

PERC Campus Sustainability Champions

2020 Honorees



The Campus Sustainability Champion title is awarded to students, faculty, administrators, and staff of Pennsylvania colleges and universities who have made meaningful contributions benefiting social, economic and/or environmental sustainability on their campus, in their community, or in society at large. Contributions can be in areas of teaching, research, co-curricular programs, campus culture, community service, and campus operations, including food recovery.

2020 CSC Honorees are listed below by category (Student, then Non-Student) and then by the last name of the honoree (or last name of the first listed nominee if several) or by the group name in the case of a group nomination.

Student Honorees

Rene Benoit **Allegheny College**

Rene has been a four-year leader in the Department of Environmental Science and Sustainability. As a freshman, she became a research assistant in long-term forest experiments on acid rain and climate change, routinely training new assistants in field and laboratory protocols. For the Creek Connections Annual Symposium and the Foundation for Sustainable Forests (FSF), Rene facilitated educational activities ranging from forest mensuration and ecology to art, teaching tree measurement and identification, and guiding younger students in producing forest protection-themed arts and crafts. (Picture a bunch of young students with more glitter in their hair than on their pinecones art supplies.) Rene developed these activities into units to be used in future FSF events, and used her artistic talents to produce promotional material for the foundation. Rene has been an active participant in the Students for Environmental Action organization, and last year she was the chief coordinator for soup lunches during noon-time departmental seminars; her gourmet meals were a hit in the department, as well as for many across the college. This year, she was among the chief organizers for the campus climate strike. Rene is certain to be among the leaders of campus environmental activities.

Paige Bryson **Lebanon Valley College**

The Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee (ESAC) of Lebanon Valley College is proud to nominate Paige Bryson as a 2020 Campus Sustainability Champion.

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Paige established herself as a student leader since arriving on campus in the fall of 2016. Paige has been a member of ESAC and Communications Intern since 2018. Some of Paige's activities include: managing all written and social media communications for ESAC, including, but not limited to: producing the annual report, developing a Green Living Guide, and marketing the College's Earth Days activities; organized, promoted and ran Goodwill, but Free, an event for College students and the community to donate clothing to the group who then conducts a thrift "shopping" event to promote the viability of secondhand clothing and clothing security on campus.

In addition to the responsibilities above, Paige also worked as a Data Intern assisting with the compilation of the College's Carbon Footprint. She also recruited, interviewed and trained other interns. Based on Paige's strong commitment to sustainability and willingness to advance ESAC initiatives, we strongly recommend Paige as a PERC Campus Sustainability Champion.

<https://www.lvc.edu/life-at-lvc/sustainability-initiatives/green-living-guide/>

Green SOCS Allegheny College

Green SOCS: The Green Students of Color Society (pronounced Greensox) is dedicated to nurturing and mentoring students of color to make a difference for the environment. Their mission is to "Promote environmental activism and empower students of color to explore Environmental Science! Everyone is welcome :-))!" Student-run and student-organized, Green SOCS has organized, participated in, and hosted a series of all campus events: The International Climate Strike; sewing and patching workshop to teach how to repurpose used and vintage clothes and promote sustainable fashion; The Green New Deal for Meadville, Pennsylvania; a sustainable eating and homemade pizza workshop; hiking events; muraling; and education on food deserts and how we fight them. At this writing, even while we are all banned from campus, Green SOCS is preparing to participate in virtual Earth Day and virtual Divestment Day. They also manage an awesome Instagram site, [greensocs allegheny](#).

West Chester University of Pennsylvania Abigail Kennedy

Abigail Kennedy is a passionate, hard-working, and empathetic student who has worked tirelessly at West Chester University to advance sustainability and empower other students. She is the current Chair of WCU's Students for Sustainable Action, with whom she has worked to engage fellow students and catalyze action on a variety of sustainability initiatives. For example, Abigail helped to organize and lead Student Brandywine Project workshops to educate her peers about the various dimensions of sustainability. She also organized monthly campus clean-ups and contributed to a "Say No to Styro" campaign to reduce use of Styrofoam containers at campus food trucks. Abigail also works with WCU's

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Outdoor Program to help fellow students hone their outdoor adventure skills. She deftly uses this role to educate students about their role in the environmental stewardship required to support outdoor pursuits. Abigail also has been a student trip leader on several Alternative Spring Break programs where she engaged student participants in sustainability education in advance of trips focused on rural and urban agriculture. Abigail Kennedy embodies what it means to be a Campus Sustainability Champion, and the campus community is deeply grateful for her inspiring leadership.

Alliyah Lusuegro Swarthmore College

Alliyah Lusuegro (Swarthmore '20) has served for three years as a Green Advisor (GA), helping to develop this intensive Eco-Reps internship program. Sophomore, junior, and senior year GAs work to encourage sustainable lifestyles among all College community members by educating peers about environmental justice issues, overseeing our extensive campus composting system, and serving as liaisons to staff Eco-Reps working on sustainability initiatives within their own departments. Alliyah has served as student coordinator of this program for two years, taking to the role with exceptional maturity, enthusiasm, and creativity. As just one example, when the GA program hosted the 2017 Sustainability Student Leadership Symposium (an east coast conference taking place at a different campus each year), Alliyah designed and hosted the conference's introductory panel titled "Diversity & Inclusion in Higher Ed Sustainability". She identified a need for this conversation within the conference's schedule, and thought deeply about the content of the panel and subsequent workshop exercises. Alliyah's commitment to environmental justice has been a hallmark of her internship work and her professional/volunteer pursuits, and we're excited to see her build on past successes as she enters the workforce after graduation this spring.

Charlotte McAdams Franklin & Marshall College

Charlotte McAdams has worked for the Center for the Sustainable Environment at Franklin & Marshall College for all four of her years of college. During that time, she led the Gardening and Regeneration Orientation Week (GROW) pre-orientation program, and has designed and implemented a number of programmatic initiatives, such as the Green Cinema sustainable film screening series, Sustainable Eats cooking workshops, and Green Crafts re-purposing activities. She has shown strong leadership skills and is defending an honors thesis on themes of sustainability in the Mormon faith. Charlotte will be attending Harvard next year to earn her Masters in a program based on sustainability and religion.

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Allison Miller **Dickinson College**

Allison Miller, Special Projects Intern for Dickinson's Center for Sustainability Education, led other interns and volunteers in organizing and championing Dickinson's participation in the 2020 Campus EcoChallenge. Through her efforts, a team of over 200 Dickinson students, faculty and staff participated in the three-week campaign to promote sustainability-focused behavior changes. She also successfully recruited ten other colleges to compete with Dickinson in the EcoChallenge. Allison worked as a sustainability intern two previous semesters and one summer, playing critical roles in hosting a summit on climate change and behavior change that was attended by over 400 people from 50+ colleges and universities; supporting Dickinson's biking and beekeeping programs, collecting and analyzing sustainability performance data, and mentoring other interns. Allison is one of eight Dickinson seniors from the 2020 class who has been recognized as a Baird Sustainability Fellow for advancing sustainability goals on and beyond the Dickinson campus through excellence in scholarship, leadership and service.

Maddy Mitchell **Pennsylvania State University**

Madison Mitchell serves as an Executive Director for the Council of Sustainable Leaders, a roundtable organization that brings together Penn State's affiliate student organizations to institutionalize sustainability into student organizations. Maddy spent the spring and summer working with the presidents of these organizations, providing them with frameworks to create sustainability coordinator positions, developing zero-waste protocols for large events, and encouraging them to commit to sustainability-focused member education.

In addition to drastically transforming the student organization landscape, Maddy hosts a weekly Sustainability Showcase that has become a mainstay for nearly 100 people every week. This series highlights the intersectional nature of sustainability bringing a diverse speaking line-up that has included climate scientists Michael Mann and Richard Alley, business leaders from PepsiCo, Perdue, and Glidepath Ventures, former Congressman Bob Ingles, and youth activist like Isaac Vergun.

COVID-19 has not deterred Maddy's spirit for community engagement. She rapidly transitioned the series online, replacing speakers who were no longer able to attend, ensured that the community built around these events continued.

Maddy is one of those students who come along very rarely in a professional's career. She has committed academically, thriving in the classroom, while genuinely valuing the role that her co-curricular experiences have in creating a holistic educational experience.

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Isabella Petitta **Allegheny College**

Bella embodies a sustainability champion. She is so enthusiastic and real about her love of the environment, it's contagious. She has been a project assistant for Creek Connections, Allegheny College's environmental education outreach program since she arrived at Allegheny. She participated in the program as a middle schooler at Seneca Valley MS. She has been a leader at Creek Connections from the moment she joined our team. Typically, I don't see leadership skills until junior or senior year, but not so with Bella. She stayed on and worked for us her first summer leading all summer activities including being the main college counselor for our Creek Camp for high schoolers. She is a standout student and involved in so many other clubs and activities at Allegheny. Bella has twice taken part in alternative spring break with Living Lands and Waters, a group who cleans up trash from the Mississippi River watershed. Bella co-lead the trip last year because she is passionate about the mission. She is always looking for ways to improve the sustainability of her own life, educate others and show them they can do it too. Bella is truly a sustainability champion.

Ashley Vecchio **Bucknell University**

Ashley Vecchio, a senior Managing for Sustainability major, demonstrates excellent leadership, drive and commitment in coordinating students, faculty and staff involvement on campus sustainability activities. She has unwavering motivation and dedication to planning and implementing sustainability events. She was responsible for a successful "Sustainable Move Out" event that helped in the diversion of over 15 tons of solid waste from the landfill in 2019. In 2020, Ashley successfully coordinated the planning and implementation of a campus wide, student-led sustainability innovation competition, "the Green Tank," where groups of students self-organized and used real campus data to create project pitches for promoting campus environmental sustainability. This competition was sanctioned by Bucknell University through the administration's commitment of using capital from the Green Fund to finance the winning projects. As a senior intern with the Office of Campus Sustainability, Ashley demonstrated leadership by supporting fellow students in delivering their expected results in advocating for sustainable behaviors on campus. She is a team player that delivers on her assigned individual and collective performance targets. She is also a student member of the President's Sustainability Council (PSC). The PSC has the overall executive leadership responsibility and oversight of sustainability at Bucknell.

Margaret Zheng **Haverford College**

Margaret Zheng arrived at Haverford with a bang. Within days of coming to campus as a first-year student, they started Haverford's chapter of the Sunrise Movement, and only a few weeks later boldly

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led the College's first climate strike, with a smile, in front of their new community. As a Sunrise leader, Margaret has organized climate strikes, engaged the College's Board of Managers, and participated in Sunrise trainings. At the Northeast Regional Summit they participated in an action targeting Rhode Island's governor and a senator. At the Friends Committee on National Legislation's Virtual Lobby Weekend, they lobbied officials on the Climate Action Rebate Act of 2019. Margaret participates in the College Climate Action Coalition and is organizing a digital Earth Day, a social media divestment campaign, and a segment of US Climate Strike's 72-hour Earth Day livestream. During Haverford's annual Spring Plenary meeting, they convinced the student body to pass a resolution to put climate justice at the center of the College's new strategic plan. They are also organizing an interactive musical performance to engage the audience about the roles of community and mutual care in the climate crisis. Margaret is a force for positive change at Haverford.

Non-Student Honorees

Kerstin Ams **Allegheny College**

If it's green, growing, and edible in Meadville, then it probably has Kerstin's name on it somewhere. Since she became the inaugural manager of Allegheny's vegetable garden, which supplies produce to the campus cafeteria, Kerstin has become the point person for gardening on campus and in the community. The garden attracts a huge flock of interns and work-study assistants who seek hands-on gardening experience, engages various courses in projects on sustainable agriculture, and attracts wide-eyed elementary students on field trips to the garden. Kirsten is a major organizer of the annual DeHart sustainability dinner, a college-community celebration of food production on campus and in the community. Kirsten spreads her green thumb throughout the community, partnering with community members in her "Grow Meadville" initiative, which has spawned pop-up and community gardens throughout Meadville. The garden at the Meadville Area High School has become a teaching tool for high schoolers and a cherished resource for local residents. Kirsten launched the Mobile Market (MM), which uses a converted mass transit bus to offer low-cost, healthy produce, grown on campus and by local growers, to area residents in food desert areas, thus improving community wellness and providing sustainable economic opportunities for local farmers.

Neil Boyd **Bucknell University**

Neil Boyd has been an ardent supporter of sustainability for many years. He was the inaugural faculty sustainability director at Lycoming College, where he championed changes in campus culture, created an

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interdisciplinary minor in sustainability, and developed sustainable management courses in the Business Administration program. At Bucknell, Neil is a member of the President's Sustainability Council, and he led the process for the Freeman College of Management to become a signatory to the United Nations Principles of Responsible Management Education. As the PRME Coordinator he led strategic sustainability planning efforts, and he continues to help stimulate environmental and social sustainability curricula and cultures within the College. Neil serves as an advisory board member for the Bucknell Center for Sustainability and the Environment, and he helped to develop the Coal Region Field Station that promotes pedagogy, scholarship, and service for social change in several municipalities in the lower anthracite region. Neil has supported additional efforts to grow civic engagement in the classroom and at the University, and he has published extensively on social and environmental sustainability topics in the fields of management, public management, and community psychology.

Robert Cooper, Mike Prinkey & Shelly McKeague: Core Team PSU Solar PPA Pennsylvania State University

Robert Cooper, Mike Prinkey, and Shelley McKeague are the core team in Energy and Engineering that shepherded through Penn State's Solar Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with Lightsource BP.

From the first moment that this team thought the University could meet its greenhouse gas emissions goals with a cost-competitive project, they assembled a diverse and ambitious group. They included renewable energy and energy market scholars, staff from purchasing, law, contracts, change management, and the Sustainability Institute, and passionate students. In our experience, this group was an outlier among similar institutions. Rob, Mike, and Shelley created a working environment that was as driven by values as it was by data.

At the end of the day, they led Penn State into partnerships with Lightsource BP, the Nature Conservancy, and others to not just generate electricity, but to create beneficial ripple effects. When it is fully operational, the 70 MW PPA will be the largest in the Commonwealth. While supplying 25% of Penn State's purchased electricity carbon-free, it will also be the home for ecological and solar research and teaching, while providing income for farmers and revenue for local government. That is sustainability worth celebrating.

Claire Jantz Shippensburg University

Over the past twelve years, Dr. Claire Jantz has increased sustainability efforts at Shippensburg University by building programs, facilitating collaborations, and supporting students and communities. Claire is passionate and dedicated, working tirelessly to build sense of place, while introducing students to service and sustainability. As Director of the Center for Land Use and Sustainability, Claire mentors

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student projects and oversees research grants focused on sustainability and land use, and bridging campus expertise with community needs to provide resources and information to local and regional decision makers as they plan for the future. On campus, Claire is a champion for sustainability efforts, supporting initiatives such as the development of Shippensburg Station on the Cumberland Valley Rail Trail, ShipShare bike share program, and our university President's Climate Leadership Commitments, to be signed in Spring 2020.

In her free time, Claire helps organize Furry Fun Days, serves as the inaugural President of Friends of Michaux State Forest, and is a committee member for Rotary Club of Shippensburg, South Mountain Partnership, South Mountain Research Corps, and Shippensburg Shade Tree Committee. Claire enjoys supporting local businesses and events, and spending time on the Rail Trail and in Michaux State Forest.

Andrew Lau **Pennsylvania State University**

I am excited to nominate Andrew Lau for a faculty Campus Sustainability Champion Award. Andy's lifetime commitment to sustainability is practically unrivalled at Penn State or any other institution. His accomplishments in writing, teaching, and service make him a perfect recipient of this year's awards.

Since he graduated from Penn State in Engineering in 1977, Andy has worked in solar energy, high-performance buildings, and sustainability. He taught his first sustainability and sustainable development course in 1990 when the term was barely in our consciousness. Ever since, he has taught solar energy, energy management, ethics, and sustainable design. To date, he has developed numerous modules and courses that bring cultural and historical perspectives on our unsustainable lives together with explorations of meaning and happiness as well as (un)appropriate technologies. He has also advised the nationally renowned Solar Decathlon team and Race-to-Zero teams, Engineers for a Sustainable World, and the county-wide Solar Racers competition for middle-schoolers since 2002.

Over a decade ago, Andy was a leader at the Penn State Center for Sustainability. This organization was inherited from dedicated faculty in the now-defunct Science, Technology, and Society program. Andy's dedication to the organization and leadership helped lay the foundation for what became Penn State's Sustainability Institute. I am personally grateful for his commitment.

Amy Maxcy **West Chester University of Pennsylvania**

Amy Maxcy provides administrative support in her position within West Chester University's Office of Sustainability, but regularly goes above and beyond in her job duties to support the work of WCU's Sustainability Council. The Council, made up of eight individual committees, benefits enormously from Amy's organizational skills and attentiveness to detail, as she provides committees with scheduling

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support and meeting minutes. The Council is currently contributing to a revision of WCU's Climate Action Plan, and Amy took the initiative to build an online workspace to facilitate the group's necessary cooperative work. She has also been deeply involved with the Council's Zero Waste Committee, helping to spearhead an enormously successful Pack It Up, Pass It On initiative that necessitated cooperation among students, faculty, and staff to reduce waste during the university's move-out period. To support sustainability education among WCU staff members, Amy has served repeatedly as a facilitator during training workshops. She has also helped with Sustainability Council-related event planning, making such efforts much easier for all involved. Although Amy serves in an administrative role, she is a knowledgeable and valued contributor to WCU's sustainability community, and our work would be challenging to complete without her steady dedication to the cause.

Wendell Ressler **Franklin & Marshall College**

Wendell has been a wonderful role model for sustainable living at F&M. He and his wife Barbara, both math professors, rode bicycles five miles to campus each way in all kinds of weather for many years until a recent injury and subsequent surgery sidelined him. He has been a strong advocate for active transportation at F&M and in the community. As a measure of his commitment, he has been heard to say that he believes that bicycles will save the world! Wendell has served on the Transportation Working Group for many years, volunteering his time quite selflessly. He also serves on the full college Sustainability Committee and can be counted on for dedication and wisdom in our deliberations. Wendell is also committed to sustainability in his personal life as evidenced by the new solar rooftop array and large vegetable gardens at his home. Wendell Ressler is a humble yet extremely effective Campus Sustainability Champion at Franklin & Marshall College.

Kyle Richmond-Crosset and Brenna Leary **Swarthmore College**

Kyle Richmond-Crosset and Brenna Leary served for the past year as Sustainability and Engaged Scholarship Fellows working between the Office of Sustainability and the Lang Center for Civic and Social Responsibility. In those roles, they have admirably served Swarthmore College through supporting the President's Sustainability Research Fellowship Program, engaging campus stakeholders members from across the community, and advancing the College's sustainability goals. Their work has made a tangible difference on campus and has been felt by their colleagues and the students they support.

Ken Shultes **Dickinson College**

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Ken Shultes, Associate Vice President for Sustainability and Facilities Planning, successfully led Dickinson College's efforts to cut net emissions of greenhouse gases to zero by this year, 2020, making Dickinson one of the first 10 carbon neutral colleges or universities in the nation. While many others also contributed to achieving this goal, Ken was an early advocate for Dickinson to sign the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment in 2007 and he played a central role over more than a decade in planning, guiding, and implementing our climate action plan. A graduate of Dickinson, Ken has been dedicated to leading the college to this transformative milestone.

https://www.dickinson.edu/news/article/4171/dickinson_s_reaches_its_2020_carbon_neutrality_goal.

Mark Spiro **Bucknell University**

Mark Spiro has been active in Bucknell's sustainability efforts for two decades. In addition to teaching Biology 150, "Plants, People, and the Environment," he co-led the Landscape group for the 2008 Campus Greening Report and co-founded the Bucknell Arboretum project, which he has co-directed since. These efforts created a highly impactful collaboration between faculty, staff, and students that has helped the campus landscape become more biodiverse and sustainable. He also played a leadership role in establishing the Lewisburg Community Garden, a university-town collaboration that, among other things, provided opportunities for local residents to have their own gardens, run a summer camp for children, co-hosted Community Harvest, a weekly hot meal program, and provided thousands of pounds of fresh produce to local food banks. More recently, Mark spearheaded an effort to establish a campus farm for teaching and campus food production. After years of planning and organizing, the farm was finally established in 2018 as a five acre living laboratory. Over 800 students in 32 classes visited the farm in its first year to learn about regenerative agriculture, soil carbon sequestration, biodiversity, and other sustainability-related topics.

Madison Tillman **Haverford College**

"Madison ("Tilly") Tillman is Haverford's Farm Fellow. She runs the operations of Haverford's sustainable farm, the Haverfarm. Under her leadership the farm produces approximately 1,600 pounds of produce each year. Tilly trains 4 interns and 2 summer workers, and coordinates 165 volunteers over the course of a year. The farm is a learning space for the campus community as well as local schools; 426 students toured the farm in the past year. Food justice is a priority for Tilly and the farm. Food is distributed to the campus community and local residents by a sliding scale that Tilly devised with her interns, and they send excess produce to food pantries in the Ardmore area. Tilly has also been instrumental in the formation of a campus food pantry, set to open in Fall 2020. The food pantry will address food insecurity

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on campus and will feature farm-fresh produce. This project led the Haverfarm to work to install a high tunnel to increase production over the winter.

<https://www.haverford.edu/sites/default/files/Haverfarm-Annual-Report-2019.pdf>