Another college with Middlebury’s record might have taken it easy on green initiatives this year. After all, Midd’s outdoorsy intellectuals had already earned recognition for such ambitious projects as recycling materials from a demolished building. But the school pressed on, giving its study-abroad program a shot of green last fall: A partnership with a renewable energy company makes it easy for students to offset carbon dioxide emissions associated with travel. More important, the Panthers now learn how to leave a lighter footprint on their excursions, and study-abroad students can win $500 grants to research environmental solutions like geothermal power in their adopted countries.

Highlight:

ENERGY: A wind turbine supplies 25 percent of the campus recycling center’s energy; a new power plant fueled by wood chips from a local willow farm could halve fuel-oil use.

WASTE: Sites for swapping goods encourage reuse. The campus recycles 60 percent of its waste.

INVESTMENTS: Despite creating a committee on ethical investing policies and a fund to support initiatives like environmental research and green campus buildings, Midd’s trustees do not disclose information about current investments.

If you go track down author Bill McKibben. He directs a fellowship program that brings environmental journalists to campus.

Score: 93

Sierra

28 • September/October 2008

ILLUSTRATION BY GREGG GORDON/GIGART

Looking for bright ideas? Start here

Eighteen U.S. colleges and universities have offset 100 percent of their greenhouse-gas emissions
#2

University of Colorado at Boulder
29,000 students; Boulder, Colorado

Eight years ago the University of Colorado (CU) became the first U.S. university to buy renewable energy certificates. Today the college-supported local offshore project. CU also has more than made its way out of carbon guilt, however, the Buffaloes also have made improvements in safety produced in the first place. Eighty percent of students commuted car free last year.

**Highlight**

**TRANSPORTATION:** Bus service covers city bus passes and intercity buses. Most campus shuttles, or Buff Buses run on biodiesel. **ENERGY:** Only 7 percent of the university’s energy comes from renewable sources. **WASTE:** Recycled garbage, composted food, and the rest mostly from coal. If you consider spending a semester studying ecology and conservation in Queens, you’ll spend time in a cloud forest reserve and at a women’s artesian cooperative.

Score: 91.5

#3

University of Vermont at Burlington
10,750 students; Burlington, Vermont

Don’t know which lightbulb to buy? If you lived on campus at the University of Vermont, home of the Catamounts, you’d know whom to ask. Dorm volunteers offer fellow students green guidance.

**Highlight**

**FOOD:** Buys 25 percent of dining-hall food from local farmers. **ENERGY:** Recently created a socially responsible investments committee but hasn’t implemented its policies. If you go, you can rent discounted snowshoes, telemark skis, or a canoe from the UVM Outing Club. **TRANSPORTATION:** Tuftlawn covers city bus passes and intercity buses. Most campus shuttles, or Buff Buses run on biodiesel. **ENERGY:** Only 7 percent of the university’s energy comes from renewable sources.

Score: 91

#4

Warren Wilson College
505 students; Swannanoa, North Carolina

The No. 2 school in our list, Warren Wilson College, has made an impressive leap up the rankings in the past year. The Fighting Owls have invested heavily in energy efficiency projects and have kept their carbon footprint low. The school has eliminated all the fossil fuels from its campus and is now powered entirely by renewable sources.

**Highlight**

**INVESTMENTS:** Created a $100 million microfinance fund for investments in developing countries.

Score: 88

#5

Evergreen State College
4,400 students; Olympia, Washington

Evergreen first made headlines for getting rid of grades and majors in the 1970s. Now the college creates buzz with its green projects. They were recent eco-moves include joining a program that lets students help pay for renewable energy projects in Maine through their electricity bills and creating a campus printing service that uses soy-based inks and recycled paper.

**Score:** 88

#6

Arizona State University at Tempe
51,500 students; Tempe, Arizona

With the nation’s second largest student population, Arizona State University can make a big impact with small changes. Although the Sun Devils have not switched entirely to xeriscaping with native plants, they have phased out wasteful flood irrigation from more than 70 percent of the campus and now water most of the grounds at night. Last fall ASU inaugurated its School of Sustainable Urban-Planning Models that minimize harm to the environment.

**Highlight**

**WASTE:** Partnered with a nearby farm to compost organic waste. **ENERGY:** Although it has signed the presidents’ pledge (page 31) and intends to buy carbon offsets, ASU hasn’t drafted a plan to reduce its carbon footprint. **WASTE:** Com posted campus garbage, 40 percent of its waste is recycled, and 38 percent of campus cafeterias use a mix of sources.

Score: 86

#7

University of Florida at Gainesville
50,000 students; Gainesville, Florida

With the 2007 national football and basketball championships in their belt, the Gators went on to become leaders in environmental policy. A water facility processes 3 million gallons of reclaimed water per day and serves more than 400 EBS at home (15 percent of average). Newer buildings, including 40 percent of the student body.

**Highlight**

**WASTE:** Campus回收 rates 40 percent of its waste; it was 15 percent in 2015. **ENERGY:** Relies on a local utility that uses a mix of sources, including 40 percent of its energy.

Score: 86

#8

Oberlin College
3,200 students; Oberlin, Ohio

Last spring Oberlin students competed in the Ecolympics to reduce their energy use and waste. Even in the Ecolympics off-season, they stay at it. Last fall eight students secured green funding for a new themed residence dedicated to green, energy-efficient living.

**Highlight**

**ENERGY:** Although half of the school’s energy comes from a local utility that relies primarily on coal, the campus now sources the other 50 percent from renewables. **TRANSPORTATION:** No free public transit; isolated location encourages students to use cars. If you go, you can take a class with David On, a Lyndhurst Prize winner best known for promoting environmental literacy in higher education.

Score: 85

#9

University of Washington at Seattle
9,350 students; Seattle, Washington

The home of the Huskies is one of the few universities whose overall energy use has decreased by 10 percent between 2000 and 2005; double that campus growth. The university’s energy comes from renewable sources (including hydroelectricity), and 14 buildings are slated for construction or renovation in compliance with LEED standards.

**Highlight**

**INVESTMENTS:** Endowment funds support renewable energy and LEED-certified development projects. **STUDENT ACTIVISM:** Environmental advocacy remains a fringe activity. If you go, you can sign up for courses in the College of Forest Resources—many of them include field trips to the Pacific Northwest’s awe-inspiring woodlands.

Score: 84

#10

Tufts University
8,500 students; Medford, Massachusetts

Often praised for being in Ivy League wanna-bes, Tufts surpassed its prestigious peers in environmental stewardship years ago. Recent eco-moves include joining a program that lets students help pay for renewable energy projects in Maine through their electricity bills and creating a campus printing service that uses soy-based inks and recycled paper.

**Highlight**

**INVESTMENTS:** Created a $100 million microfinance fund for investments in developing countries. **TRANSPORTATION:** With no subsidies for public transit in suburban Medford, the 50 percent of students living off campus receive no incentives to commit to green.

Score: 82

Did you know?

More than $500 campus kahunas have signed the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment (this package calls it the presidents’ pledge) and committed to auditing their school greenhouse-gas emissions, developing concrete plans for going carbon neutral, and reporting their progress.

From electricity through renewable energy certificates, Western Washington University, the University of Central Oklahoma, Evergreen State College, Concordia University Texas, and Unity College use 100 percent renewable energy to power their operations.

High school students and young adults have persuaded 200 U.S. colleges and universities to commit to paperless admissions processes by signing the online Students plant the Seed petition.

New York University buys more green power than any other school in
THE ECO LEAGUE

Students interested in a hands-on environmental education need look no further than the Eco League. The five liberal arts schools in this consortium—Alaska Pacific University, College of the Atlantic, Green Mountain College, Prescott College, and The Evergreen State College—each is exploring how to best involve students in the effort to reduce the university’s environmental impact.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Also in a league of their own are the ten University of California campuses. With 220,000 students and 170,000 faculty and staff, the UC system has the ecological footprint of a large city. Efforts to reduce that footprint one campus at a time mean the system now leads the higher-education pack in making big green changes.

At UC Berkeley, for example, campus dining options are 65 percent vegetarian, reducing the use of resource-intensive meat-based meals. (Pound for pound, more energy, water, and land go into producing meat than vegetables.) Harvests from UC Davis olive trees that once left oil slicks on bike paths have been put to better use in a line of award-winning olive oils.

Meanwhile, UC Santa Cruz has offset 100 percent of its carbon dioxide emissions since last fall, and four of UCLA’s high-rise dorms now have solar-powered water heaters. Farther south, UC San Diego generates 7.4 megawatts of its electricity (10 to 15 percent of its total energy) using renewable sources including methane-powered fuel cells, solar, and wind. universityofcalifornia.edu —Michael Fox

FREE MONEY!

ZIPCAR TO THE RESCUE

College friendships forged around the search for a late-night ride to the local liquor store have taken a back seat to rethinking when and how much we use our cars. Zipcar.com (www.zipcar.com) has appointed university sending students car-sharing memberships, which pay tuition and related fees as well as a $19,200 annual stipend.

FIELD: ENERGY

Students attending universities funded by the U.S. Department of Energy’s Office of Biological and Environmental Research are eligible for GRADUATE RESEARCH ENVIRONMENTAL FELLOWSHIPS, which pay tuition and related fees as well as a

FIELD: LAW

The American Bar Association’s FELLOWSHIP IN ENVIRONMENTAL LAW awards eight to ten-summer internships and $5,000 stipends to law students from traditionally underrepresented groups (based on ethnicity, income level, ability, age, and other characteristics). Fellows intern at government agencies and public-interest groups focusing on environmental, resource, or energy law in seven states.

FIELD: SCIENCES

The EPA’s SCIENCE TO ACHIEVE RESULTS program awards up to $37,000 per year for up to three years for master’s and doctoral students pursuing environmental degrees. DEADLINE: mid-July.

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FIELD: SCIENCES

The EPA’s SCIENCE TO ACHIEVE RESULTS program awards up to $37,000 per year for up to three years for master’s and doctoral students pursuing environmental degrees. DEADLINE: mid-July.

MORE INFO: es.epa.gov/reer/fellow

FIELD: WATER

The American Water Works Association’s LARSON AQUATIC RESEARCH SUPPORT program sponsors a $5,000 fellowship for a master’s student and a $7,000 scholarship for a Ph.D. candidate preparing for a career in aquatic, analytical, or environmental chemistry; corrosion control; or treatment and distribution of industrial and domestic water supplies. DEADLINE: mid-January.

MORE INFO: awwa.org/conferences (click on “AWWA scholarships”)

FIELD: YOU CHOOSE!

The Robert and Patricia Switzer Foundation’s FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM offers $15,000 for one year of graduate study at New England or California universities. Fellows can prepare for environmental work in a variety of fields, including architecture, journalism, economics, and chemistry. DEADLINE: early February.

MORE INFO: switzerfoundation.org

Looking for more resources? Check out the Sierra Student Coalition’s list at ssc.org/resources/ops.php

THAT FAIL

The College of William and Mary

5,760 STUDENTS; WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA

Despite student protests, William and Mary interim president W. Taylor Wynn III refuses to sign the president’s pledge (page 311) and has no climate plan. Administrator Anna Martin told the campus newspaper, “Signing it would be making promises we aren’t sure we can keep.”

George Washington University

20,000 STUDENTS; WASHINGTON, D.C.

The most expensive school in the nation has yet to invest in fighting the climate change. GW doesn’t offer its students incentives to use the green building. Nearly president Steven Kopp signed the president’s pledge earlier this year. The school now takes any steps to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions as the agreement requires.

Howard University

10,500 STUDENTS; WASHINGTON, D.C.

Howard does not recycle and has no green design or procurement policies. Although one manager has launched an environmental awareness campaign on campus, university officials say they’re waiting for students to press for change before implementing new policies.

Texas Tech University

28,000 STUDENTS; LUBBOCK, TEXAS

Texas Tech’s Maysled Rider mascot is probably hiding his identity because he’s embarrassed by the university’s lack of eco-initiatives. Texas Tech has no campus-wide sustainability policies or unified water- conservation plans for its fields and grounds, despite having published studies on water-saving techniques for the Texas Plains. Simply wearing flip flops at night instead of during the day could slash water needs by up to 25 percent.

Valdosta State University

11,000 STUDENTS; VALDOSTA, GEORGIA

Want to protest your school’s less-than-green projects? If you attend VSU, schedule an appointment with the administration first. Campus protests can occur only with administrative approval in a “free-expression area” during two nonconsecutive hours each day. —Lara Hartog and Michael Fox

EMISSIONS

Climate change stresses agricultural systems, which could result in price spikes for crops such as hops and barley, the basics of a beer garden close to many students’ hearts. Cincinnati State Technical and Community College students connect those

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Climate change stresses agricultural systems, which could result in price spikes for crops such as hops and barley, the basics of a beer garden close to many students’ hearts. Cincinnati State Technical and Community College students connect those...
OUTDOOR ACADEMIA

A SNOW-COVERED SLOPE may be as quiet as a library, but until recently only the boldest of scholars would claim that hours spent there counted as study time. Some colleges, however, have embraced the outdoors as a classroom, offering such nature-inspired courses as avalanche science and backcountry skiing.

At St. Lawrence University in Canton, New York, undergrads minoring in outdoor studies debate the merits of snowshoes versus snowmobiles and the ethical implications of ski lifts. Adventurers at Whitman College in Walla Walla, Washington, can earn credit for rock climbing, telemark skiing, and kayaking, and undergrads can spend three months exploring environmental issues or take six- to nine-day adventure trips known as “Scrambles.” And last September environmental politics professor Phil Brick brought seven Whitman students down Halls Canyon to help re- search a book with author Mary O’Brien. “We couldn’t have done it without the outdoor program,” Brick says. —Peter Frick-Wright

FROM ZERO TO HERO

Receiving a D- at TRINITY UNIVERSITY in San Antonio didn’t deter Jill Reed. But that’s how low the school scored on last fall’s College Sustainability Report Card, a comprehensive evaluation of campus operations and investments published by the Academics, Philosophy and Economics at the Sustainable Endowments Institute. In less than a year, Trinity completed its first campus-wide audit of greenhouse-gas emissions, switched to printing paper with recycled content, and committed to using LED standards for a new science building. It even ranked among the top five schools in the EPA’s RecycleMania competition.

Enough already? Not for Trinity. The university also purchased wind energy to power 15 percent of its operations, signed the president’s pledge (page 31), completed a LEED-certified building renovation, began offering organic food in dining halls, and banned all Styrofoam products from campus. Presidential Task Force on Sustainability chair Richard Reed says, “In light of the report, we acted very locally, very fast.” —Michael Fox

ECO-DORMS

AH, DORM LIFE: cramped space, bad food, and—what’s this?—solar panels. Schools around the globe have taken to greening campus housing with innovations such as renewable energy, recycled building materials, and composting facilities. Last year 318 students at California’s Pitzer College moved into a new residence hall that has rooftop gardens, solar panels, and low-flow showers and toilets. Most building materials, including lumber and metal, came from within 200 miles of the campus.

At Kentucky’s Berea College, 50 to 100 students live in the Ecovillage, a group of apartments and learning facilities built around a permaculture food forest (where food grows among trees instead of on a cleared swath of land), vegetable gardens, and a wastewater recycling system. Across the pond, Amsterdam’s Tempohousing mods old shipping containers to make prefab temporary housing. Shipping container? Prefab! The results are far from dreary. After the innovative recycler built a 1,000-square-foot student housing project from containers painted bright red, with floor-to-ceiling windows at either end. —Katie Mathis

Paper products make up the largest portion of municipal solid waste. Bonus: You won’t have to tote the trash out as often.

WHERE TO FIND THEM: ommongoods.com, freecycle.org, craigslist.org

Concentrated solutions use less packaging and require less energy to transport than typical detergents. Look for plant-based ingredients to avoid spending your dollars on fossil fuel.

WHERE TO FIND THEM: Drug and natural-foods stores, Staples, Whole Foods

Soda bottles, flip-flops, and tires—commonly found on our beaches. List them.

WHERE TO FIND THEM: gosum.com, uncommongoods.com

Bikes

WHERE TO FIND THEM: Bike shops, Target

Find revealing details about our top ten schools, on-campus conservation tips, and other Web exclusives at sierracol.org/greencolleges.
**Wildlife Biologist**

**WHAT IT TAKES:** A bachelor’s degree in biology, wildlife ecology, or a related field. Depending on your goals, a master’s or Ph.D. in a related field. A few years of experience in resource conservation could give you a leg up as well.

**TOP SCHOOLS:** Harvard University, Indiana University, Oregon State University, Tufts University, University of Colorado, University of Georgia

**STARTING PAY:** $30,000 to $75,000, depending on the school location and your experience.

**WHO’S BEING IT:** Sustainability experts who want to affect a large community without ever leaving college.

**INTERNSHIP OR SUMMER JOB:** Most schools with this kind of position, such as NASA Green Corps (nusaco.green.org) also have places for student internships or work-study positions. Nonprofit organizations often offer field research and monitoring opportunities.

**Volunteer Opportunities**

- **Americas Hiking Society’s National Trails Day:** americas-hiking.org
- **Bureau of Land Management public lands volunteers:** blm.gov/volunteer
- **EPA volunteer water-monitoring program:** epa.gov/volunteer
- **National Wildlife Foundation:** nwf.org/volunteer
- **Sierra Club:** action.sierraclub.org
- **U.S. Fish and Wildlife volunteers:** fws.gov/volunteers

**CAMPUS COLLABORATOR:** Praeen Dapyananda, 25

**THE JOB:** As the campus field coordinator at the National Wildlife Federation’s Austin, Texas, office, Dapyananda helps universities audit their greenhouse-gas emissions and launch behavior-changing campaigns.

**WHY HE DOES IT:** “Our planet that has miraculously sustained life so far is changing. Because of our actions. We still have many ways to improve the situation.”

**ADVICE:** “Don’t limit yourself to working for a typical green group. Any work is fine as long as it is done with a sense of compassion and concern for humanity and our planet.”

**WEED WARRIOR:** Serena Dennis, 24

**THE JOB:** A river ranger at Dinosaur National Monument in Colorado and Utah, Dennis rafters the Green and Yampa Rivers to remove invasive plants and teach environmental stewardship.

**WHY SHE DOES IT:** “I never thought I’d find a job that combined restoration with white-water rafting. I love working with volunteers and knowing I made a difference.”

**ADVICE:** “Internships! They are a great way to find out what you are interested in, make connections, meet people, and gain valuable work experience.”

**GREEN BUILDING WHIZ:** John Dowker, 25

**THE JOB:** As an associate at Seattle-based Cascadia Capital, Dowker helps renewable energy entrepreneurs refine their business plans and raise money.

**WHY HE DOES IT:** “Clean tech is really taking off, and helping the green economy is pretty cool!”

**ADVICE:** “Lots of clean-tech start-ups are looking for people who can fill multiple roles. This lets you learn about different areas of the business and helps you figure out where you want to focus your career.”

**OUTDOOR EDUCATION COORDINATOR:**

**WHAT IT TAKES:** Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) accreditation and a bachelor’s degree, preferably in architecture or engineering.

**TOP SCHOOLS:** Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Rutgers State University of New Jersey, Stanford University, UC Berkeley, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

**STARTING PAY:** $38,000

**WHO’S BEING IT:** People who want to help change the built environment and work toward a generous future.

**INTERNSHIP OR SUMMER JOB:** The U.S. Green Building Council, which administers the LEED program, always has a few internships available (check usgbc.org for listings).

**ENVIRONMENTAL JOURNALIST**

**WHAT IT TAKES:** A firm grasp of climate-change science and multimedia skills. A bachelor’s or master’s degree in environmental studies or a related field, with reporting experience of some sort is more than a degree.

**TOP SCHOOLS:** Columbia University, Northwestern University, UC Berkeley, University of Missouri; for specialized science and journalism.

**STARTING PAY:** $30,000, depending on the market and medium.

**WHO’S BEING IT:** Insatiably curious-minded people who enjoy telling stories and deciphering technical concepts.

**INTERNSHIP OR SUMMER JOB:** Writing and reporting internships with newspapers, magazines, or Web-based publications.

**CAMPUS ACTION COORDINATOR:**

**WHAT IT TAKES:** A bachelor’s degree in biology, wildlife ecology, or a related field. Depending on your goals, a master’s or Ph.D. in a related field. A few years of experience in resource conservation could give you a leg up as well.

**TOP SCHOOLS:** Colorado State University, Cornell University, Harvard University, Indiana University, Syracuse University, Tufts University, University of Colorado, University of Georgia.

**STARTING PAY:** $30,000 to $75,000, depending on the school location and your experience.

**WHO’S BEING IT:** Sustainability experts who want to affect a large community without ever leaving college.

**INTERNSHIP OR SUMMER JOB:** Must schools with this kind of position, such as NASA Green Corps (nusaco.green.org) also have places for student internships or work-study positions. Nonprofit organizations often offer field research and monitoring opportunities.

**Web Sites for COOs**

- [treehugger.com](http://treehugger.com)
- [sierraclub.org/careers](http://sierraclub.org/careers)
- [greenbusinesswhiz.com](http://greenbusinesswhiz.com)
- [greenbuildingconsultant.com](http://greenbuildingconsultant.com)
- [sustainablebusiness.com](http://sustainablebusiness.com)
- [ admittedlyeco.com](http://admittedlyeco.com)
- [greenjobs.categories.org](http://greenjobs.categories.org)