President’s Office

Macalester College has taken a leadership role in sustainability for higher education. In 2007, President Mark McPhee signed the Telleries Declaration, the first official commitment to environmental sustainability on the North American college campus. In 2012, President Susan Caspe signed the American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment, which commits Macalester to becoming a carbon-neutral university by 2050. The college also supports the Global叠加 of Sustainability for Higher Education and has been recognized by the Economist Intelligence Unit as one of the top five institutions in the country in terms of sustainability performance.

Information and Technology Services

ITS purchases all Energy Star certified products to save energy and reduce products from vendors that promote sustainability. We virtualize servers to minimize physical devices in the data center. Print release in the library and Digital Resource Center reduces paper waste by 90 percent. Laser toner cartridges are refilled with environmentally safe toner. We recycle computer packaging materials, including styrofoam, cardboard, paper and plastic bags.

Environmental Studies Department

The Environmental Studies Department serves as the academic cornerstone of sustainability work at the college. In 1973 Environmental Studies was founded by 20 faculty, and is today housed in the Macalester College Department of the college. The department has supported campus sustainability through classes, events, newsletters, internships, study abroad programs, and off-campus projects.

Olin-Rice/Energy Efficiency

Facilities Services recommended Olin-Rice Science Center, the largest energy user on campus. The lights and vent holes were placed on occupancy sensors to ensure that the building is only heating or cooling spaces when needed. The electric motors in the heating, cooling, and ventilation (HVAC) systems have been changed to more efficient variable-speed drives. These adjustments save the college over $50,000 in energy costs annually.

Prairie

The prairie once covered more than a third of Minnesota. The prairie recreated here was established in 2004 by students and alumnus Tom Lisen ’93, based on an idea from an environmental studies professor. The area includes upland and wetland prairie, with native prairie plants that provide food and shelter for animals. Prairie lands are left natural after planting to allow plants to adapt to the Minnesota climate. The plantings help to slow and neutralize pollutants flowing from the parking lots into the storm drain, which leads directly into the Mississippi River.

Wind Turbine

The Senior Class Gift of 2003 financially supported the installation of a 10kW urban wind turbine. Despite its small size, it is a valuable public demonstration of the use of household-scale renewable energy applications in urban spaces.

Vegetarian Cooperative

One of the great federal parks in the Lower 48, the Mississippi River, is a major transportation route serving the Midwest. The Mississippi River is a vital economic artery, providing the transport of goods and services for those living along its banks.

Katharine Ordway

Katharine Ordway is a public policy professional with an MPA from the University of California, Berkeley. She has over 20 years of experience working in government and non-profit organizations, including the U.S. Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Natural Resources Defense Council. She has a background in environmental policy, climate change, and sustainability issues.

Zap

Zap is a bike commuting program that provides a means of tracking bicycle usage for those at and around Macalester. This Zap reflects the University’s commitment to sustainability and the importance of cycling to the Macalester community. The CEC employs a student employee focused on environmental and sustainability issues.

Library

The library maintains Digital Commons @ Macalester, Macalester’s open access publishing service. Library staff work to raise faculty and student awareness of their rights as authors to choose in open access journals. The library makes available copies of high-demand textbooks purchased by the Mac Student Government. The library collects discarded, clean one-sided paper to be used in the “One-sided Notebook” project, where used paper is bound and distributed as notebooks. All incoming first-year students receive a one-sided notebook, along with information on sustainable printing. The library coordinates reuse of books wrought from its collection or donated from the campus community via Better World Books. Library-sponsored events, including the annual Library Technology Conference, are catered using only compostable or recyclable materials.

MacBike’s Bike Share Program allows students and staff to check out free bicycles from the circulation desk in the library.

Café Mac

Café Mac is a student-run student service that serves fresh, local, and sustainable food. The cafe is located in the Talbot Center, which was the first LEED Platinum building in the United States. The cafe is committed to using locally-sourced, organic, and seasonal ingredients.

Ecomouse

Ecomouse is a student organization that promotes sustainable living and environmental consciousness. Ecomouse organizes events, workshops, and other activities to raise awareness of sustainability issues and encourage positive change on and off campus.

MacCARES

MacCARES is a student organization that stands for Community Action for Resiliency, Environmentalism, and Sustainability. The organization focuses on sustainability initiatives, student sustainability projects that are implemented across campus. Past MacCARES initiatives have included composting and the establishment of the Sustainability Office.

Subsidized Metro Transit Projects

Subsidized Stored Value products that can be added onto a Go-To Card are sold at the Macalester community at the Information Desk located in the Renning Room. The campus has also added a Bike Share program to support the livability of the neighborhoods surrounding the campus. The college has also created a bike fix-it station, a Twin Cities-wide bike share program; a bike fix-it station; a ZAP fix-it station; a bike commuter courier; and a neighborhood-organic recycling station. These programs are located adjacent to campus.

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

Facilities Services has designated several parking spots and a location in the Freshman dormitory to cover the cost of one station and installation. Macalester purchased electric vehicle charging stations to support the increase in electric vehicles on campus.

Facilities Services

The Sustainable Facilities Services Unit is responsible for the design, construction, and implementation of our Sustainable Landscape Master Plan, supporting the growth of composting as a piece of our Zero Waste goal, and energy-recommending of existing buildings.

Parking Lot Storm Water Project

The new wetland on the edge of the Macalester Woods District, the runoff water of the parking lot is diverted to a basin with special soil plants to infiltrate storm water, decreasing the amount of pollutants running into the Mississippi River.

Mulch

Macalester College is a sustainability leader in the region. The college is a member of the C20 Partnership for Sustainability and the Sustainability Academy. The college has been recognized for its commitment to sustainability by the National Wildlife Federation, the Green Grid, and the Green Grid 2019 award. Macalester College is a LEED Gold-certified campus and a member of the College and University Presidents Climate Action Coalition. The college has signed the American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment, which commits Macalester to becoming climate neutral on an emissions basis by 2050.

Ecohouse

EcoHouse is a student residence renovated to be more environmentally friendly. The 2-3 student residence is located in the Marcy Hall area of the college and contains a garden on the Macalester campus and provides fresh produce for the college community. The college has also created a bike fix-it station, a Twin Cities-wide bike share program; a bike fix-it station; a ZAP fix-it station; a bike commuter courier; and a neighborhood-organic recycling station. These programs are located adjacent to campus.

High Winds Fund and Sustainable Transportation Hub

The High Winds Fund is engaged in neighborhood partnerships that support the livability of the neighborhoods surrounding the campus. To promote living near work, the fund provides financial assistance for faculty and staff members who purchase houses within one mile of campus by offering matching grants up to $4,500 for home improvement projects. In addition, High Winds provided financial to establish the HOURCAR bike share program, NiceRide, a twin Cities-wide bike share program, a bike fix-it station; a ZAP fix-it station; a bike commuter courier; and a neighborhood-organic recycling station. These programs are located adjacent to campus.

Sustainability Office

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Sustainability Locations

1. President's Office
2-3. High Winds Fund and Sustainable Transportation Hub
4. Electric Vehicle Charging Stations
5. Facilities Services
6. Parking Lot Storm Water Project
7. MULCH
8. EcoHouse
9. Information and Technology Services
10. Environmental Studies Department
11. Olin-Rice / Energy Efficiency
12. Prairie
13. Wind Turbine
14. Vegetarian Cooperative
15. Katharine Ordway Natural History Study Area
16. Leonard Center
17. Wellness Activities
18. Library
19. Bike Share Program
20. Bike Friendly
21. Café Mac
22. MacCARES
23. Subsidized Metro Transit Products
24. Markim Hall / LEED Platinum
25. Civic Engagement Center
26. Pollinator Friendly
27. Communications and Public Relations
28. Department of Multicultural Life
29. The Sustainability Office
30-31. Green Roof
32. ZAP

Sustainability Office:
Suzanne Savanick Hansen, Sustainability Manager
651-696-8138
macalester.edu/sustainability

Macalester Sustainability Tour