

Syracuse University featured in green colleges guidebook

Friday, April 30, 2010, *By News Staff*

Syracuse University is one of the country's most environmentally responsible colleges, according to The Princeton Review. The nationally known education services company selected SU for inclusion in a unique new resource it has created for college applicants, "The Princeton Review's Guide to 286 Green Colleges."

Developed by The Princeton Review in partnership with the *U.S. Green Building Council* (USGBC), the recently released "Guide to 286 Green Colleges" is the first free comprehensive guidebook focused solely on institutions of higher education that have demonstrated an above average commitment to sustainability in terms of campus infrastructure, activities and initiatives.

SU's listing in the guide highlights its many green and sustainable campus initiatives. These include signing the American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment (ACUPCC), commitment to USGBC's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards for new buildings and renovations, energy conservation using a comprehensive energy management system, voluntary purchase of low-impact hydropower, sustainable transportation initiatives, and extensive research opportunities available through the *Syracuse Center of Excellence*, among others.

"This sort of recognition is both gratifying and helpful," says Rick Martin, principal sustainability analyst in SU's Energy and Computing Management Department. "A lot of the work our Sustainability Division and other groups on campus do is out of the public eye. Being recognized by The Princeton Review brings the progress SU has made to the attention of the whole community and helps build momentum for the effort still ahead."

The "Guide to 286 Green Colleges" is based on a survey of hundreds of colleges nationwide and profiles the nation's most environmentally responsible campuses. It looks at an institution's commitment to building certification using USGBC's LEED green building certification program, environmental literacy programs, formal sustainability committees, use of renewable energy resources, recycling and conservation programs, and much more.

The free guide can be downloaded at www.princetonreview.com/greenguide and www.usgbc.org/campus.

"Students and their parents are becoming more and more interested in learning about and attending colleges and universities that practice, teach and support environmental responsibility," says Robert Franek, senior vice president and publisher of The Princeton Review. "According to our recent College Hope & Worries Survey, 64 percent of college applicants and their parents said having information about a school's commitment to the environment would impact their decision to apply to or attend it. We created this guide to help them evaluate how institutions like

Syracuse University focus on environmental responsibility so that they can make informed decisions as they move through the college assessment and application process.”

SU joins the ranks of outstanding universities and colleges nationwide that are leading the green movement through their own special programs and initiatives. In February 2007, SU became a charter signatory of the *American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment* (ACUPCC), making SU one of the largest private universities committed to emitting zero net greenhouse gases. This commitment will be fulfilled through the University’s Climate Action Plan (CAP), an institutional blueprint and timeline for SU to become climate neutral by 2040.

Released in September 2009, the CAP consists of five overlapping action components focusing on energy conservation through existing technologies; energy efficiency through emerging technologies; creation of energy from renewable sources; enhancing sustainability practices among students, faculty and staff; and limited use of energy offsets, as needed, that benefit local residents and businesses. Each component of the plan will feature one or more flagship projects that engage the public and facilitate scholarly research while consistently demonstrating that sustainability can be achieved in a fiscally responsible manner.

“Beyond the cost savings to an institution, even the simplest aspects of a green campus, such as increased use of natural light, have been found to improve student learning and quality of life,” says Rick Fedrizzi, president, CEO and founding chair of the USGBC. “Green facilities make colleges more attractive to students and can dramatically reduce energy costs. Higher education is a top priority market segment for USGBC because graduates of green colleges become incredible drivers of change when they call for similar surroundings in their jobs and communities.”

The Princeton Review noted that another unique aspect of the guide is that it provides important information on schools that have dedicated environmental studies curriculums. “By many accounts, there are going to be a lot of job opportunities related to the environment and sustainability,” says Franek. “For those who are interested in working in this growing sector, the guide highlights the schools that are doing an especially good job in preparing and placing the next generation of green professionals.”

The Princeton Review chose the 286 higher education institutions included in the guide based on the “Green Rating” scores each received in summer 2009 when The Princeton Review published Green Rating scores for 697 institutions in its online college profiles and/or annual college guidebooks. The Princeton Review’s “Green Rating” is a numerical score from 60–99 that’s based on several data points. In 2008, The Princeton Review began collaborating with USGBC to help make the Green Rating survey questions as comprehensive and inclusive as possible. Of 697 institutions to which The Princeton Review gave “Green Ratings” in 2009, the 286 in the guide received scores in the 80th or higher percentile. The Princeton Review does not rank the institutions in this book hierarchically (1 to 286) or in any of its books based on their “Green Rating” scores.

For additional information about the ACUPCC, SU’s Climate Action Plan, and to learn more about campus sustainability efforts and activities, visit the University’s Sustainability website

at <http://greenuniversecity.syr.edu>. To discuss a green idea to implement on campus, contact SU's Sustainability Division at sustain@syr.edu.