Millennial Hope*
David W. Orr

This is a message for our graduating seniors and I will take my theme from my six-year-old granddaughter, Molly. Molly is a wonder-filled and life-filled little girl with the personality one can imagine Queen Elizabeth the first might have had at a similar age. Recently, Molly managed to irritate both of her parents. They sent her to “time out” which is a kind of purgatory for a small child. She then stomped to her room in glorious rebellion. A few minutes later, they heard her talking in a loud and agitated voice to her slightly older brother saying “Lewis: I’m really worried... we’ve got to do something... the adults are taking over this house.”

Molly’s parents, I hope, will stay in control of that house, but in your case, the situation is reversed: You have to do something because the adults, my generation, are leaving you with a rapidly destabilizing planetary household. You know the numbers as well as I do. We are creating what climate scientist James Hansen calls a “different planet.” Sometimes called “global warming,” it is rather planetary destabilization that, if allowed to go far enough, could well threaten civilization. The numbers are daunting. The World Health Organization estimates that climate change driven weather events already kill 150,000 people each year... and that number is expected to rise sharply in the decades ahead. A UN agency recently predicted that climate change will create 250 million to one billion refugees by the year 2050. We are indeed, approaching points of no return and places where Angels would fear to go.

This is the “the anthropocene”... a time in which humans have become the dominant geological force on Earth. We face, as no previous generation, the choice once described in the book of Deuteronomy between life and death, with the admonition to choose life. That choice—or more properly choices by all of us—will be made one way or another in the near future. If we choose life we must act with extraordinary creativity, energy, stamina, wisdom, and dispatch. The defense of life is, as theologian Thomas Berry calls it, the “Great Work” of your generation and mine.

At the outset we have cause neither for optimism nor despair. Optimism is a prediction that we will succeed rather like Yankee fans believing that the team can win the game when it’s the bottom of the ninth, they’re up by a run, with two outs, a two strike count against a .200 hitter, and Mariano Rivera in his prime is on the mound. They are optimistic for good reason. The Indians fans, on the other hand, believe in salvation which is a kind of purgatory for a small child. She then stomped to her room in glorious rebellion. A few minutes later, they heard her talking in a loud and agitated voice to her slightly older brother saying “Lewis: I’m really worried... we’ve got to do something... the adults are taking over this house.”

At the other end of the spectrum, despair is a pose and can sometimes lead to self-fulfilling prophecies. In your time neither optimism nor despair is acceptable. The honest truth is that the odds are not in our favor, but the only authentic choice we have is to be hopeful... aggressively and imaginatively hopeful. Optimism comes from the belief that the odds are in one’s favor; hope is the faith—against the odds—that things will work out. Hope is a

Hope and Rapid Climate Change in Oberlin Ohio
John Petersen ‘88

In his adjacent article, my colleague David Orr speaks of the “Great Work” facing this generation with respect to the challenge of stabilizing the climate system. As David suggests, it is hard to know how and, indeed, whether humanity might rise to this challenge. With that said, a variety of events this last year give me reason to situate myself firmly in the camp of the hopeful. Certainly the impending change in the presidency brings with it reason to hope for new leadership and progress on climate policy at the national and international level. But most of the hope I’m feeling these days stems from the changes I’ve seen close to home. The stories in this newsletter provide evidence that the Oberlin community is rising to the challenges of a changing world with creativity and leadership. Below I summarize some of the many changes that have occurred or are underway at Oberlin that inspire me with hope.

Hope in a Courageous “No” Vote (and an Implicit “Yes” Vote).

As readers of this newsletter know well, coal is the most polluting form of fossil fuel energy, releasing more greenhouse gases per unit of electricity generated than any other fuel source and damaging human health and the environment in communities in which the coal is mined and burned. Just before 11:00 PM on February 4, 2008 a small city in a region of the country powered with over 80% coal-fired electricity voted against investing in a new coal-fired power plant. This vote took place in the face of enormous political pressure from a consortium of electrical utilities that had sent a bevy of lawyers and spokespeople to argue the cause for a 50 year commitment to this 19th century fuel source. The community that said no to coal was, of course, Oberlin Ohio.

The five months of intense local debate, with several standing-room-only City Council hearings on this issue provide a model of grassroots democracy. Testimony was heard from experts on both sides and from community members representing the full diversity of Oberlin. Over the course of the debate, Oberlin students played an important role in providing citizens with information and campaigning for a new City Council in which four of the seven members pledged a commitment to clean power options. Late in the fall of 2007, Oberlin College donated the funds necessary to underwrite a rapid economic analysis of the proposed coal plant and alternatives. This analysis was conducted by Concentric Energy Associates, a Massachusetts-based energy consulting firm. The report, which was praised by all City Council members, could be interpreted in a number of different ways. But the report made clear to all that neither coal nor any green energy alternative currently available provides a silver bullet that will continue to supply the inexpensive electricity that has fueled this community’s past.

One might argue that Oberlin’s 4-3 decision to vote down a future of coal, like all things that take place in individual organizations and communities, is an insignificant event in the context of a region, nation and global economy that are still heading, with great speed, in the wrong direction on climate issues. But for me, the courageous and difficult decision that the City of Oberlin made offers a wellspring of hope. The ancient Hebrew adage, “if not me, then who, if not now, then when?” resonates in this decision. If it is not possible to

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* Modified from Graduation talk, Nicholas School, Duke University, May 10, 2008.
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Harlan Wilson, Politics

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Meet Jordan Suter:
Assistant Professor of Economics & Environmental Studies

In August 2007, Jordan Suter joined the Oberlin community as Assistant Professor of Economics and Environmental Studies after completing his Ph.D. in Applied Economics from Cornell University. Jordan’s research and teaching focus in environmental economics has found a welcome home at Oberlin, where there is growing student interest in understanding how economic incentives can help to explain and address many of the environmental problems faced by our society.

Jordan teaches courses in environmental, natural resource, and water resource economics, in addition to a course in the principles of economics. The environmental economics course takes up issues such as accounting for the external costs of production and consumption, the inadequate provision of public goods like clean air and biodiversity, the economics of climate change policy, and how environmental policies can influence the incentives that underlie human behavior. The upper level course in natural resource economics investigates the management of both renewable resources, like forests and fisheries, as well as nonrenewable resources such as fossil fuels, paying particular attention to the evolution of policy and the role that economics plays in current resource management policy. Finally, the seminar in water resource economics looks at the economic dimensions of water use and examines problems related to both water scarcity and water quality in the US and internationally. The course stresses independent research on topics related to water resource policy and students have the opportunity to conduct and present their independent analyses.

Outside of the classroom, Jordan serves on the board of the new Oberlin College Fund for Ecological Design and General Efficiency (EDGE), which will invest in student initiated projects that aim to reduce energy consumption in college-owned buildings. In the spring semester, he conducted a private reading with the four student board members of the fund in an effort to design the criteria by which the energy efficiency proposals, submitted by members of the Oberlin College community, will be evaluated. The research avenues that Jordan is currently pursuing pertain primarily to issues related to the economics of land use and water quality. In particular, his research investigates the design and testing of policy mechanisms aimed at reducing nonpoint source water pollution from agriculture, which represents the largest source of water quality impairment in the United States today. This set of research makes use of economics experiments to gain insight into the types of policies that can effectively reduce the pollution generated by groups of polluters. Jordan has also conducted research aimed at improving the design of programs that address water quality concerns through providing financial incentives to agricultural producers to take environmentally sensitive land along rivers and streams out of production.

Jordan’s research also involves the investigation of both the causes and effects of the sprawled pattern of residential development exhibited in many communities. To begin, he is engaged in a project that seeks a better understanding of the preferences that underlie homebuyer decision making. Using a large database of residential property transactions from New York State, the research estimates the preferences that homebuyers have for larger lot sizes and proximity to both public and private open space as well as other important factors such as school quality. Research that Jordan is currently working on looks at the role that sprawl plays in determining the decisions that individuals make in regards to the number and types of vehicles that they own, as well as how much driving they engage in. By looking at a spatially explicit dataset of over 115 metropolitan areas in the US, the research seeks to gain a greater understanding of the role that proximity to public transportation and the location of employment centers plays in individual transportation decisions and how this has evolved over the last 10 to 20 years. This research has important policy implications, given that sprawled development has become the common characteristic in communities across the country and because transportation represents a large and growing share of US greenhouse gas emissions.

Personal Carbon Budgets: Rethinking our planetary responsibilities
Md Rumi Shammin

Dr. Md Rumi Shammin is an Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies at Oberlin College. Dr. Shammin has a diverse, interdisciplinary background. His undergraduate degree is in Civil Engineering from Bangladesh Institute of Technology. He completed his MS degree in Natural Resources from Cornell University and Ph.D. in Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Dr. Shammin has a long history of teaching and research in energy, sustainability, and urbanization - both in developing and developed countries. His most recent papers reported energy and carbon intensities of consumer goods and services in the US with applications to urban planning and climate policies. Dr. Shammin has taught more than a dozen different courses in three institutions over the last 12 years. He joined Oberlin College in Fall 2007 and is teaching the introductory course in environmental studies (environment and society) and upper-level courses on energy, environmental analysis, and international environmental issues.

The 21st century presents a defining challenge before us: can we take charge of our responsibilities as citizens of the planet earth to combat climate change and make a transition from the non-renewable fossil fuel based economy to one that is powered by the sun? The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), comprised of scientists from around the world, clearly concluded in its fourth assessment report released in 2007 that human induced climate change is unequivocal and even if we stop emitting greenhouse gases into the atmosphere today, global temperatures will still continue to rise in the decades to come. If business as usual policies persist, catastrophic consequences are very real possibilities. If we wish to significantly reduce the risks associated with climate change, we need to reduce our carbon emissions by 80% or more below current levels.

Reducing carbon emissions is not an easy task – particularly here in the US. Carbon is embodied in every aspect of our lives. Normally, when we think about rising energy consumption or greenhouse gas emissions in the US, we consider the end-use sectors of the economy...
Acting Locally: Oberlin’s Light Bulb Brigade
Kristin Braziunas ’08

This past spring semester, Environmental Studies student groups, community partners, and volunteers organized the free exchange of 10,000 new compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) for existing incandescent bulbs in Oberlin College and community. The light bulb donor stipulated that this would be a pilot project and would be implemented at colleges and universities nationwide contingent upon Oberlin’s success. This program aims to formalize student-run energy-efficiency initiatives and supply the resources they need to make a real difference in energy use in their local communities.

The Light Bulb Brigade expands the work of Andrew deCoriolis and Morgan Pitts (both OC ’07), who led a project of the same name in Oberlin dorms last year. Light bulbs are one of the lowest hanging fruits in energy efficiency, and yet despite the energy and monetary savings of CFLs, the upfront cost remains a barrier to change. The Light Bulb Brigade eliminated that initial cost, allowing participants the opportunity to experiment with energy efficiency without making an initial investment. To ensure immediate energy savings, students asked participants to bring in the incandescent bulbs then in their light fixtures and exchanged on a one-for-one basis.

Students in two sections of Environment and Society (ENVS101) took on the challenge of organizing exchanges with multiple groups, both in the College and Community. On the first day of the Oberlin College Employees exchange, in early April, a mob of employees holding plastic bags and boxes of incandescent bulbs packed the Wilder Student Union lobby. Over the course of the weeklong exchange, 11 AM to 12 PM became the “morning rush,” when students could count on nonstop action serving long lines of faculty and staff waiting to trade in light bulbs. In all, Oberlin employees received and installed 2,500 CFLs in their homes.

Students employed a variety of efforts to both publicize the program and exchange bulbs. One ENVS 101 group led exchanges with students, going door-to-door in dorms offering light bulbs and culminating in an exchange on Earth Day. Another group worked with Oberlin High School to send home a flyer to parents encouraging them to bring their bulbs to exchange at parent-teacher conference nights. Some community members passed the word around that students were coming door-to-door, and I received phone calls from residents who wanted me to come through their home and swap out every old, inefficient light bulb we could find. At one house, we swapped out more than 60 bulbs.

In addition to High School and door-to-door exchanges, two student groups worked with local churches and community groups to bring these light bulbs to the larger Oberlin Community. Mount Zion Baptist Church, Rust United Methodist Church, Seventh Day Adventist Church, Concord Manor, and Oberlin Community Services served as venues for exchanges where local residents, churchgoers, and attendees of monthly food distributions could either bring in their light bulbs or sign up to have students bring light bulbs to their door. Downtown businesses Ben Franklin, Watson’s Hardware, and Main Street Oberlin, exchanged more than 2,500 light bulbs over the course of a week and a half. Community partners that helped with implementation and publicity include Oberlin Municipal Light and Power System, the Oberlin News-Tribune, Mount Zion Community Development Corporation (CDC), the Southside Neighborhood Association, the Elyria YWCA, and the Oberlin Heritage Center.

Oberlin was the first of its peer institutions to sign the American College and University President’s Climate Commitment. Each of the now over 530 institutions that have signed this agreement commits to developing both a budget that accounts for all greenhouse gas emissions associated with campus operations and a long-term plan for balancing that budget to achieve “carbon neutrality.” Among its other benefits, this semester’s light bulb exchange is being explored as a local “carbon offset” program; some of the on-campus greenhouse gas emissions will be balanced through this and other local projects that reduce emissions in the larger community. The advantage of local programs such as the Light Bulb Brigade is that they result in economic and social benefits within the Oberlin community. Rough initial calculations indicate that the exchange of 10,000 compact fluorescent bulbs will result in savings of approximately 6,500 tons of CO2, which can then be credited against this year’s on-campus emissions. Since Oberlin seeks to create a model for others, more thorough analysis is necessary and is underway.

Every participant in a Light Bulb Brigade exchange filled out a survey including information on wattage of bulbs exchanged, household size, and likelihood of purchasing CFLs to replace their incandescent bulbs had we not offered this program. Many residents signed a consent form that will allow researchers access to their utility bills before and after CFL installation. In addition, ten identically designed low income Oberlin homes will participate in a more controlled study of energy usage over the next three months; five of these homes will be randomly selected to swap out all of their light bulbs. Professors John Petersen and Rumi Shammin (Environmental Studies) and Cindy Frantz (Psychology) are overseeing this study, the first of its kind, in collaboration with students living in SEED House. This study will allow us to more precisely identify real savings of this type of program.

The Brigade officially ended on April 26, when the College Recyclers drove a truck with three 4’ by 4’ by 2’ crates packed full of 8,500 incandescent light bulbs to Wilder Bowl for the Ecolympics closing ceremony and a photo shoot with President Marvin Krislov. Under the guidance of local carpenter Nick Zachos, and assisted by Sustainability Coordinator Nathan Engstrom, Professor John Petersen, and College First-Year Maggie Zimmer, student volunteers constructed these boxes out of plywood and plexiglass, and they will be on display in the AJLC Atrium through commencement. The collected incandescent bulbs will then be recycled at Environmental Recycling, a facility near Bowling Green, Ohio.

As the student coordinator of the Light Bulb Brigade, my duties continue with the distribution of the remaining 1,500 bulbs, which have been set aside for the research study and local communities that were not reached in the initial push. I will be working with Mount Zion CDC Executive Director Judy Wright to ensure that these light bulbs find their way into Oberlin homes where they are most needed. It has been a long and rewarding three months, and Oberlin comes ever closer to picking all of that low-hanging fruit.

This program would not have been possible without the generosity of an anonymous donor working with General Electric and Sommer Electric. Within the college, the Environmental Studies Program, the Office of Environmental Sustainability, and the Bonner Center for Service and Learning provided additional financial and logistical support.
Oberlin installs “Energy Orbs” to encourage conservation of electricity in dormitories

John Petersen ‘88

Students in six Oberlin dormitories returned from spring break to find glowing “Dorm Energy Orbs” mounted on the wall in their lobbies. The glass orbs pulse with different colors depending on how much electricity is currently being consumed in each dorm. The Orbs are a new feature of Oberlin College’s “Campus Resource Monitoring System” which continuously measures and displays electricity use in 16 dormitories and 12 residential houses. On the Dorm Energy website (www. oberlin.edu/dormenergy), students can view trends of consumption over time and can compare their dorm’s use with that of other dormitories. They can also choose to display the environmental and economic costs of electricity consumption in a range of units that they find more meaningful than kilowatts including lbs of CO2 emissions, gallons of gas, number of veggie burgers, dollars, etc. The Dorm Energy Orbs are a way to take the most basic information on electricity use – how much a dorm is consuming now relative to what it normally consumes at this time of day – and translate this into a spectrum of colors. At the low end, the Orb glows a perky green if the dorm is consuming half of its normal electricity use, it shifts to yellow if it is consuming at a typical rate and it shifts to a vibrant red if it is double its normal electricity use. The idea behind the new Dorm Energy Orbs is to render the normally invisible consumption of electricity easily visible to the whole dorm community. The goal is to engage, educate, motivate and empower students to conserve electricity. In contrast to the Dorm Energy website, the Energy Orb provides an ambient form of feedback; without going out of their way, students can absorb information from the orb as they pass by and become aware of the resource flow currently necessary to support activity in their dorm. The students and faculty who developed this idea invite student attention.

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Winter Term 2008 Projects
Sponsored by the Ann Marie Schaening ’87 Memorial Fund

The Ann Marie Schaening ’87 Memorial Fund is a fund established by the family and friends of Ann Marie Schaening ‘87. The fund is used to provide support for students pursuing Winter Term studies related to the Environmental Studies Program. The following is a list of student recipients and titles of their projects.

Virginia Dreier:
The Asian Rural Institute: Independence Through Food

Michael Evans, Jonathan Feazell:
Everglades National Park Service’s Invasive Python Research

Nikrad Mahdi:
Environmental Awareness and Action in Hadsamran, Thailand

Emma Bishop, Lora DiFranco:
Greenlight: Environmental Education

Allison Handler, Benjamin Jakubowski,
John Light, Margaret Zimmer:
The Lifecycle of Coal

So, how do we use this knowledge to achieve real changes, particularly when everything that we depend on for our daily lives is responsible for direct and indirect carbon emissions? One way to begin is by educating ourselves about the carbon impact of our lives, and then developing a carbon budget for ourselves. We do this all the time to manage our finances. All we need to do is to use the same accounting methods to track carbon instead of money. This does not mean that we have to give up all modern facilities overnight and return to caves (even though that action would greatly reduce our carbon footprint). It means that we will become fully aware of the carbon impact of our everyday choices and each of us will have the opportunity to develop our own plans to reduce or neutralize that impact. If we are unable to achieve our fiscal carbon goals and have a credit balance in our carbon budget, we can always make better choices in the future to pay off that credit or choose to buy offsets from the growing market of carbon offsets to balance that budget immediately. Fiscal responsibility is an established goal for governments, private sector institutions, and individuals for maintaining economic well-being. It is time to apply the same logic and level of rigor to observe our planetary responsibilities.

An economy where consumers demand reduction in carbon emissions will open up new opportunities for renewable and alternative technologies to evolve. Energy derived from the sun and the wind and other renewable sources (biomass, geothermal, etc.) are less polluting and do not have long-term supply constraints. A gradual increase in energy derived from these sources will facilitate a gradual decrease in energy obtained from fossil-fuel sources. Since each member of the society will be an active participant of this process, they will be better prepared to grapple with the challenges involved in this global transition of the fundamental forces that fuel our economy and lifestyle.

It is often easy to place the burden of responsibility on the government when it comes to overarching national and global issues. However, climate change is different because it is so deeply embedded in our lives that real change is impossible without individual members of the earth voting with their wallets to exercise their democratic rights to a safer planet. If we can achieve such a paradigm shift, this will be the finest grassroots movement ever, where each individual will be an agent of change. It is not a dream or unrealistic idealization; it is the reality that envisions the best intentions of the human spirit.
organize for a clean energy future here in Oberlin, then what hope might we have of accomplishing this elsewhere? Conversely, if Oberlin Ohio, a community blessed with only modest renewable energy resources and with limited economic and political muscle can demonstrate the creativity and leadership necessary to create a practical solution, then why not imagine that this is possible everywhere?

In any “no” vote there lies (at least implicitly) a “yes” vote. In the case of the vote on coal, the City Councilors and those who supported their decision voiced a commitment to finding ways to meet the very real energy needs of this community without coal. Oberlin College is the largest single consumer of electricity in the City of Oberlin. The College also has a formal commitment to a “carbon neutral” future. Finally, it is clear to most that the health and environmental sustainability of the college is inextricably linked to the health, welfare and environmental sustainability of the city of Oberlin. For all these reasons, the college has a special obligation to develop and support environmentally responsible solutions that meet the entire community’s energy needs. I am proud to say that immediately following the vote, members of the college and town community began rolling up their sleeves to tackle this very challenging problem.

Hope in Carbon Offsets for the College and Energy Relief for the Community

Although debate in Oberlin City Council was contentious, there are three points that informed community members would likely agree on. The first is that regardless of the decision on coal, the price of electricity for Oberlin consumers (and for everyone else in the country) is likely to rise substantially over the next several years as a result of increasing fuel and generation costs and greenhouse gas legislation. The second is that without active efforts to avoid it, low income citizens of our community are likely to suffer disproportionately from increased costs simply because a larger percentage of their income goes towards paying utility bills and other basic necessities. The third point of agreement that comes through loud and clear in the Concentric Energy Associates study is that what is known as “demand side management” (DMS) is the most cost-effective of the multiple strategies necessary to meet Oberlin’s electricity needs. DMS consists of programs that are designed to conserve energy and to alter the time at which electricity is consumed.

Elsewhere in this newsletter, Kristin Brazianas describes this year’s “Light Bulb Brigade” which, among other things, initiated an experiment in “local carbon offsets”. Typically an organization or community that wishes to achieve carbon neutrality will take measures to reduce on-site emissions as much as possible, and then will find ways to balance or offset the remaining emissions by investing in “carbon offsets” that reduce emissions elsewhere. Since greenhouse gases emitted anywhere in the world have an equal impact on the climate, from a strictly biophysical perspectives, it is perfectly reasonable for Oberlin College to balance local carbon emissions with offsets produced through reforestation projects at the opposite side of the world. However, some are beginning to recognize the economic and social value of developing local offset programs. The goal of such programs is to bundle economic and social benefits to one’s local community together with reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. As Kristin explains in her article, when an Oberlin student visits a local Oberlin resident and trades a 100 Watt equivalent compact fluorescent light bulb for an incandescent bulb, the exchange will save the resident approximately $100 in electrical energy over the life of the bulb while crediting Oberlin College with 1,600 lbs of CO2 emissions in the form of a carbon offset.

The carbon offset concept embodied in the Light Bulb Brigade can be implemented in a variety of ways. Shortly after the city vote on coal, a group of community members began meeting to discuss the range of opportunities that might be pursued to simultaneously achieve environmental, economic and social benefits. Over the last few months, the “Low Income Energy Efficiency Working Group” has begun investigating the financial mechanisms and organizational structure that might enable DMS in Oberlin. The initial focus has been on low or no interest loans and grants that would encourage weatherization and energy efficient appliance exchanges for Oberlin community members who are most vulnerable to increasing energy costs. Local carbon offsets, purchased by Oberlin College as part of its climate neutrality commitment, will likely be one of several financial vehicles that make such a program possible.

Hope in Changing Campus Infrastructure

A $500,000 donation to the college that provided funds for the Concentric Energy Associates study described above is also being used to fund a comprehensive analysis of the options available for Oberlin College to achieve its goal of climate neutrality. This new study, conducted by the firm Energy Ventures International (EVI), is building on the 2002 study conducted by Rocky Mountain Institute. The EVI study is focused on exploring three areas 1) renovation or replacement of the existing coal-fired central plant that currently supplies heat to most college buildings, 2) identification of opportunities for radically improving the energy efficiency of college buildings, and 3) identification of mechanisms and opportunities for purchasing green electricity and offsetting the carbon emissions which can not be eliminated. A broad range of potential energy sources are being considered, including biogas and biomass, for what will likely be a combined heat and electrical power facility for the college. The college’s Committee on Environmental Sustainability, which is charged with developing and overseeing implementation of environmental policy, has been interacting closely with EVI and is looking forward to a report by mid-summer.

Meanwhile, plans are rapidly moving towards ground breaking on Oberlin’s Phyllis Litoff Jazz Studies Center, which will be the first music facility in the world to achieve a LEED Gold rating for environmental sustainability. Initial studies have also begun to examine the feasibility of what has been termed the “Green Arts Block”. This project envisions a redeveloped block that includes the Oberlin Inn, Hall Auditorium, the Allen Art Museum and the art and residential areas to the east. The goal is to honor the best of what exists on this site, but to renovate, replace and build to achieve additional art facilities, a world-class conference center, and new student housing that collectively set a new benchmark for environmentally responsible development.

New Faces at Oberlin

There is considerable reason for hope in the initiatives described above. I also find great reason for hope in the new faces that have arrived on campus and in the Environmental Studies Program. I am particularly pleased to welcome colleagues Rumi Shammin and Jordan Suter, both tenure track Assistant Professors in the Program (Jordan has a joint appointment in Economics) who joined us in the fall of ‘07. Rumi Shammin, a native of Bangladesh, has broad research interests that include quantification of the energetic and climate impacts of different lifestyles. Rumi is teaching sections of Environment and Society and teaches upper level courses in Energy and Society, Environmental Analysis in Social Science, and Local vs. Global: Environmental Issues Beyond Borders. Jordan’s work is in the field of game theory, experimental economics, econometric theory, and environmental policy. He teaches Principles of to Economics, Environmental Economics, Natural Resource Economics and Policy, and Topics in Water Resource Economics. Rumi and Jordan’s scholarly interests and teaching are described in greater detail elsewhere in this newsletter. Even during their short time here at Oberlin, Rumi and Jordan have become highly valued members of the ES Program and have demonstrated exceptional commitment to teaching, scholarship and service. We are very pleased to welcome them to Oberlin!

For the 2008-2009 year, we are also pleased to welcome Visiting Assistant
Professor of Environmental Studies Krystal Fortwangler, Assistant Professor of History Sam White and Visiting Professor of Environmental Studies Carl McDaniel. Crystal has an MA in International Relations from University of Chicago and a PhD from University of Michigan in Anthropology and Natural Resources and the Environment. Krystal will be teaching Environment and Society, Environmental Policy, Nature Culture and Interpretation and a Seminar in Environmental Justice. Sam White is the first to complete a PhD in Columbia University’s new Global International History Track. Sam will be teaching courses in, Global Environmental History, Animals in History, Climate Change and Disaster in World History and Globalization and Capitalism.

Carl McDaniel, OC class of ‘64 should be a familiar name to many readers of this newsletter since he has served as Chair of Oberlin’s “EnviroAlums” since founding this alumni group in 2002. This year Carl retires from a highly distinguished academic career as professor of biology at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and moves with his wife Mary to Oberlin (for further details see Carl’s column in this newsletter). Carl will begin his career in retirement at Oberlin by teaching a one credit course next year exploring Biodiversity and Human Futures.

Another new colleague on campus who has been a key supporter of environmental initiatives is Marvin Krislov. Although less than a year has passed, it is clear that the 14th president of Oberlin College recognizes that Oberlin College has a unique role to play in addressing the environmental challenges facing this and all future generations. In his words and through his actions, Oberlin’s new president has indicated that he views the environment as an opportunity for leadership that is consistent with and builds on Oberlin’s proud history of moral courage on issues of race, gender and labor. Among other things, Marvin Krislov has embraced and supported the goal of climate neutrality, the green arts block and a vibrant Environmental Studies Program.

Hope in an Expanded and Revised Environmental Studies Program

A comprehensive external review of Oberlin’s Environmental Studies Program that was completed in 2006 came to the conclusion that Oberlin’s ES Program is severely understaffed relative to needs and demand. In addition to the environmental initiatives described above, within the first three months of taking office, Marvin Krislov, working with David Orr, played an instrumental role in securing the addition of two new tenure track faculty positions in the Environmental Studies Program.

This fall we will initiate a search for a new faculty member with expertise in the humanities. We plan to follow that one year later with a new faculty position in social geography. With the addition of these two new positions we will be able to fully implement a variety of fundamental changes that will add depth, consistency and focus to the ES major. We will be expanding the first years of the major to a two course sequence with the second course focused on providing students with multiple perspectives on the environment from the humanities. Another change we are implementing is a new requirement that all majors identify and pursue a “curricular pathway” that ensures a more focused and integrated course of study.

I will conclude this report by mentioning one last important change in the ES Program. David Orr has accepted a half-time position for the next three years working directly with President Marvin Krislov on special projects. David will continue to teach his signature, Ecological Design course and will add a new course in Environmental Leadership. Although the fact that fewer students will have the opportunity to experience David’s considerable talents as a teacher is a loss, I personally view this transition as a significant gain for Oberlin College. Through his work developing the landmark Adam Joseph Lewis Center for Environmental Studies at Oberlin, and through his national and international work on behalf of environmental education, ecological design and rational politics, David has demonstrated a remarkable ability to translate vision into reality. Although David might chide me for my choice of words, I am genuinely optimistic about the scope and depth of opportunities that will be made possible through a close collaboration between David Orr and Marvin Krislov.

In case it is not yet clear, it has been a busy year for the City of Oberlin, for Oberlin College and for Oberlin’s Environmental Studies Program! I confess that as Chair of the ES Program and Chair of Oberlin’s Committee on Environmental Sustainability, I have at times felt myself at the center of a storm this last year. Although a bit buffeted by the turbulence I have rarely seen greater cause for hope!

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Blank Research Assistantship Awards for 2008

The Blank Research Assistantships fund was established through a generous grant from the Arthur M. Blank Foundation to enable Oberlin students to undertake research and educational opportunities relating to the environment in collaboration with core Environmental Studies Program faculty. Blank Assistantship funds are intended to primarily support research projects involving maintenance of the Adam Joseph Lewis Center, the Living Machine, the data monitoring/display system, and the landscape. Assistantships are also available for research projects that do not involve facility or landscape maintenance.

Projects supervised by David Benzing, Emeritus Professor of Biology: Landscape and Garden of the Lewis Center – Ayla Zeimer ‘09, Katherine Ortner ‘08 and Cara Turett ‘09

Project supervised by John Petersen, Associate Professor of Environmental Studies/Biology and David Benzing, Emeritus Professor Biology: Wetland Research – Ian Santino ‘09 and Jake Grossman ‘08

Projects supervised by John Petersen, Associate Professor of Environmental Studies/Biology: Campus Resource Monitoring System – Adam Hull ‘10 and Alex Totoiu ‘10

Projects supervised by John Petersen, Associate Professor of Environmental Studies/Biology and Brad Masi, Director of the George Jones Farm, Virginia Dreier ‘08, Marian Dalke ‘08 and Kristin Brazinunas ‘08

Projects supervised by Md Rumi Shammin, Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies:
- Developing Composite Local Sustainability Indicators – A Marriage between Genuine Progress Indicator and the Ecological Footprint
  Index: Spring 2008 – Colin Miller and Carl Schubert; Fall 2008 & Spring 2009 – Greta Bradford
- Analyzing Energy Flow through the US Economy using a Mixed Matrix of the National Input-Output Data:
  Summer 2008 – Jonathan McCall
Nathaniel Flaschner Meyer Named Goldwater Scholar

OBERLIN, OHIO — The Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Program has named Oberlin College junior Nathaniel Flaschner Meyer, a Goldwater Scholar for 2008-09. Meyer of Readfield, Maine, is a double major in environmental studies and biology. “The interdisciplinary nature of Nathaniel’s interests, combined with his strong academic record and his research experiences, and his intention to pursue graduate study made his candidacy a compelling one at the national level for the Goldwater competition,” says his advisor, Manish Mehta, associate professor of chemistry and biochemistry. Meyer is one of 321 students from the United States selected to receive the scholarships, which cover eligible expenses for undergraduate tuition, fees, books, and room and board, up to a maximum of $7,500 annually. Goldwater Scholars were selected based on academic merit. These scholars were chosen from a field of 1,035 mathematics, science, and engineering students who were nominated by the faculties of colleges and universities nationwide. Congress established the Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Program in 1986 to honor Sen. Barry M. Goldwater, who served his country for 56 years as a soldier and statesman, including 30 years of service in the U.S. Senate. The purpose of the foundation is to provide a continuing source of highly qualified scientists, mathematicians, and engineers by awarding scholarships to college students who intend to pursue research careers in these fields.

Gorn Prize Recipients

Among her many contributions to the ES Program and to the larger community, Kristin has been the principal student organizer of the “LightBulb Brigade” this spring, which successfully exchanged 10,000 compact fluorescent light bulbs for incandescents. A key component of this program has been distribution efforts in low income communities within the city of Oberlin. Kristin has worked closely with members of Oberlin City Council, Oberlin Municipal Light & Power System and the Zion Comminity Development Corporation in this important environmental work.

Lina Yamashita has worked with the local schools to a foster school garden program EAT (Eat Appreciatively and Thoughtfully) that engages students in experiential learning through the design, planting and tending of vegetable gardens. Food literacy was an important outcome of the endeavor as the students harvested the vegetables and cooked soup for a meal together. Lina’s work lead to an honors project (see next page) which has provided a framework and justification for the continuation and expansion of this program.
Much research has been done surrounding conservation behaviors in the household and electricity consumption. Most research has tended to focus on attitudes about the environment and how those attitudes influence pro-environmental behavior, but the research has not usually found a strong link between the two. The Connectedness to Nature Scale was used in my honors project to measure emotional responses to nature, and to determine whether people who felt more connected to nature used less electricity in the household. The residents of the Union Street Housing complex at Oberlin College were chosen as the group monitored for this project, because the houses had the same baseline consumption data and the residents had no fiscal incentives to conserve electricity. I compared the emotional response to nature with attitudes about the environment and electricity consumption per house. I concluded that emotional response to nature had a correlational relationship with electricity consumption, and that attitudes about electricity consumption were very predictive of behavior; probably because the data measured attitudes about very specific behaviors. This was the first time the CNS was correlated with actual behavior. Recommendations were made for further studies that might establish a causal link between connectedness to nature and electricity consumption.


I helped start the garden at the Oberlin High School last spring, with the ultimate goal of integrating it into the academic curriculum. My desire to learn more about how to achieve this goal motivated me to pursue formal research about other existing school gardens and explore the roles that school gardens can play in facilitating food education. Equipping students with “food literacy” - or the ability to understand where food comes from, how it is produced, and what the environmental, social, economic, and cultural impacts are of the food we eat - is critical, given the urgent, overwhelming problems that we face today. One of the root causes of these problems, which include climate change, obesity, and social inequities, is the cultural disconnection from our food, environment, and community. I argue that schools are the most logical and appropriate setting to begin cultivating such food literacy, and that food education programs and school gardens in particular can help students connect with not only their food but also to their environment and community. Based on my analysis of two model food education programs in the US, I also describe the ways in which school gardens could be used by teachers in the Oberlin schools to meet academic content standards and foster food education among Oberlin’s students.

Katherine Yoder Zipp, “Living with Factory Farms in Ohio: The Socioeconomic and Environmental Effects of CAFOs” Honors Advisors: Roger Laushman and Jordan Suter

In my honors thesis I examined the environmental and socioeconomic consequences of concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs). CAFOs are feedlots that are designed to house livestock indoors instead of allowing the animals to graze on pastureland. In the past several decades CAFOs have come to dominate the meat production industry in the United States, but little is known about their impacts on water quality. Therefore, I used a spatial analysis regression to study the effects of CAFOs on surface water quality in Ohio. I found a statistically significant correlation between number of CAFOs and number of animals in CAFOs on tributary water quality, but not stream water quality. To my knowledge this is the first quantitative analysis on a statewide scale. My results show that CAFOs do pose a threat to surface water, however more research can be done with more precise measurements of water quality.
Millennial Hope... Continues from pg 1.

verb with its sleeves rolled up. Hopeful people are actively engaged in defying the odds and thus changing the odds. Optimism leans back puts its feet up and wears a confident look believing that the deck is stacked. But hope-filled people are always trying to change the odds in their favor. And often they summon the creativity, intelligence, and wisdom to do just that.

Ahead of you are the greatest challenges humankind has ever faced: Climate destabilization, degradation of virtually every ecosystem, marine or terrestrial, on Earth, the end of the era of cheap fossil fuels, loss of species, global poverty, and global insecurity. This is not a single crisis, but as John Platt once put it “a crisis of crises” each interacting with the others. Rather like a quadratic equation, your generation and mine must solve each component to solve the entire thing.

Many people believe that better technology and smarter economics will save us. And both are vitally important to our prospects. But climate destabilization is not first and foremost a problem of technology or economics. It is rather a result of the largest political failure in history. Our government and others ignored warnings about climate destabilization that date back to the 1960’s and have occurred with increasing frequency, rigor, and urgency ever since. But few leaders, republican or democrat, until very recently took heed or paid attention.

As a political issue climate change has the following characteristics. First, it is neither a democratic nor republican issue; it is neither liberal nor conservative. The prospect of rapidly and irreversibly shifting climate transcends the left-right divisions of our political topography.

Second, climate destabilization is not just another issue on a long list of issues. It is rather the linchpin that connects all other issues. Solutions to climate destabilization depend mostly on changes in our energy policy toward efficiency and renewable energy...something that we’ve known at least since the Paley Commission Report in 1952. A rapid transition to efficiency and solar energy would eliminate our dependence on imported oil, thereby reducing our involvement in the politics of an unstable region, improve our balance of payments, clean our air and water, improve public health, create millions of jobs, promote equity and much more.

Third, climate destabilization is a global crisis much as Al Gore described in An Inconvenient Truth. And the time available to avoid the worst that could happen is very short, perhaps as James Hansen believes a matter of a few years. Truth be told, no one knows how much time we have but we should take no comfort in that fact. It is increasingly clear, however, that we must quickly mobilize governments, corporations, universities, and the public in imaginative and unprecedented ways.

Finally, as a growing number of Pentagon officials and security analysts have noted, climate change is the largest security issue of our time. It will amplify virtually every other security threat while creating entirely new threats that we can scarcely comprehend. But climate change cannot be solved by military power or by any one government. It will require fair, farsighted, and binding global agreements. Those in turn will require that the United States re-engage the international community to craft a global bargain by which all of us fairly and quickly contract our carbon footprint and converge on equitable and sustainable levels of consumption. While the politics are daunting, the logic is compelling and unavoidable if we intend to build a decent and secure global civilization.

In their details, the policy choices ahead are complex. But in essence they are simple. We should avoid choices that simply switch problems instead of solving problems. Across the range of policy options the right measure is how much carbon they reduce per dollar invested or spent. The technologies we deploy must be available immediately, not at some future date with unknown costs and benefits or even technological feasibility. And policies ought to be flexible, redundant, and offer multiple benefits without collateral risks.

Is the public ready for imaginative and far reaching climate leadership? Most polls indicate that public opinion on climate issues is changing. Major corporations have joined the US Climate Action Partnership and are committed to sharp reductions of carbon emissions or, like Interface Corporation, to achieve climate neutrality. Each of the remaining candidates for the presidency in various ways have committed to climate legislation. I believe that we are reaching the proverbial “tipping point” that leads us into a new era of energy policy and towards the work of stabilizing climate.

But that is only the starting point for your generation and mine. The obvious part of the great work ahead is to:

1. Quickly stabilize and reduce CO₂ to perhaps levels ~300 ppm;
2. Stop the hemorrhaging of life and preserve biological diversity;
3. Make a rapid transition to efficiency and renewable energy; and
4. Build a world secure by design for everyone...a world in which every child has a decent home, food, water, education, and medical care.

But all of us must do more. We must also build the moral, legal, and political framework necessary to protect the rights of posterity in situations in which one generation can deprive those to follow of life, liberty, and property—the words of the 5th and 14th amendments to the Constitution. We must, in other words, extend the philosophy of the Founders to include the rights of future generations. This is no more than the recognition that each generation, ours most importantly, acts as a Trustee on behalf of those yet to be born. As a faithful Trustee we are obligated to pass on the best of our civilization and the ecological requisites on which it depends to future generations. The idea that we are Trustees has its origins in both conservatism and liberalism. It was proposed long ago by Edmund Burke, the founder of modern conservatism (1790), and by one of the founders of modern liberalism, Thomas Jefferson (1789) as well. It is a perspective that unites us across all of our present divisions in service to all those yet to be born to the far horizon of time.

Finally, the great work of our time must be placed on a foundation sufficiently strong to bear the great weight of the best of human aspirations while being durable through the ages to come. By whatever name, we must eliminate the scourge of violence from human affairs—both the violence that destroys the relationships between people, organizations, and nations and that which has become the norm in our dealings with nature. The transformative idea of non-violence can no longer be dismissed as an Eastern oddity, an historical aberration, or the height of naiveté. At the end of our tether, it is no longer an option, rather it is the only realistic option left to us. There is no decent future for humankind without transformation of both our manner of relations and our collective relationship with the Earth. The beginning of a more realistic realism is in the recognition that violence of any sort is a sure path to ruin on all levels and that the practice of non-violence is a viable alternative—indeed the only alternative to collective suicide.

The Great Work of our time is a sacred trust and a privilege given to your generation and mine. If we do not rise to the challenge it will not be done. We know enough now to say what no other generation could rightfully say: the price for that dereliction will be high and perhaps total. Our challenge is to honor wholeness, health, and the great Holy mystery of life. No other generation before ours and yours ever had a greater challenge and none more reason to rise to greatness.

The challenge specifically to you is to do your work -- as environmental scientists, activists, educators, entrepreneurs, lawyers, farmers, natural resource managers, and citizens of the Earth -- so well that those who will look back on your time will know that this was indeed humankind’s finest hour.
Environmental Studies Program Guest Speakers and Events 2007-08

9/18/07 “Soil and Water for Every Farm”, a talk on Keyline Design by Darren Doherty, a permaculture designer and Australian approved Keyline Design Farm Planning ConsultantTM. He has studied keyline with members of the Yeomans family, developers of the system, and has designed over 1100 properties across four continents, most recently in Vietnam, on land projects for Mars, Inc., owners of Seeds of Change. He lives on a working research and demonstration farm in Southern Victoria, Australia.

9/27/07 Biographer Victor M. Cassidy spoke on the life’s work of “Henry Chandler Cowles: Pioneer Ecologist”. Pioneering ecologist Henry Chandler Cowles graduated from Oberlin College in 1893. He obtained his Ph.D. in 1898 from the University of Chicago for his study of vegetation succession on the Lake Michigan sand dunes. Cowles was one of the founders of the American school of ecology that has been labeled “physiological ecology” and “dynamic ecology.” Cowles came to the conclusion that the process of ecological succession was a dynamic event and that the vegetation at any one point in the system is related to the distance the point lies from the lake, the kind of soil present at the location, and the time period over which the plant community had been developing. Victor M. Cassidy’s recent book, Henry Chandler Cowles: Pioneer Ecologist, is the first and only biography of this seminal figure in ecology. The talk was sponsored by Environmental Studies, Biology and History Departments.

10/9/07 “Ecology, Holistic Education and Voluntary Simplicity” a lecture by Satish Kumar, World Renowned Speaker, Editor of Resurgence magazine and Director of Schumacher College. Satish has been the editor of Resurgence magazine for 30 years and is the guiding spirit behind a number of ecological, spiritual and educational ventures in Britain.

10/10/07 Public presentation “Lake Erie’s Watershed and History of Lake Erie’s Pollution Issues” by Dr. Charles Herdendorf, Professor Emeritus of Limnology and Oceanography, Ohio State University, Dept. of Geology. He included recent findings on phosphorous loadings to the lake and resurgence of the dreaded “DEAD ZONE” in his talk. Dr. Herdendorf is a nationally known expert in the ecology and biology of Lake Erie and is an Affiliate Scholar with Oberlin College’s Environmental Studies Program.

11/7/07 “New Frontiers in Climate Change Science: Mitigation Options, Biofuels and Unintended Environmental Consequences” by Dr. Jerry M. Melillo, Director of The Ecosystems Center at the MBL. He is also a professor of Biology at Brown University. Melillo specializes in the impacts of human activities on the biogeochemistry of terrestrial ecosystems. He has studied carbon and nitrogen cycling in ecosystems across the globe. The lecture was sponsored by Environmental Studies & Oberlin Center for Computation and Modeling.


12/8/07 “Wind! Water! Earth! Fire! Heart! Project” organized by students of ENVS 101 and sponsored by the Office of Environmental Sustainability (OES) and the Environmental Policy Implementation Group (EPIG). The project displays by the students of Environment & Society class (ENVS 101) and a free screening of “An Inconvenient Truth”.

12/14/07 “Jones Farm Opening” was a public display of art sketches and design ideas for the one-acre landscape surrounding the straw-bale building at the George Jones Farm by students from two classes: Ecological Art taught by Nanette Yannuzzi-Macias and the Practicum in Agroecology taught by Brad Masi.

Continued on page 12
12/19/07 “Orbital Variations: Pacemaker of the late Cenozoic Ice Age” by Dr. Benjamin S. Felzer, Marine Biological Laboratory, Wood Hole, Massachusetts. He was a visiting professor of Geology during the spring semester with expertise in climate change. Sponsored by the Geology Department, Department of Physics & Astronomy and the Environmental Studies Program.

2/8-2/9/08 “Inventing the Future: Entrepreneurship at Oberlin” Oberlin’s Entrepreneurship Symposium celebrated the launch of the Creativity & Leadership project by creating a forum in which to define and explore entrepreneurship in a liberal arts setting. The two-day symposium was designed to provoke dialogue among students, faculty, and alumni, and regional entrepreneurs and advocates. The symposium featured keynote speakers and panelists, and provide opportunities for all participants to meet informally to share their own entrepreneurial ideas and ventures. Students had an opportunity to talk with Jerry Greenfield about balance profit motives and social responsibility in Ben and Jerry’s; ask Michael Alexin questions about Target’s innovations in sustainability; engage with leaders in the arts such as Claire Chase, Melissa Friedman and Ron Russell of Epic Theatre Ensemble; and hear from major environmental leaders Marcia Aronoff and Brad Swing as they discussed the political, intellectual, and market forces driving new growth in the energy sector.

3/11/08 “The Greenest Building is Already Built: Community and College Meet to Learn and Discuss Historic Preservation and Sustainability” – An illustrated presentation by Sara Hobbs, Associate Director of the Cleveland Restoration Society. Sponsored by: Lorain County Preservation Network, Oberlin Heritage Center, Cleveland Restoration Society, Environmental Studies Program, Office of Sustainability and the City of Oberlin’s Historic Preservation and Housing Renewal Commissions.

3/11/08 “Is Efficiency Enough? Tradeoffs Between Efficiency & Growth” by Dr. Robert Herendeen, Fellow with the Gund Institute of Ecological Economics, University of Vermont.

3/12/08 “Running the Numbers: Photographs by Chris Jordan” Photographer Chris Jordan presented a lecture on his work in the Ellen Johnson Gallery (Allen Memorial Art Museum), exploring the themes of environmental stewardship, mass consumption, waste, public health and social justice are explored through haunting, large-scale images.

3/13/08 “The Accidental Entrepreneur: Affording a Passion for Activism with a Family to Feed” by Michael Lythcott ‘70 President, The Lythcott Company. Michael Lythcott discussed his path as an entrepreneur determined to make an honest living promoting environmental justice by working the fence line between polluters and their near neighbors. Mr. Lythcott is a consultant for private industry, government agencies and community organizations. Sponsored by: African American Studies Department, Environmental Studies Department, and Creativity & Leadership: Entrepreneurship at Oberlin Project.

4/3-4/5/08 Modeling Workshop with Tony Starfield In association with the Oberlin Center for Computation and Modeling (OCCAM), internationally renowned scientist and educator Tony Starfield visited Oberlin this spring to hold a mini-course on simulation modeling.

4/10/08 Lecture on Ecological Economics: “Ecosystem service valuation: Panacea or problem for environmental science and policy?” by Ken Bagstad, Ph.D. Candidate; Gund Institute for Ecological Economics, University of Vermont.

4/14/08 “The Economic Dynamics of Climate Change” by David M. Driesen (OC ’80) Professor Driesen is the Angela S. Cooney Professor at Syracuse University College of Law. His first book, /The Economic Dynamics of Environmental Law/ (MIT Press 2003), won the Lynton Keith Caldwell award for the best book of the year in science, technology, and environmental studies. He recently published /Environmental Law: A Conceptual and Pragmatic Approach/ (Aspen 2007, with Robert Adler). His research focuses on the law of economic thought in environmental policy. In his talk, Professor Driesen explained how an economic dynamic approach can help us address global climate change. This approach focuses on fostering the innovations necessary for long term progress on the issue to produce a positive economic dynamic. Sponsored by: Environmental Studies, Politics, Law and Society, Alumni Association and EnviroAlums.

4/22/08 “SLOWlab” was presented by Carolyn Strauss who is a designer, curator and the founding director of SLOWlab, a laboratory for slow design thinking and creative activism with offices in New York and Amsterdam and activities worldwide. Sponsored by the Ward Lecture Fund, Ellen Johnson Visiting Artist Fund and the Environmental Studies Program.


4/24/08 “GETTING YOUR WAY!” Students learned strategies and techniques to make an effective campaign in the spirit of “getting your way.” This workshop by Amy Meyer ’53 was based on her understanding of why the campaign for the Golden Gate National Recreation Area was so extraordinarily successful. Sponsored by the Office of Environmental Sustainability.

5/1/08 “Regulating Nonpoint Source Water Pollution: Evidence from the Experimental Economics Laboratory”, by Asstant Professor of Economics & Environmental Studies, Jordan Suter. Accumulated evidence suggests that nonpoint source pollution, primarily from agriculture, represents the greatest remaining obstacle to attaining the goals of the 1972 Clean Water Act. The regulation of nonpoint source water pollution is made complex largely because it involves the unobservable actions of multiple polluters as well as stochastic environmental factors. Ambient-based mechanisms, which base regulation on overall observed water quality levels, have been suggested as a means to provide incentives for groups of polluters to reduce their aggregate pollution loads. Given that ambient-based mechanisms have seen very little real-world policy exposure, the experimental economics laboratory offers an important intermediate venue for gaining insight into how these policies may perform in practice.
Students Establish “Green” Funds
John Petersen

Oberlin students have helped the College to go green by mobilizing to create two new sources of money that will support environmental initiatives on campus: the Student Green Fund and the Green EDGE Fund. Students initiated both funds with the goal of stimulating discussion and activism while fostering concrete action towards greater environmental sustainability.

In the fall of 2007 the College committed $40,000 to a student-led revolving loan fund for energy efficiency projects. The effort was inspired by the success of similar efforts at other schools and by the current momentum behind environmental projects here at Oberlin. Dubbed the “Fund for Ecological Design and General Efficiency”, or Green EDGE Fund, the program will be directed by a board of students, faculty and staff who will review proposed sustainability projects and fund those that have a demonstrable financial payback.

College juniors Lucas Brown and Nathaniel Meyer and College senior Kristin Brazuiunas spearheaded the effort to establish the Green EDGE fund which seeks to make it easier for student ideas, large and small, to receive support. Vice President of Finance Ron Watts and Associate Professor of Environmental Studies John Petersen aided the students in developing the concept and securing initial funds. Assistant Professor of Economics and Environmental Studies Jordan Suter worked with students in a private reading in the spring of ’08 to further develop the Fund. The board of the fund anticipates accepting applications in the fall of ’08.

College Coordinator of Sustainability Nathan Engstrom hopes the fund will “empower students by giving them a very clear and well-defined pathway for proposing projects and having those projects funded and implemented.” Engstrom is excited about the way in which the fund “puts students in the driver’s seat,” and notes how it differs from previous College-funded green efforts: “Most of our previous accomplishments have been, in a sense, products,” he said. “This one is a process.”

The students in charge share his excitement. “We can’t wait for the fund to start,” said Brown. “The fund will fill an empty niche in Oberlin’s environmental actions. Oberlin is great at the big stuff — the AJLC, the new Jazz Building, the SEED House — but small efficiency projects get lost in the shuffle.” In an open forum held in the Adam Joseph Lewis Center for Environmental Studies for interested students, Brown summarized the group’s message to Oberlin students: “All those ideas you had in [Environmental Studies] 101, all those leaky showerheads you’ve wanted to fix, each plan you’ve made for installing [Compact Fluorescent Lights] across campus — we can do it now. We can make it happen.” The impact of the fund “can be significant if targeted at strategic projects,” said Environmental Studies Professor David Orr.

Meanwhile, the student Senate has been working on a parallel effort to generate a source of funds for green campus projects. These efforts culminated in a student referendum in January of ’08 with 85 percent of the 1,500 students who voted agreeing to fund a “Student Green Fund” with a $20 waiveable fee per student, per semester. Since the fee is optional, the amount of funds that will be raised remains unclear, but Senate leaders have projected upwards of $50,000/yr in potential revenue.

“We want a fund that would be used only for promoting sustainable activities on campus. So that’s everything from buying more compact fluorescent light bulbs to detergent that’s biodegradable...whatever we think is green,” said Senate Organizational Liaison Jeni Klebanoff. The Senate will consult with leaders from the Green EDGE Fund and the Committee on Environmental Sustainability to create a review and selection process. The senate plans to solicit proposals and make its first awards in the fall of ’08.

Oberlin’ first “Ecolympics” is a success
Lora DiFranco

Oberlin College’s month-long Ecolympics came to an end Saturday, April 26th as organizers announced the winning dorms during the closing ceremonies. Run almost entirely by students and sponsored by the Office of Environmental Sustainability and the Environmental Studies Program in , events featured dorm energy competitions, waste audits, eco-volunteer days, and a dozen other events where students earned points for their dorm. South Hall has won a pizza and ice cream party for their dorm by winning the overall competition.

Oberlin has had a Dorm Energy Competition every year for the past four years. Dorms usually decrease their electricity use around 20%, saving the college hundreds of dollars and thousands of pounds of carbon emissions. This year, taking the lead from Duke’s Eco-Olympics, student organizers thought, “Why not host other events that can have the same effect as the Dorm Energy Competition?” Most Oberlin students are very aware of the environmental issues facing our world today, but sometimes everyone needs an incentive to change their behavior. With 15 events and hundreds of students participating, the Ecolympics was a huge success. Check out oberlin.edu/ecolympics for more information!

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The information in this article on the Green EDGE Fund is largely excerpted from an article by Alice Ollstein that first appeared in the Oberlin Review on November 30, 2007
A lot can happen in a year

Nathan Engstrom

A lot can happen in a year. A year ago I had just moved to Oberlin and started a new job as the college’s first Sustainability Coordinator. In November I became an uncle for the second time and was struck by the fact that miracles can happen in only nine months. I have met amazing people and have had incredible experiences. New houses, new cities, new jobs, new babies, new friends, what will the next year bring?

But before we look forward, let’s look back even further to 1908, a year characterized by unbridled optimism, hope and promise. A year, says Smithsonian, where astonishing inventions, predictions, stunts and breakthroughs propelled America into the modern age.

Americans in 1908 shared a fierce hope that the future would be better than the present. The achievements of 1908 reflected and expanded Americans’ sense of what was possible. In 1908, said Thomas Edison, “[a]nything, everything, is possible.”

So here we are now in 2008 and it’s striking to realize how much more hopeful Americans were then than we are today. A recent Pew Research Center poll showed that barely 1/3 of Americans say children today will grow up to be better off than people are today. A solid 50% say they will grow up to be worse off. The world is a scary place.

In Al Gore’s Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech he tells us that we are confronting a planetary emergency—a threat to the survival of civilization no less—that is gathering ominous and destructive potential. He warns of the consequences: massive droughts, melting glaciers, unprecedented wild fires, flooding, and people in the frozen arctic and low-lying Pacific islands quite literally making evacuation plans to leave the places they have long called home.

And here is Oberlin celebrating its 175th anniversary. And we must ask ourselves, what do we want our legacy to be for the next 175 years? What have we done in the last year to confront these threats?

A lot.

• Last May Oberlin hosted its first green commencement with a focus on reducing carbon emissions and waste.
• This year we hosted our first carbon neutral Commencement and Reunion weekend.
• We developed a Green Purchasing Policy.
• An organic turf management program was piloted on Wilder Bowl.
• Green Energy Ohio named Oberlin Clean Community of the Year.
• The college’s first green roof was installed on a portion of Harness.
• A series of events and activities were held during orientation to imprint new students on Oberlin’s sustainability initiatives and opportunities for their involvement.
• A local foods festival was held on Tappan Square.
• Oberlin was named the number one school on the environment by Sierra Magazine.
• A new hands-on campus sustainability class was offered.
• The international social networking session know as Green Drinks came to Oberlin.
• Energy Ventures International was hired to help with energy conservation and carbon neutrality planning.
• The Oberlin City Council voted NO to participating in a new coal-fired power plant.
• Oberlin hosted its first Ecolympics, a four-week series of dorm versus dorm events and activities.
• Oberlin Hosted a Climate Change Solutions for the Buckeye State and Beyond conference.
• The Light Bulb Brigade exchanged 10,000 incandescent bulbs for energy efficient compact fluorescents throughout the community.
• A full time energy manager has been hired.
• A feasibility study has been initiated for the Oberlin College and Community Green Arts District.

The future, Al Gore says, is knocking at our door right now. We must commit ourselves, in no uncertain terms, to massive changes in technology, practice and mindset. For Oberlin, we must build on our impressive accomplishments. And we must do this—act—with the same moral courage, the same hope, the same promise and the same sense that anything, everything, is possible that defined us a century ago.

Scoville Family Invests in New Learning Initiatives

Through a contribution from Jim Scoville on behalf of the Scoville family, the New Agrarian Center has expanded the capacity of the Jones Farm to serve as a learning resource for the College and wider community.

The contribution supported the development of a unique college-high school mentoring program during the summer of 2006. Three college students served as interns at the Jones Farm, assisting farm manager Aaron Englander ’06 and serving as mentors to four high school apprentices from Oberlin High School. The crew participated in the farm operation to develop basic competencies in sustainable growing techniques and also assisted with operation of the Jones Farm stand at the Oberlin Farmers market. They also assisted with the construction of a unique strawbale cooler building which uses the insulation and thermal performance of strawbale construction to create a highly efficient cold storage unit. Finally, the team worked in the wider community, establishing and maintaining community gardens and assisting with the City Fresh program which distributes local food to inner-city neighborhoods.

Funding also supported the development of three pilot courses through the Environmental Studies Program at Oberlin College. The Practicum on AgroEcology was developed in the Fall of 2007 and involved 12 students in the design of several components of a permaculture design surrounding the strawbale office at the farm. During Winter Term of 2008, the NAC hosted a Permaculture Design Certification workshop, taught by Darren Doherty, a permaculture designer from Australia. The two and a half week intensive led to the development of four permaculture designs for the entire Jones Farm. In the Spring of 2008, a course on Contemporary Agrarianism combined background in basic permaculture techniques to the formation of three permaculture “guilds”. These guilds included 4-5 students who worked in two applied projects at the farm and one at the Zion Village Community garden in downtown Oberlin.

The high school mentoring program and course work at Oberlin College laid some good groundwork for further development of ways to link the Jones Farm with Oberlin College and the wider community. Presently, several features of permaculture designs from the courses and Winter Term are being developed at the Jones Farm. The NAC has also developed a series of public workshops to expand the role of the farm in helping individuals and communities grow sustainable local food systems. We are also evaluating the three college courses and mentoring program to develop on-going programs and efforts to engage Oberlin College in larger farm and food system issues in the greater region.
Localizing the Food System in Northeast Ohio  
Brad Masi ’93

Re-named recently from the Ecological Design Innovation Center, the New Agrarian Center (NAC) began as an initiative to develop the George Jones Farm and Nature Preserve as a community farm and learning center. The NAC has since spanned to serve as a convener for regional food systems development across Northeast Ohio. As “shrinking cities” like Cleveland, Lorain, and Youngstown contemplate their futures, the local provision of food may well provide the beginning place for re-envisioning the regional economy.

I have spent a lot of time wandering the urban wilds of Cleveland, Lorain and Youngstown. As a testament to the resilience of nature, many of these industrial landscapes are turning back to natural environments. Vines make their way across old factory facades, slowly crumpling those old bricks back to clay. Once the greenhouse capital of the U.S., acres of abandoned greenhouses are returning to forests. Tree branches punch their way through the metal gridwork of old greenhouse frames and broken glass mixes with ground cover. As nature reclaims swaths of old urban landscapes, what can we observe about the elegance of natural systems compared to old industrial landscapes based entirely on fossil fuel energy and the rapid consumption of natural resources?

These landscapes speak to the temporary nature of an extractive economy. Abandoned buildings, rusting equipment and overgrown lots crumble as stark relics from an economy that came and went without any regard to the longevity of the community. As much as the industrial process shaped the urban landscapes of Northeast Ohio, a heavy reliance on fossil-based energy coupled with the high mobility of investment capital reduced the sustainability of this kind of development.

Similarly, our entire industrialized food system, the source of how most people eat today, has historically been supported by the availability of cheap fossil fuel energy. Large amounts of this energy are needed to power farm equipment, manufacture chemical fertilizers and pesticides, and create packaging, refrigeration and long-distance transport for food products. At the other end of this cycle, food waste accumulates in landfills and becomes methane, a greenhouse gas that traps 20 times more heat than carbon dioxide. If you took cheap fossil fuels out of the equation, this entire food system scenario becomes impossible. Without the use of this energy, a corn or soybean field would quickly be overtaken and, within a few years, would once again start to resemble a forest.

We face today what David Holmgren, an Australian and co-originator of the permaculture concept, refers to as “energy descent.” Worldwide, we may well have passed the peak of oil production, which will be followed by a permanent decline. The other major carbon-based fuels—natural gas and coal—are projected to peak and decline in production over the next 25 years, according to recent reports. Rising fuel prices, increased political volatility and the specter of climate change all point toward the end of a carbon-based era that has relied on burning these carbon dioxide spewing fossil fuels. Some people regard this end with a great deal of trepidation and fear of collapse.

But does energy descent have to be negative? As we confront these challenges, can we begin to move toward what Holmgren refers to as “creative descent”? Descent is a natural part of any process. In nature, every organism has its cycle of growth and its cycle of decay. These cycles are what lead to the longevity of the system. Can we tap into the best of our creative capabilities to proactively seek out alternatives to carbon based systems?

As we look for alternatives to the carbon-based economy, we can begin by observing the natural systems all around us. Without any outside inputs of energy, nutrients or water, natural systems are highly productive, very efficient and do not generate any waste that cannot be utilized by another organism. All waste becomes food and, over time, the system becomes more resilient to such disturbances as disease, flooding or periods of drought.

How can we begin to pattern our human settlements around the principles that guide natural systems? How can we utilize current solar income, harvest and re-use water, and cycle nutrients through our systems? How can we mimic the designs of nature to create food, energy and material pathways that actually enhance rather than deplete environmental quality and community vitality?

Answering these questions can begin to point toward the framework for a regenerative economy that will lead us toward a post-carbon future. A regenerative economic system has the capacity to reproduce its own assets. Like nature, it eliminates the concept of waste, where every by-product feeds another process. It maximizes the free services of nature, including such resources as wind, sun and rain water. Through a diverse web of local connections between individuals, businesses and institutions, the system has greater resilience through diversity.

Northeast Ohio captured the national imagination when the Cuyahoga River burned in 1969. Even though earlier river fires were more severe, the 1969 fire became a tipping point for the national environmental movement and led to some of the most significant changes in legislation for protection of the natural environment. Today, Northeast Ohio stands poised to once again capture the national imagination as a center for regenerative economic systems.

The rising interest in local food systems presents perhaps one of the best opportunities to put into practice the development of a regenerative economic system. Because food can be grown just about anywhere (from an urban rooftop to a large open field), local food systems can invite high levels of community participation and invention.

In recent years, we have seen groups like Neighbors in Family Practice, Wonder City Farm, and Gather 'round Farm in Cleveland actually utilize the abundant organic wastes available in cities (wood mulch, leaves, food waste compost, newspaper) to construct gardens on top of asphalt. Even Full Circle Fuels, a gas station in Oberlin that distributes vegetable-based fuels, has...
its own asphalt garden behind one of its garages. If these are the beginning signs of an energy descent future, then what is there to fear?

Through a partnership with Oberlin College, Case Western Reserve University and food service company Bon Appétit, Full Circle Fuels helped to convert a diesel box truck for the City Fresh program to run off of waste vegetable oil. City Fresh connects area farmers to institutions and urban neighborhoods (several of which have lost grocery stores). City Fresh utilizes vegetable oil or recycled waste grease to operate its own distribution system independent of petroleum-based fuels.

The George Jones Farm and Nature Preserve in Oberlin utilizes food waste coming out of the dining halls and cooperatives at Oberlin College to enhance its topsoil, feed its pigs and even heat greenhouse beds. Students enrolled in a course on Contemporary Agrarianism at Oberlin College helped to build an experimental compost pile inside one of the greenhouses with radiant tubing going through it. Not only is the compost created right where it will be used, but waste heat can be utilized in the system. Students last fall constructed a “worm tractor” which includes a mix of food waste, brewery wastes and wood mulch. Strawbales help to filter leachate and provide temporary walls for the pile. Worms are added to the pile to over-winter. A large pile of waste represents “Daytona Beach” to the worms where they spent the entire winter indulging and making worm castings. The worm tractor was built on top of a new market garden site for the farm. The New Agrarian Center (NAC), based at the George Jones Farm, is working to grow a regenerative food system in Northeast Ohio. The organization is based in the loft of a strawbale building. This high performance green building is heated with a solar hot water system installed in partnership with the Ohio Farmers Union. The primary materials for the building (wood, straw, clay, sandstone, and brick) all came from within about a four mile radius of the building. Once the building’s useful life has expired, it can be composted and become a garden, the ultimate form of adaptive re-use.

The NAC hosted a Permaculture Design Certification workshop during Winter Term of 2008 which involved eleven college students and nine community members, including several urban market gardeners from Cleveland, in a 15 day training intensive. The workshop was the first event to be held in the winter-time in the newly constructed strawbale office and learning center.

Bill Mollison, one of the co-originators of permaculture, had an epiphany when working on forest conservation in the 1950’s. He realized that the forest provided for all of its own needs without any outside sources of energy or nutrients. His thought was: how could we begin to pattern human settlements around some of these same principles? Permaculture stands for “permanent culture.” It provides a framework for building more self-reliant local systems that are insulated from the fickle whims of the global economy. How can we begin to graft international innovations such as permaculture with initiatives taking place in grassroots communities across the region to set the stage for a regenerative economic system for Northeast Ohio? Like just about every other major innovation in the U.S., it begins with small inventions in our backyards, neighborhoods or institutions. These many small inventions can grow to whole-scale change. To keep the process rolling, start with yourself and ask what you can do today to take a small step toward a regenerative future in your own life. Then start linking with others in your own community and the broader region. Before you know it, a few small steps will add up to whole-scale change and the post-carbon future will be here.

For more information contact Brad Masi at the New Agrarian Center at brad@gotthenac.org or visit www.gotthenac.org
by David Orr

In its nearly 2000 years, the city of London survived William the Conqueror, fire, pestilence, the blitz of 1940, the Beatles, and the ongoing invasion of tourists. It is a great place to ponder the issues of human behavior under all sorts of adverse conditions. In the spring semester 2008, Steve Mayer (Psychology Department), 15 Oberlin students, and I did just that. We used the City as the stage setting to ponder human psychology in the drama of climate change just now beginning. Readings for the course included cheery stuff like Margaret Atwood’s Oryx and Crake, Cormac McCarthy’s The Road, and Jared Diamond’s Collapse along with visits to the London Museum to see the exhibit on the London fire of 1666, Hampton court to ponder how the rich and famous sometimes amuse themselves when the going gets tough for lesser folks, and the war rooms from which Winston Churchill rallied the British people in the dark days of 1940. The second half of the course featured talks by people actually doing creative things to stop climate change like representatives from the Carbon Disclosure Project working with businesses with some $50 trillion + in assets, and 23-year-old Cambridge University graduate Tamsin Omond who climbed on top of the Parliament building in March to protest the proposed runway at Heathrow airport. Student projects for the semester ranged from public opinion surveys conducted in the London Tube to attempts to measure their own carbon footprints. We wrapped up the semester with a great performance of Shakespeare’s King Lear in the Globe Theatre.

The students taking my course in ecological design began by studying the work of Inigo Jones, Christopher Wren, John Nash, Capability Brown, John Wood (elder and younger), and John Soane. With that background we then focused on current efforts to make the London region more sustainable including site visits to the Bedzed project, Bristol, the Princes Foundation, the offices of Ave Arup, the cities of Bath and Bristol, and the Millennium development.

The Tube, fish ’n chips, the National Theatre and Globe, the Manchester Guardian, the dailies, the Thames, corner pubs, the Tower, Big Ben, speakers’ corner, Harrods, Foyles Bookshop, black cabs, more history and literary history than possible to take in, and people who proudly insist in driving on the wrong side of the road—all in easy proximity to the Continent, Scotland, and Ireland . . . the London program is one of the jewels of the Oberlin curriculum. The City as a classroom and what a City! Here’s hoping that the Oberlin-in-London program flourishes in the years to come.


Lucas Brown ‘09 Awarded Udall Scholarship
By Betty Gabrielli

In recognition of his potential as a leader in environmental policy, the national Morris K. Udall Foundation has named Oberlin economics major Lucas Brown ‘09 a 2008 Udall Scholar.

He is one of 80 students from 64 colleges and universities selected by a 14-member committee on the basis of commitment to careers in the environment, health care or tribal public policy, leadership potential, and academic achievement. The scholarship carries an award of $5,000 to be used for senior-year tuition.

Brown is passionate about helping people reduce global warming through policies that save money and increase profits. “My fellow students and I are learning—from such visionaries as Nobel-Prize winner Muhammad Yunus, founder of microcredit lending—that millions of people can be lifted out of poverty through social entrepreneurship Brown says. “By embracing the power of profit, we can use capitalism as a tool to promote social justice and preserve the environment:

By putting his passion into action during his three years at Oberlin, Brown has racked up a number of achievements that garnered him the Udall. He founded the Oberlin Ecological Design and General Efficiency fund (Green EDGE Fund ), which loans money for student-designed campus energy conservation projects and returns the energy savings to the fund as interest. He helped to design its structure, to secure $50,000 in College funding, to recruit the board, and to persuade 85 percent of the student body to approve raising student fees—an increase that could contribute up to $50,000 to the fund.

Brown also helped found SEED House (Student Experiment in Ecological Design), a sustainability themed house whose residents weatherize local low-income homes. He co-designed the low-emissions house and helped to recruit members, to secure College funding for repairs, to lead outreach programs, and to install an energy monitoring system.

Brown was also a member of the campus environmental policy group that organized a car share program and successfully lobbied the College to commit to a LEED Silver standard and work toward eventual carbon neutrality. In addition, he helped reduce Oberlin’s carbon emissions by maintaining the EPA-award-winning dorm energy monitoring system.

Off campus, he has worked for Washington, D. C. Mayor Adrian Fenty ‘02, conducting research on D.C.’s job training programs and inspecting earmarks for Fenty’s budget director, Will Singer ’03. He also served as lead programmer of iLoveMountains.org, one of the most innovative advocacy sites on the web, and he successfully lobbied the legislative directors of Senator McCain and eight U.S. representatives to reduce mountaintop removal by co-sponsoring the Clean Water Protection Act.

Brown says Oberlin’s strong economics department, its project-focused programs in environmental studies and politics, and its Creativity and Leadership Project are creating a growing contingent of students who are fast, flexible realists capable of balancing idealism with pragmatism.

“Our professors and friends at Oberlin have helped us see our potential. They have taught us how to build strong relationships and coalitions behind environmental goals, and they have taught us to constantly learn from mistakes and missed opportunities.

“Most of all, they have helped us dream smart.”

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Oberlin Online ~April 24, 2008
Climate Change Solutions in the Buckeye State and Beyond:
A Symposium hosted by Oberlin College

On Friday, April 18, 2008, Oberlin hosted a symposium to highlight new and emerging low-carbon solutions that offer promise of enabling the U.S. to dramatically reduce its emissions of greenhouse gases while continuing robust economic growth. A particular emphasis was placed on technologies relevant to Ohio with Lieutenant Governor Lee Fisher ’73 providing a keynote address that included several examples of businesses already engaged in green technology solutions in the state.

The crowd was welcomed by Oberlin’s President Marvin Krislov and Bruce Latimer, Executive Director of the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. Things quickly got underway with a presentation by Fred Krupp, President of Environmental Defense Fund, highlighting entrepreneurs of unique and exciting work in low-carbon solutions. A generous donor made it possible for all symposium participants to receive a copy of “Earth: The Sequel”, the book by Krupp and Miriam Horn.

Conference sessions were moderated by Karen Florini ’79, Senior Attorney with Environmental Defense Fund and David Orr, Paul Sears Distinguished Professor of Environmental Studies and Politics. The following is a list of the experts that presented on a range of alternative energy sources as well as efficiency, fuels, and vehicles. They described technologies that are already available or quickly emerging and how they can create jobs in Ohio and elsewhere:

Utility Scale Solar
John O’Donnell, Executive Vice President, Ausra Solar

New Energy Sources
Low-Carbon Coal: David Ball, Program Manager, Battelle Memorial Research Institute’s Midwest Regional Carbon Sequestration Partnership
Distributed Energy: Steven J. Strong, President, Solar Design Associates, Inc.
Utility-Scale Wind: Richard Stuebi, BP Fellow for Energy and Environmental Advancement, The Cleveland Foundation
Solar PV and More: Rich Wells, Vice-President – Energy, The Dow Chemical Company

Key Sources
Transportation: Scott Bernstein, Transportation President, Center for Neighborhood Technology (Chicago)
Buildings: Rebecca Flora, Executive Director, Green Building Alliance (Pittsburgh)
Agriculture: Laura Sands, Senior Associate, The Clark Group
Forests: Stephan Schwartzman, Co-Director, International Program, Environmental Defense Fund

Climate Change Solutions for Midwestern Cities
Sadhu Johnston ’98, Chief Environmental Officer, Deputy Chief of Staff, Mayor’s Office, City of Chicago

Climate and Jobs
Van Jones, President and Founder, Green for All

A reception and tours of the Adam Joseph Lewis Center for Environmental Studies concluded the well-received symposium. Sponsors for the day included Environmental Defense Fund, Ohio’s Tomorrow, Cleveland Museum of Natural History, and the Cleveland Foundation.
David Orr:

Awards
2007 Visiting Scholar, James Madison University
2007 Green Cross Millennium Award for Individual Leadership

Publications
Orr, D.W. 2008. At the End of our Tether. in Conservation Biology, April.
Orr, D.W.  High resolution in an age of High Consequences. 2007 Introduction to Hi Res Rhode Island School of Design Graduate Student Alliance & Responsible Design.

John Petersen:
Petersen, J.E. Accounting 101 for the 21st Century. Accepted for 2008 publication. Chronicle of Higher Education

Md Rumi Shammin:

Jordan Suter:
Congratulations 2008 ENVS Grads!

May ‘08 Major Graduates
Ashley Allen
Jeffrey Beem-Miller
Kristin Braziunas
Joseph Charboneau
Wyan-Suk Chun
Lora DiFranco
Jonathon Feinberg
Zena Grecni
Jacob Grossman
Marya Johnston-McIntosh
Nivan Khosravi
Roneisha Kinney
Katherine Knowles
Sarah Kotcon

Jeayoon Lee
Krista McKinnon
Callen Miracle
Lydia Moore
Nathan Moore
Fiona Ritter-Davis
Christine Rollinson
Carl Schubert
Benjamin Shapiro
Jenna Trostle
Zachary Wardle
Lina Yamashita
Emily Zielinski
Katherine Zipp

May ‘08 Minor Graduates
Virginia Dreier
Ilana Garcia-Grossman
Mary Elise Lauterbur
Kelly Lloyd
Kyla Neilan
Jasmine Powell
Cindhura Reddy
Melissa Streng

December ‘07 Major Graduates
Andrew Barnett
Patricia DeCoster
Eleanor Gordon
Joseph Lyerla
Shraddha Ramani