

## **SU receives strong marks in sustainability practices from Sustainable Endowments Institute**

Syracuse University has been named one of the Campus Sustainability Leaders among higher education institutions in the United States and Canada, earning high marks for its efforts to create a more sustainable college environment and encourage renewable energy usage, according to a report issued by the Sustainable Endowments Institute.

As noted in the institute's "College Sustainability Report Card," SU earned top grades in the categories of "Administration" and "Climate Change & Energy." In earning an "A" in each of these categories, the University is recognized for its implementation of several administrative committees addressing campus sustainability issues -- including an energy council, a utility committee and a building sustainability committee -- and the hiring of a manager and staff to oversee energy conservation efforts on campus. In the "Climate Change & Energy" category, SU is lauded for its \$1.8 million investment in energy efficiency; a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification policy for all new building and renovation projects; and the purchase of renewable energy credits equal to 22,000 megawatt-hours of small-hydro and wind energy, making Syracuse the seventh-largest higher education purchaser of renewable energy in the country.

The report also makes note of the research taking place at the Syracuse Center of Excellence in Environmental and Energy Systems (CoE) to develop advances in improving sustainability in built and urban environments.

The report rated the 100 colleges and universities with the largest higher education endowment funds in the United States and Canada. Policies in administration, climate change and energy, food and recycling, green building, endowment transparency, investment priorities and shareholder engagement were reviewed at 66 private institutions and 34 public institutions. The Campus Sustainability Leaders list recognizes SU and 25 other institutions (both public and private) that received an average grade of A- or better in the four campus-related report categories.

"This is the first time that colleges have been assessed on both campus and endowment sustainability policies," says Mark Orłowski, executive director of the Sustainable Endowments Institute. "Linking campus sustainability efforts with endowment investment policies is important because it assures a unified sustainability vision for the institution."

"Syracuse University has become a leader among higher education institutions in the areas of energy conservation, green building and sustainability," says Louis G. Marcoccia, SU executive vice president and chief financial officer. "We're pleased by the institute's recognition of our initiatives."

The efforts made by SU Food Services to include more locally produced foods in the menu, along with the University's ongoing recycling efforts and programs, earned SU a grade of "B" in the "Food & Recycling" category. The University's commitment to follow LEED guidelines for all new building and renovation projects since 2005, among other sustainable practices, earned SU a "B" in the "Green Building" category.

In the category of "Investment Priorities," the University was given a "C" for prioritizing "investing to maximize profit." Barbara Wells, the University's treasurer, says, "The University's investment priority is not based solely on maximizing total return. Instead, the University's investment policies are used as instruments in furtherance of the University's asset management goals, which include preservation of capital, preservation of purchasing power, growth of assets, and generation of a fair and reasonable return on investments, while adhering to commonly accepted portfolio management best practices, including asset diversification."

Many institutions -- including the vast majority of the private universities rated, SU among them -- were given "F" grades in the categories of "Endowment Transparency" and "Shareholder Engagement." According to Wells, as a private institution, SU is not required to make its individual investment holdings public, and, in fact, a number of its holdings change daily. The University does disclose its asset allocation, performance, and the market value of its endowment fund through its participation in the annual endowment survey of the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO). In addition, the University is in the process of reviewing its proxy voting policy as it relates to shareholder engagement, Wells says.

SU's overall grade for sustainable progress was a "C+" based on the Sustainable Endowments Institute's averaging of the seven categories. Among the New York institutions rated, Columbia University and Vassar College received a "B" overall, Cornell University a "B-," Hamilton College and New York University a "C," Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and the University of Rochester a "C-," and The Rockefeller University a "D+."

To view the complete report, visit <http://www.endowmentinstitute.org>.