

Aug 06, 2014

Thunderstorms 77° F

Charlottesville, VA

# The Cavalier Daily



UNC  
KENAN-FLAGLER  
BUSINESS SCHOOL

Evening, Weekend & Global OneMBA

Learn More >>

## United we sustain

### A new collaborative sustainability initiative will help the planet and the student body

by [Sheffield Hale](#) | Apr 19 2011 | 04/19/11 1:24am

Tweet 0

SUSTAINABILITY has been a part of the University's identity since the Academical Village's inception, when the gardens on the Lawn provided food and water for the students and faculty. More recently, grassroots efforts have worked to keep that vision at the University's core. We are learning how to engage with this essential ecological paradigm and understand its implications for our generation. The improved ability to navigate grassroots endeavors in the areas of academics, lifestyle and involvement will allow new students to take advantage of these resources and increase their positive impact.

In academics, the Office of the Provost approved the new sustainability minor Jan. 28. This student-led initiative enables students across different schools to learn and explore sustainability in a more formal way. Profs. Phoebe Crisman, Paxton Marshall and Mark White have been at the forefront in offering sustainability-related courses and even created the core class for the new minor, "Global Sustainability," on top of their departmental loads. With new courses appearing throughout different departments and schools, the University's first interdisciplinary minor offers a structured introduction to sustainability.

For sustainable living, the UVA Green Challenge was founded in September to answer the question, "But what can I do in my daily routine to make an impact?" This year-long crash-course is broken into seven three-week phases and has made leading a more sustainable lifestyle at the University simpler for over 300 distinct participants this year. The Green Challenge is supplemented by successful initiatives such as the Sustainability Pledge and the Do One Thing campaign, which encourage students to consider more



POPULAR

RECENT

COMMENTS

[The Cavalier Daily :: RUDGLEY: Finding the greener path](#)  
1 comment

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

WED	THU	FRI	SAT
6	7	8	9

No events for this date

FULL CALENDAR

sustainable choices in their daily lives.

An informal group of student leaders also saw an opportunity to better enable student involvement in sustainability when it noticed that there are more than 50 organizations related to sustainability with which students are involved. This group of student leaders, in order to help reduce redundancy and further sustainability at the University, came together under the brand of SustainaUnity.

These same students created SustainaUnity.com Nov. 19, a hub of information about sustainability for students. Complementing the website is a weekly newsletter, which includes the latest events and opportunities related to sustainability. This newsletter, which launched March 27, makes it easy for someone to hear about the events that occur each week, as well as opportunities with organizations, academics or employment.

In addition, more than 50 student leaders now are connected through a "sustainability\_leaders" listserv. These online connections, while useful, are not enough. These same leaders have been meeting informally during the last semester through potlucks and discussions to explore benefits of collaboration. They have decided that collaboration can support each other's missions while having a broader impact at the University. The first applications for positions within SustainaUnity, due April 31, will help pass the torch to the next generation of leaders.

But how does this more sophisticated information sharing among students relate to the administration? What communication exists currently?

The President's Committee on Sustainability created a student subcommittee March 3 to get a broader student perspective and to help bridge an already shrinking communication gap between students, faculty and administrators regarding sustainability issues on Grounds. Newly inaugurated President Teresa A. Sullivan soon will receive a comprehensive list of recommendations from the committee, which will set a vision for sustainability at Mr. Jefferson's University in the 21st century.

In the article, "Sustaining the Legacies of the Unity Project," which I authored Sept. 27 of last year, I outlined just how many powerful initiatives have been sparked as a result of the well-timed Unity Project that harnessed the excitement around sustainability and empowered grassroots leaders. Are these current initiatives sustainable themselves? It will be up to the next generation of student leaders to ensure that they participate in this larger dialogue and continue successful initiatives, such as Green Initiative Funding Tomorrow, which needs an annual funding source in order to sustain it and the projects it will support. In keeping with the lessons of the 2009-2010 Unity Project, the leaders of SustainaUnity are enabling younger students to engage in sustainability, but perhaps more importantly, they are empowering those students to lead.

*Sheffield Hale is a third-year College student. He was the 2009-10 Unity Project co-chair and is the current undergraduate representative on the President's Committee on Sustainability.*

Published April 19, 2011 in [Opinion](#)

The Cavalier Daily welcomes thoughtful, respectful and relevant comments that contribute to a public dialogue. In order to maintain a high level of discourse, all comments must be approved by our moderator. For more information, view our [full comment policy](#).

## Commentary

Add your \$0.02, [go to the comment form](#) or follow the [comment feed](#)

### News

- Grounds
- Local
- State

### Life

- Columns
- Love
- Connection
- Love
- Connection
- Survey

### Opinion

- Columns
- Editorial
- Cartoons
- Lead
- Editorials
- Letters to the Editor

### Blogs

### A&E

- Art
- Movies
- Music
- Arts & Entertainment
- Blog

### Sports

- Baseball
- Football
- Men's
- Basketball
- Men's
- Lacrosse
- Men's Soccer
- Women's
- Basketball
- Women's
- Lacrosse
- Women's
- Soccer
- Wrestling

### Focus

### H&S

### Multimedia

- Video
- Photos
- Audio

### About & History

- Contact
- Corrections
- Join
- Comment
- Policy
- Permissions

### Links

- Buy
- Facebook
- Likes
- Dental
- Assistant
- Salary

The Cavalier Daily is the independent student newspaper of the University of Virginia, published since 1890.

Please see our [about page](#) for more information.



[Download PDF](#)

All Content © Copyright 2014, The Cavalier Daily

Powered by  **WORKS** Solutions by The State News