

uwsp news release

University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

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September 5, 2008

University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point to co-host historic climate change summit

University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point Chancellor Linda Bunnell and Wisconsin Lt. Governor Barbara Lawton will co-host an historic climate change summit at the university this December 12. The summit is billed as a clarion call on municipal leaders across Wisconsin, as well as key private and public institutions, to create regional and local collaborations to combat global climate change.

The summit will be an opportunity for municipal leaders and others from throughout Wisconsin to learn about best practices, whether at UWSP or elsewhere in the state. Workshop sessions scheduled include climate change in Wisconsin, community energy use, transportation issues, waste management issues, planning and infrastructure changes, local food markets, and more.

“UWSP was one of the first Wisconsin campuses to engage its students, faculty, and staff in a campuswide effort to raise awareness and implement procedures to begin to tackle global climate change,” said Bunnell. “We are honored to join with Lt. Governor Lawton and to provide this leadership from the center of our state.”

In June 2007 UWSP was among the first American universities to formally commit to sharply reduce and eventually eliminate all campus global warming emissions. UWSP was the very first Wisconsin university to sign on to this far-reaching energy commitment, The American College and University Presidents Climate Change Commitment. UWSP and three other UW System institutions have been designated by Governor Doyle to go “off grid” and be completely dependent on renewable energy by 2012.

Earlier this year UWSP became the largest purchaser of renewable energy of all the UW System universities. UWSP continues to work with the Wisconsin Public Service (WPS) NatureWise energy program to increase its overall renewable electrical energy mix to more than 25 percent of the total energy use by the campus.

(Other sustainability measures at the university are detailed in the sidebar.)

For more information on registration and breakout sessions for the December Climate Change Summit at UWSP go to www.WiClimateChangeSummit.com.

HEADLINE FOR SIDEBAR: Sustainability at UW-Stevens Point

Home of one of the largest natural resources programs in the country, UW-Stevens Point takes its commitment to sustainability very seriously:

- Conservation has been a tradition at UWSP since the creation of the College of Natural Resources in the 1940s.
- In the fall of 2007, Chancellor Bunnell created the Sustainability Task Force to achieve the goals of tracking, reducing, and eventually eliminating the campus' global warming emissions. . (see www.uwsp.edu/admin/chancellor/sustainability.aspx).
- Solar water heating systems have been installed for Knutzen Hall, the university's ecologically focused residence hall, as well as Pray-Sims residence hall and the Health Enhancement Pool.
- Rain gardens were created around campus to support native landscape plantings that absorb water runoff from the roof, decreasing water in the stormwater system and the energy needed to treat that water.
- Photovoltaic windows and low-energy lighting were added to the remodeled Noel Fine Arts Center, and elements of energy conservation have been included in current remodeling of the Dreyfus University Center.
- A "green roof" was installed on one section of the University Library. Five different drought tolerant plants provide an extra layer of insulation for the building and evaporative cooling in the summer, reducing energy usage and rain runoff as well as improving air quality by trapping and absorbing nitrous oxides, volatile organic compounds and airborne particulate matter.
- The Paper Science program uses recycled newspapers to create paper for local elementary schools.
- Courses in chemistry and natural resources emphasize sustainable practices.
- On April 4, 2006, Chancellor Linda Bunnell signed an agreement that will allow "green power" to be used as an energy source on campus. The environmentally friendly NatureWise program available through Wisconsin Public Service has UWSP purchasing blocks of methane generated power (derived from cow manure) to supplement 10 percent of our total energy consumption.

Chancellor Bunnell on September 18 will travel to Washington, D.C. for this year's American College and University Presidents 2nd Climate Commitment Summit.

"I am looking forward to renewing ties with my fellow college presidents and sharing the many wonderful climate change and sustainable initiatives taking place at our campus, many of which are being student-driven," said Bunnell.