

Monday, March 31, 2014 By Kelly Homan Rodoski

SU Launches Zimride Ridesharing Program

Syracuse University has launched Zimride, a new ridesharing program aimed at providing transportation options and benefits for students, faculty and staff. A goal of the program is also to help to reduce the University's carbon footprint.

The private service connects potential drivers and passengers easily, helping to make carpooling an easier option. Cornell University and Ithaca College are among the area colleges and universities enrolled in the network.

At SU, the program will be offered and supported by three campus departments: the

Sustainability Division, the **Office of Parking and Transit Services** and the **Office of Off-Campus and Commuter Services**.



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Individuals with an SU e-mail address can access the system through <http://www.zimride.com/syr>. Zimride engages users through social profiles and optional Facebook functionality. Individuals can make connections based on being a driver or passenger, departure and arrival times, and other criteria. Zimride is a tool not just for use in

commuting to campus, but can also be used to arrange rides from campus to other points around the country, such as students going home for weekends or breaks.

The SU Zimride network will also include a module that will allow the University to post the location of away sporting events to all SU members, providing easy access to finding or offering a ride to the game.

Zimride will provide an essential service to the University, both in bolstering the University's commitment to the Climate Action Plan, working toward carbon neutrality and helping to counter the tight parking situation on campus, says Scot Vanderpool, manager with the Office of Parking and Transit Services. Carpooling enables people to better share the cost of parking permits on campus, gas prices and car maintenance.

“This is really something we support and are hoping that faculty, staff and students will find very beneficial,” Vanderpool says. Campus parking permits are pro-rated, so individuals can turn their permit in if they find a carpool match through Zimride, he says.

The University previously engaged with a ride-share system that was not efficient and did not work out, Vanderpool says. After extensive research, the University decided on Zimride as the best available system due to its proven track record and ease of use.

Elin Riggs, director of the University’s Office of Off-Campus and Commuter Services, says the service may be especially helpful to commuters such as students who drive in with parents who work at the University, offering more flexibility for their schedules. It will also help commuters with gas and maintenance costs, and hopefully reduce congestion in the neighborhoods surrounding the University.

“I think it will be a very good thing for our University community,” she says.

“This is an effort to meet our community’s needs while reducing our impact on the climate,” says Melissa Cadwell, marketing manager for the Sustainability Division. “It’s a win-win situation.”

For more information on Zimride and rideshare options, contact Scot Vanderpool at svanderp@syr.edu.