



People and Nature: Our Future is in the Balance

National Wildlife Federation®

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Ball State University Muncie, Indiana Spring 2004, Campus Assessment

BACKGROUND

Campus Profile

Ball State University (BSU), situated on 940 acres in Muncie, Indiana, serves approximately 19,000 students (45 percent male, 55 percent female). Seven academic colleges offer 120 undergraduate programs, 80 master's programs and 20 doctoral programs in 46 departments and schools. Some 750 faculty, 550 professional staff and 1,500 support personnel compose the employee base.

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GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Goals

Host the fifth in a series of international conferences on Greening of the Campus.

Accomplishments

The conference was held September 18-20, 2003. Some 250 people attended this fifth offering in the Greening of the Campus conference series. These attendees represented well over 100 universities from throughout North America and other parts of the world. The university continues to benefit tremendously from hosting this biannual gathering.

Challenges and Responses

We grappled with issues of balancing opportunity for free-time networking by attendees, with opportunities to exchange academic papers in a formal setting, against the chance to hear from renowned keynote speakers at the plenaries of the conference. We again had an outstanding list of keynote presenters and were able to create windows of time for networking by the many participants. We also assured access to the conference keynote presentations for the entire 18,000 students on campus by making all keynote presentations free and open to the public. We also correspondingly drew participation by members of the more general Muncie/East Central Indiana community in this way.

ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

Leaders and Supporters

We had the benefit of leadership by members of the same planning committee that has steered previous events. Even though our former Provost had moved into semiretirement as a Distinguished Professor of Environmental Studies, our new Provost was willing to maintain the past pattern of financial support and absorb some of the cost of this gathering. This once again enabled us to keep the registration fees at a modest level. On a daily basis, numerous articles were published in the local East Central Indiana newspaper and our own campus news bureau was very effective at posting news releases for distribution statewide. On occasion, these articles are picked up by communities throughout Indiana. As a spin-off of this initiative, talks continued to develop and initiatives were undertaken to mount the first Education for Sustainability West conference that is to be held in the fall of 2004 in Portland, Oregon. In fact, that conference is being billed as the counterpoint to the Ball State Greening of the Campus conference, and it is suggested that such gatherings will occur in alternating years into the future. Additional information can be found on the conference website at: www.bsu.edu/greening.

Funding

Funding for the conference came from a combination of in-house resources and attendee conference fees.

National Wildlife Federation's Campus Ecology® Program

Reference to Campus Ecology publications such as *Ecodemia* and *State of the Campus Environment*, as well as the reports about other campus efforts in the *Campus Environmental Yearbook*, continue to be touchstones in garnering support for the maintenance of this biannual conference offering.

CLOSING COMMENT

The strengths of this biannual gathering are reflected in the mix of those presenting papers, participating in workshops, and attending the keynote lectures. We again had members of the full constituency of university representation, including students, faculty, administrators, professional staff, procurement offices and facilities managers. Moreover, we had attendees from the surrounding East Central Indiana community and were able once again to leverage our connection with this network in follow-up discussions about the need to schedule a subsequent offering in September 2005.