foods (such as the Thanksgiving offering featuring **heritage breed turkeys**), to name just a few.



# Special Transportation Vote in July

**O**n July 31, Georgia voters will go to the polls to select their choice of candidates in the General Primary.

Voters will also have an unprecedented opportunity to vote on a referendum for a one percent sales tax to be dedicated to specific transportation projects and improvements approved last October by elected officials representing 12 regions throughout the state.

In the 10-county metro Atlanta region, the tax would generate \$7.22 billion over a 10-year period if approved. The Clifton Corridor Transit Initiative, which would provide much needed rail connectivity from the Lindbergh MARTA station to the organizations in the Clifton Corridor, including Emory, the CDC, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta and the VA Medical Center, as well as the surrounding neighborhoods, is slated to receive \$700 million from the sales tax for construction of a light rail line.

The funding would also provide for a redesigned and newly constructed bridge on Clifton Road, and a redesigned, dramatically improved Haygood Drive, allowing for enhanced access throughout the Clifton Corridor.

With over 30,000 employees in the Clifton Corridor and an estimated additional 48,000 cars passing through the Corridor each day, a transit alternative to reduce automobile congestion and dependency is critical to the economic vitality of the area and quality of life for those who work, visit and live in the Corridor.

The deadline for registering to vote for the July 31 primary is July 2.

For more information on voter registration, obtaining absentee ballots and polling locations, please visit the following websites: [www.sos.ga.gov/elections/](http://www.sos.ga.gov/elections/) or [www.dekalbvotes.com](http://www.dekalbvotes.com).



*(Sustainability Program continued from front page)*

- Experience with problem solving in the field of sustainability.
- Understanding the multiple approaches to communication about sustainability.
- Familiarity with innovative practices and solutions.
- Experience with practices of reflection and restoration for self-sustainability and personal wellbeing.
- Access to a network of sustainability leaders in the metro Atlanta region.

## Certificate requirements

To receive the certificate, students will take three courses and complete a capstone project as part of the final course. Students must comply with the 80% attendance requirement and complete all course assignments with 80% proficiency or higher. An application, resume, and \$35 application fee are required.

## Format

The program will launch with course one, Organizational Change for Sustainability, in May of 2012. Further details regarding the remaining courses and capstone will be available beginning May 2012. Students may enroll in the program on a course-by-course basis and all courses will provide CEUs.

Please visit [Emory Continuing Education](#) for more information.



# Environmental Artwork Adorns Campus

**T**ake an empty plastic bottle out of the trash. Slash the label and the top off with a knife, then use scissors to cut the base into a spiraling ribbon. Now clamp the plastic ribbon and blast it with 1,000 degrees F from a heat gun.



Voila! The plastic bottle becomes a long slender stalk curving into a dainty little cup at one end, like a pitcher plant. [See how the sculpture was made here.](#)

Environmental artist John Grade (pronounced “grotty”) was a visiting artist fall semester at Emory, heading up a monumental public art project called “Piedmont Divide.” Over 13 days in 2011, 20,000 plastic water bottles were transformed into two massive sculptures. One of the sculptures hangs from the trees on the Quadrangle; the other suspends over the lake at Lullwater Preserve.

Approach the Emory Quadrangle on a sunny afternoon and you will see what looks like a giant crystal chandelier floating amid the canopy of the oak trees. As you walk beneath it, the swaying “chandelier” appears as ephemeral as a cloud, or a seeding dandelion.

One thing that the “Piedmont Divide” does not resemble is the thousands of recycled plastic bottles that comprise it.

“I didn’t expect the sort of precious quality of the material, just how much of the sunlight and wind would do this,” says the sculpture’s creator, Grade.

Emory’s visual arts department invited Grade, a Seattle-based artist who draws from science and nature, to create a piece for the University in co-sponsorship with the Office of Sustainability Initiatives. After a whirlwind two-day visit, and many meetings with faculty, Grade decided to do a piece that would reflect the campus environment, as well as Emory’s research into [West Nile virus](#) and [global water sustainability](#).

Grade returned to his Seattle studio to ponder what material he should use to tie all of those themes together. “It was an ‘ah ha moment,’” Grade says of the idea of recycling plastic recycling drinking bottles. “I realized that there was this relationship with Coca-Cola supporting the University, and I thought about how to use that product in some way for this environment.”

On the far side of campus from the Quad’s floating chandelier, the second half of the “Piedmont Divide” is set in the lake of Lullwater woods. There, the plastic stalks rise from the water like crystal reeds.

Grade says he wants “Piedmont Divide” to help people make connections, between different environments and between different water systems and how both nature and man use them.

Read more about Grade’s artwork at Emory [here](#).

This exhibit is part of Emory’s [year-long water theme](#) in which The Center for Creativity and Arts has collaborated with the Office of Sustainability Initiatives.

# Climate Action Plan Approved, Carbon Reduction Goals Identified

**E**more University has adopted a Climate Action Plan that chronicles the University’s sustainability efforts to date, and sets forth a series of goals and recommendations for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the future, ultimately down by 85 percent per square foot by 2050. To reach this goal would require significant changes in the way Georgia Power sources its electricity; Emory has used their long-term plan beliefs.

The plan proposes a comprehensive approach to reach these goals and recommends emission reduction strategies in a number of categories. These areas include sustainable building and construction, energy, transportation, waste management, food, procurement, academic programs and individual action.

At the mid-point of Emory’s 10-year Strategic Plan, the University is on track to achieve many goals outlined in its sustainability initiative. Emory has made steady progress in the area of energy reduction. Over the last five years, total energy use is down more than 20 percent per square foot. Emory’s [goal is to reduce energy use](#) by 25 percent per square foot by 2015 from 2005 baseline levels.

“The Climate Action Plan builds on a strong base of institutional support and grassroots action,” says Ciannat Howett, director of Emory’s Office of Sustainability Initiatives. “The next steps for reducing carbon emissions include maximizing energy efficiency in new construction and major renovation projects, promoting further alternatives to single occupancy vehicle use and partnering with suppliers and service providers to reach our goals.”

*(Green Jobs continued from front page)*

and Kelly O’Day Weisinger as sustainability program coordinators for OSI.

In her role, Cumbie-Drake will work with University committees and various campus groups in fulfilling Emory’s sustainability vision. She graduated from Emory College in 2010 with a B.A. in anthropology and minor in global health, culture and society. As an Emory student, she was actively engaged in sustainability efforts on campus. She served on Emory’s Sustainable Food Committee, managed the Green Bean Coffee Cart and researched local organic farmers for her honors thesis.

As a 2010/2011 Robert T. Jones Scholar, Cumbie-Drake spent the year after her graduation in St. Andrews, Scotland and traveling and worked at an eco-village in Greece, volunteered on organic farms in Norway and Romania and attended Slow Food’s Terra Madre conference in Torino, Italy as a Slow Food Emory delegate. Most recently she worked for Heifer International.

O’Day Weisinger will collaborate with Emory University and Emory Healthcare leadership in helping to fulfill Emory’s sustainability vision. She spent the previous two years working in transportation and sustainability community development with Midtown Alliance in Midtown Atlanta. She acquired a master’s in environmental law and policy from Vermont Law School in 2009 while working full-time as assistant director of admissions for the law school.

These positions were funded via reductions in other administrative costs and direct funding from Emory Healthcare, so the investments incorporate the notion of prioritizing limited resource use – all very consistent with sustainable principles.

# LEED-certified buildings, recycling initiative and sustainability courses give Emory head start

The University has a head start with its **large portfolio of LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified buildings**, comprehensive alternative commuting program and programs to foster research and teaching in sustainability. Emory's green building program is consistently ranked as one of the top American programs based on square footage of certified green building space, with over two million square feet certified.

The recycling initiative encourages every member of the Emory community to reduce, recycle and reuse to minimize the amount of waste sent to local landfills. Emory's vision is to reduce waste by 65 percent and recycle 100 percent of its electronics waste and road construction materials. The University also aspires to compost at least 95 percent of its food waste and animal bedding by 2015.

Additionally, Emory has implemented initiatives designed to incorporate sustainability across the curriculum. Almost 80 percent of academic departments in the College of Arts and Sciences offer sustainability-related courses; approximately 60 percent of departments University-wide offer sustainability-related courses.

Matthew Early, Emory's vice president for campus services, adds that "the Climate Action Plan outlines a series of energy-saving steps that Emory should be undertaking in any event in the coming years to save money and be wise stewards of our resources, with or without the threat of global warming from greenhouse gas emissions. The case for minimizing energy usage through every means at our disposal is a compelling one and serves as a powerful motivator for this plan."

Carbon offset purchases have not figured in the climate action goals and unlike some peer institutions, the scope of the plan and its carbon reduction goals include all Emory Healthcare hospital and clinical facilities on Clifton Road.

The **Climate Action Plan (PDF)** was developed through the cooperation of two committees appointed by Emory President James Wagner, established in 2010. They studied the issues, assessed feasibility and conducted extensive outreach to develop ambitious and achievable goals for reducing Emory's greenhouse gas emissions reduction.

Climate Action Plan Goals (with a 2005 baseline):

- By 2020: a 20 percent reduction in total emissions; 35 percent per square foot (based on projected growth in square footage).
- By 2036: a 36 percent reduction in total emissions; 50 percent per square foot (based on projected growth in square footage).
- By 2050: a 50 percent reduction in total emissions; 85 percent per square foot (based on projected growth in square footage).



## Who we are ...

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