



SUSTAINABILITY SPOTLIGHT

March 2013

Innovations to Improve Health and End Hunger

By Thelma Simons, Project Coordinator for Information Technology and KU Advocate for Just Food

It's amazing to realize how one innovation can have such an immense impact on many lives. No, we are not talking about Twitter or Facebook. We are talking about seemingly simple innovations that impact people in need. Several such innovations were highlighted during the recent [Universities Fighting World Hunger world conference](#).

One innovation was an attempt to address the fact that two billion people suffer from iron deficiency anemia which causes serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and children. A Canadian researcher worked with Cambodian scientists, where 44% of the people are anemic, to find a solution. They realized that if people would cook in cast iron pots they could greatly reduce anemia

in Cambodia. But families used aluminum pots because they were cheaper. The scientists then tried to convince women to put a lump of iron in the bottom of their cooking pots, but women were reluctant to put that lump in with their food. The researcher studied the culture and found that a fish was considered lucky. So, they molded that lump of iron into the shape of a fish. Compliance for use of the fish over nine months of the study increased to over 90%. This seemingly small innovation has greatly improved the health, and lives, of the people who are using their lucky fish. (More information about this innovation can be found at www.luckyironfish.com.) Other small innovations to help people in need are happening much closer to

home. Most food banks focus on distributing food. Just Food, the Douglas County food bank, is working on several innovations to help people make good nutrition choices and move forward on the path to self sufficiency. Last summer they started a cooking class to help clients learn how to cook nutritious meals at a low cost. In January, Just Food changed their food distribution from "here's the bag for your family size" to a choice system that *(continued on page 2)*



KU FIGHTS HUNGER

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allows people to choose items they know their family will eat. They are working on creating a food recovery system with several local grocery stores. Just Food receives and distributes fresh produce donations from the Lawrence Farmers Market and several local farms. They also recently started walking

and aerobic groups for improved health. These small innovations are improving the lives of those in need in Douglas County, and are also reducing food waste in our community.

If you are interested in hunger issues, we invite you to become involved in KU Fights Hunger, www.facebook.com/KUFightsHunger,

[KUFightsHunger](http://www.facebook.com/KUFightsHunger). This group provides information about hunger related events on campus, sponsors the annual campus wide food drive, and is planning several activities throughout the year. Come join us. Who knows, maybe you will be inspired to create the next innovation that helps people in need.

Kansas Dialogue Focuses Discussion at a Local Level

By Collin Edwards, Center for Sustainability Intern

The 2013 Kansas Hunger Dialogue was held on March 4 following the Universities Fighting World Hunger Summit. KU again sent a delegation of faculty, staff and students to attend this collaborative event. The Dialogue started off with a keynote address from April Mason, Provost and Senior Vice President of Kansas State University, who spoke on the “why, when, and how” of higher education addressing hunger.

After the keynote, the attendees were split into breakout sessions according to their respective roles at their schools. Discussion in

the Student cohort was focused on finding ways to connect hunger related events and activities happening at each school and creating a statewide network between these schools. In this way, student groups from each school would be able to learn from one another and help address issues and barriers being dealt with on campuses across the state.

After a short break, a second breakout session split the attending groups into institution type. As part of the Public 4-year group, the KU representatives met with representatives from similar

schools across the state and discussed what hunger initiatives were happening at each university.

The closing keynote address was led by Rick McNary, the vice president of strategic partnerships at Outreach, Inc. In his address, Rick presented on “The why before the what: motivations to fight world hunger” and gave an anecdotal account of the need to address the hunger issue, at home or abroad.

Nominate Sustainability Leaders at KU

The KU Center for Sustainability is soliciting nominations for the sixth annual Sustainability Leadership Awards. These awards recognize students, faculty, and staff, as well as programs and projects that have made important contributions to sustainability and have promoted the values of environmental, economic, and social responsibility.

The nominations should reflect outstanding leadership and creativity in addressing issues of sustainability on the KU campus and/or in the broader community through education, research, service and innovation.

Individual Sustainability Leadership Awards recognize

nominees that excel in addressing issues of sustainability by leading sustainability initiatives on and off campus, incorporating sustainability into curriculum or research, and inspiring others to engage in sustainable practices.

In addition to these categories, awards are presented to programs and projects—including student and other campus organizations and campus departments—that promote sustainability through collaborative initiatives and/or outreach.

A Social Justice Award is also presented to an individual, project, or program that promotes equity for all

members of the campus community, integrates issues of social justice into education, research, and/or outreach, and inspires others to address issues of social and/or environmental justice.

Nominations should be submitted by email to sustainability@ku.edu by 5:00 PM on Friday, March 29. Awards will be announced this April as part of our Earth Day celebrations.

Additional information and nomination forms are available at www.sustainability.ku.edu.

Thank you for your assistance in recognizing leaders in sustainability at the University of Kansas!

Do You Work in a Green Office?

The KU Center for Sustainability Green Office program recognizes campus departments and offices that are making an effort to reduce environmental impacts and create a more sustainable workplace. Participants in the

program must complete an application that identifies specific actions their offices are taking. The list includes strategies for cutting energy consumption, reducing waste and making environmentally preferable purchases. Green

Offices are recognized during Earth Day activities. Offices that wish to be considered for 2013 recognition should submit an application by 5:00 PM on April 10. Applications can be found at www.sustainability.ku.edu.



Energy Solutions Professionals (ESP), an Overland Park-based energy service company, and the KU Center for Sustainability kicked off the second annual KU energy-saving competition on March 7. Lights Out–Round 2, is a competition between buildings on campus to see who can save the most electricity over a six week period. This year the contenders will be 14 buildings primarily used by the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, including last year’s winner, Bailey Hall.

“I’m encouraged that we’ve expanded the competition from three to 14 buildings this year and incorporated what we learned from last year,” stated Tim O’Kane, director of marketing for Energy Solutions Professionals. “The hope is that we’ll keep growing it to the point where it becomes a campus-wide initiative.”

Last year’s competition led to a combined energy savings of 14.3%, and was equivalent to the electric use of 10.4 homes for a full year.

Training for students, faculty and staff is currently underway in order to get them ready for the friendly battle and encourage as many of them as possible to take a personal pledge to save energy in their building. 227 individuals took the pledge in 2012.

Each building’s energy savings will be judged against the amount of electricity the building used during the same time period in 2011. At the end of the competition, the building that makes the greatest improvement wins a travelling trophy that they can proudly display in their building. All of the buildings will also receive some portion of the actual dollars they save during their competition.

Items like lights, computers, printers and other office equipment are prime candidates for being turned off when not in use.

Additionally, the buildings will have 13-watt CFL bulbs available to them so they can replace their existing incandescent bulbs. A CFL is around six times more efficient.

“We see this as a fun way to save money while reducing our resource use and greenhouse gas emissions,” stated Jeff Severin, director, Center for Sustainability. “Each year that we do this helps students, faculty, and staff form habits that will help them continue to reduce their impacts.”

The contest runs through April 17, with the winner announced on Earth Day, April 22. More information about **Lights Out!** can be found online at www.energy.ku.edu.

Live Sustainably

Upcoming Campus and Community Events

3/26

Empowering & Sustaining Malawi: Africa Windmill Project with John Drake, 7:30 PM
Dole Institute of Politics

3/28

3rd Annual Spring Symposium on the Scholarship of Diversity, 8:30 AM to 1:30 PM
Kansas Union
Register by March 25 at www.diversity.ku.edu/symposium

4/5 & 4/6

Great Plains Conference on Animals and the Environment
Burge Union

4/11

Replant Mount Oread, TBA
Fraser Hall

4/20

Earth Day Parade & Celebration, 11 AM-4 PM
Downtown Lawrence & South Park

4/23

Sustainability Leadership Award & Green Office Recognition Event, 3:30 PM
Kansas Union

4/23

The Environment & Energy: The Role of Free Enterprise and the Government, 7:30 PM
Dole Institute of Politics

4/24

Environmental Security Conference, 8:30 AM-5 PM
Kansas Union

4/25

Earth Day Lecture: David Orr, 7:30 PM
Kansas Union

For updated information on Earth Month visit sustainability.ku.edu/events/earthmonth.shtml.

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Join Us

For more information about sustainability at KU, visit www.sustainability.ku.edu like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/KUSustainability, or follow us on Twitter [@SustainKU](https://twitter.com/SustainKU).

Contribute

Is your department or organization contributing to a more sustainable KU? We'd love to hear about it and include your efforts in our next issue of the Spotlight! Send submissions to sustainability@ku.edu.