



## **New Report Finds Colleges Hold Important Keys to Solving Climate Crisis** *Developing Solutions that Save Money and Protect Environment*

RESTON, VA, January 14, 2008—As Congress considers legislation that seeks to reduce the nation’s greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent by mid-century, colleges and universities may hold the key. Campuses nationwide have launched climate-driven projects that are taking a significant bite out of emissions along with saving money, according to a new publication from the National Wildlife Federation, *Higher Education in a Warming World: The Business Case for Climate Leadership on Campus*. The report demonstrates how schools are stepping up efforts in response to the potential threats of global warming and how these institutions are reaping multiple rewards.

The report highlights the business, educational and ethical arguments for reducing greenhouse gas emissions on campus, featuring best-practice examples from U.S. schools.

“With rising energy prices and growing energy insecurity, institutions of higher learning are finding that conserving energy and shifting to sources of safe, clean, renewable energy make sensible investments,” said Julian Keniry, director of the National Wildlife Federation’s campus leadership program.

Packed with examples from over 100 schools, “*Higher Education in a Warming World*” is an illustrated online guide for taking climate action. It covers the science of global warming, the opportunities and challenges confronting higher education, steps required to create a campus climate action plan, as well as dozens of cost-effective, practical solutions to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions on campus. These include energy efficiency, renewables (wind, solar, geothermal), co-generation, green buildings, transportation alternatives, habitat improvement and behavior change. A section on financing shows how schools have funded their climate initiatives through performance contracting, utility and government incentives, student self-assessed fees, revolving loan funds and other strategies.

“The science on global warming has provided the basis for a new level of urgency for cutting carbon emissions,” says John J. Magnuson, Emeritus Professor of Zoology and Limnology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and a scientist participating in the 1995 and 2001 assessments of the United Nation’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) “This report illustrates ways this reduction can be achieved at the campus level.”

A sampling of campus initiatives featured in the report includes:

- A 1.6 megawatt wind turbine built by **St. Olaf College** in Minnesota provides 33% of campus electricity, saving over \$250,000 in utility costs a year.
- **Richard Stockton College** in New Jersey is heated and cooled using one of the country’s largest closed-loop geothermal systems, cutting natural gas consumption by 70% and reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 13% below 1990 levels.
- At the **University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**, eight energy efficiency projects resulted in annual savings of \$365,000, with an average project payback of less than three years.

- The new Bren Hall laboratory at the **University of California, Santa Barbara** has a LEED-Platinum certified, energy efficient design that saves the campus \$50,000 in utility costs and prevents 275 tons of CO2 emissions per year.

“As traditional hubs of innovation, colleges can model emission reductions that can be replicated by companies and communities,” says Kevin Coyle, Vice President of Education for the National Wildlife Federation. “They can also generate the needed research and inventions that will be needed for large reductions while preparing a workforce that will embrace opportunities for a new low-carbon, energy-smart economy.”

It doesn't take a math major to figure out that good environmental stewardship is also good for the bottom line. As many campuses have discovered, clean energy and efficiency projects can yield an attractive return-on-investment, especially when funded in part with grants and other incentives. Using life-cycle accounting and by “bundling” different-sized projects together, campus emissions--and long-term costs--can be greatly reduced.

“We have been implementing cost effective and energy saving measures for more than a decade resulting in nearly a \$10 million annual savings,” says Hank Baier, Associate Vice President for Facilities and Operations at the University of Michigan. “The cumulative savings and environmental benefits provide a strong motivation for us to continue with our energy conservation efforts.”

Eban Goodstein, founding director of Focus the Nation and professor of economics at Lewis and Clark College in Oregon believes that, “as educators we would be failing future generations if we did not prepare them to meet the challenge of reducing carbon emissions to protect the health of our world. This report will provide a foundation for meeting that challenge.” Focus The Nation is a national teach-in on global warming solutions for America, to be held on over 1,100 campuses on January 31. A national web cast, *The 2% Solution*, produced by the National Wildlife Federation on the evening of January 30 will kick off the event.

*Higher Education in a Warming World* showcases schools that are leading the way toward a sustainable future. It calls for an ever-greater commitment from the over 4,000 U.S. colleges and universities to step up to climate leadership. To date, 465 college presidents have already signed the American College and University President's Climate Commitment pledging to dramatically reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. This new report will assist them in translating that commitment into action.

“Our nation's institutions of higher learning can achieve the 2% per year reduction in net carbon emissions that climate scientists say is needed to stabilize the atmosphere,” says David Eagan, staff member of the Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and lead author of the report. “It's an investment in the planet's future we can't afford not to make.”

National Wildlife Federation's Campus Ecology Program was established in 1989 to work with college and university campuses (students, faculty, administrators, and managers) to promote sustainability and climate-positive action both on campus and in the surrounding community.

The National Wildlife Federation is the nation's largest member-supported conservation organization inspiring Americans to protect wildlife for our children's future.

**To access a copy of the full report, and a listing of the schools featured in the report, go to [www.nwf.org/CampusEcology/BusinessCase](http://www.nwf.org/CampusEcology/BusinessCase).**

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