

**Contact: Patrice Sayre**

**CAMPUS SUSTAINABILITY ANNUAL REPORT**

**Action Requested:** Receive the annual report on the Campus Sustainability Plan

**Executive Summary:** The FY 2014 Campus Sustainability Report provides a transparent accounting of the Regent institutions' environmental impact through progress on the Campus Sustainability Plan, adopted March 2009, and highlights areas of achievement.

The Plan is designed to provide an integrated and collaborative effort towards greater sustainability to make the Regent institutions leaders in the nation on:

- Operational practices
- Education
- Research
- Economic development

As stated by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE), there is no commonly accepted and fully understood definition of sustainability or "campus sustainability," let alone agreement on what indicators to use in measuring it. Regent institutions apply campus sustainability broadly – in the general operations of each institution, in the curriculum and experiences of students and employees, in effectively partnering with industry and government, and in technology transfer.

The Regent institutions, with their more than 4,500 on-campus and 753 off-campus acres (excluding farm acreage), nearly 38 million gross square feet of space, more than 76,000 students, over 48,000 employees, and hundreds of thousands of visitors to the campus annually (including more than 850,000 clinic visits to UIHC), have a significant environmental impact. Conducting significant research with distinguished faculty, Iowa's public universities are positioned within the state and nationally to lead in the greening of buildings, purchasing and transportation. Regent institutions have an educational responsibility to students to expand discussion about sustainability, create student awareness and provide programming incorporating the principles of sustainability.

In this year's report, the Campus Sustainability Coordinators at the universities have highlighted selected accomplishments in the area of sustainability.

This report relies heavily upon the Campus Sustainability Coordinators for up-to-date information on projects and initiatives:

Elizabeth Christiansen – SUI, Director, Office of Sustainability  
Merry Rankin – ISU, Director, Office of Sustainability  
Eric O'Brien – UNI, University Sustainability Coordinator

## 2014 Sustainability Report

Since the 2009 Iowa Board of Regents Sustainability Initiative was adopted, the three state universities have all established robust campus sustainability programs.

This report highlights a few of the recent accomplishments of many faculty, staff, and students at Iowa's state universities whose drive and passion for a more sustainable world have resulted in improved practices and innovative solutions. Because so many sustainability-related activities are now being undertaken on these campuses, this report includes only selected and current efforts in each area.

The three major areas of reporting – education and research; operations; and planning, administration and engagement – reflect the format of [The Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System \(STARS\)](#). STARS is a transparent, self-reporting framework for colleges and universities to measure their sustainability performance, administered by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). STARS was developed by institutions of higher education and designed to be a standard for reporting on sustainability progress.



Each of the state universities have completed a STARS report (the University of Northern Iowa has actually completed versions 1.0 and 1.2) and all received a GOLD Rating, establishing the schools as institutional leaders in sustainability. Only eighteen percent of all 370 participating colleges and universities have achieved a GOLD Rating.

Each state university currently has a lead staff person heading and coordinating each respective university's sustainability efforts, along with an advisory committee comprised of faculty, staff, and student representation. The responsibilities of sustainability staff reach across the campus and often out into the community, sharing progress in building a green campus and seeking opportunities for collaborative partnerships. A major part of their duties includes guiding and mentoring students as either volunteers or interns. All staffers are active members of AASHE and participate in continuing education through that organization. In addition, all universities participate in other sustainability-related professional organizations such as APPA: Leadership in Educational Facilities and the United States Green Building Council.

While each school has developed a unique sustainability program that reflects that campus' culture and responds to the particular needs of the school, there are similar efforts undertaken among the universities. For instance, each school has curricula that include sustainability-related learning outcomes. Similarly, sustainability-related research takes place at and among the universities. Student gardens, student environmental organizations, and sustainability events and speakers are common (and often shared) among the three state universities. Each school offers opportunities for students to get involved with "greening" the campus. Each spring, student groups organize events such as campus clean-ups, energy competitions, recycling and waste audits, and clothing donations around Earth Day. Throughout the year, students undertake class studies and projects, many of which have resulted in real change. Examples include the establishment of composting programs in dining services that divert thousands of pounds of food waste from landfilling and the installation of water bottle filling stations across campuses, avoiding the generation of hundreds of thousands of waste plastic bottles.

School administrators have also incorporated sustainability into major, long-range planning documents. Schools are also finding that sustainability is an ever-increasingly important mechanism for campus outreach to Iowa's citizens and communities. Sustainability is driving various operational areas such as energy conservation and green building design. Best practices in all areas are shared through regular communication among the universities' sustainability and facilities staff.

Active collaboration already occurs among researchers and faculty in many cutting-edge, sustainability-related areas. University of Iowa, Iowa State University and University of Northern Iowa partnered to develop Iowa's Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR), aimed at building research capacity and increasing competitiveness for the State of Iowa through investments in infrastructure and human capital. EPSCoR provides support for key research areas at Iowa's Regents Institutions while establishing partnerships with the state's community colleges, private colleges, school districts, government agencies and industries. The ultimate goal is to stimulate lasting research infrastructure improvements for the State of Iowa.

After five years, each of Iowa's state universities has a vital and thriving campus sustainability program that engages thousands of students, faculty, and staff each year. Collectively, our state universities are becoming known for some of the most innovative work and research undertaken in sustainability in the nation, in large part due to the programs, projects, and initiatives detailed below.

Campus sustainability program websites:

University of Northern Iowa - <http://www.uni.edu/sustainability>

Iowa State University - <http://www.livegreen.iastate.edu/>

University of Iowa - <http://sustainability.uiowa.edu/>

## **EDUCATION AND RESEARCH**

A primary function of colleges and universities is to educate students. By training and educating future leaders, scholars, workers, and professionals, higher education institutions are uniquely positioned to prepare students to understand and address sustainability challenges. This STARS category recognizes institutions that have formal education programs and courses, as well as sustainability learning experiences outside the formal curriculum.

Sustainability is a driving force in both classrooms and research laboratories at all three state universities. As noted in the institutions' latest STARS reports, 164 academic departments teach courses focused on or related to sustainability. Additionally, eighty-three percent of graduates go through academic programs requiring sustainability learning outcomes. Within the research arena, it can be noted that 114 departments have faculty engaged in sustainability-related research. With so much sustainability education and research taking place, it is not hard to figure out why Iowa's state universities have such a powerful and growing reputation for being environmentally friendly and sustainable.

### **University of Northern Iowa**

Sustainability scholarship on the part of faculty continues to grow through interdisciplinary collaboration. There are numerous contributions, too many to discuss in this report. Contributions from faculty are diverse and are highlighted by an invited presentation featuring William Stigliani, Catherine Zeman and Gowri Betrabet-Gulwadi. Their presentation "Sustainability and Community Engagement: Fostering Faculty Skills for a Sustainable Future" at the American Democracy Project's 2014 national meeting. Additionally,



Catherine Zeman's presentation "Development, Structure and Impact of a Ten Year Outreach and Study Abroad Program in Sustainability and Environmental Health Disparities in Romania at the 2nd World Symposium on Sustainable Development" will be presented in Manchester, United Kingdom, in September 2014. In addition, faculty across campus continue to integrate sustainability into their teaching, research, and community engagement activities.

The National Science Foundation awarded a grant of \$749,875 to the University of Northern Iowa for support of the project entitled "Arctic-FROST: Arctic FRontiers Of SusTainability: Resources, Societies, Environments and Development in the Changing North" under the direction of Dr. Andrey Petrov, Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography.



Arctic-FROST is based at the Arctic Social and Environmental Systems Research (ARCSES) Laboratory, which is housed in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. Through this effort, UNI will serve as the national focal center of sustainability science research in the Arctic for at least the next five years. Arctic-FROST builds an international interdisciplinary collaborative network that teams together environmental and social scientists with local educators and community members from all circumpolar countries. The effort is designed to enable

and mobilize research on sustainable Arctic development, specifically aimed at improving the health, human development, and well-being of Arctic communities, while conserving ecosystem structures, functions, and resources under changing climate conditions. This project is the first circumpolar initiative of this kind and magnitude based in the United States after the International Polar Year (2007-08). The purpose of the project is to contribute to the conceptual, applied, and educational aspects of sustainability science concerning the Arctic and beyond.

UNI has a history of Arctic research, attracting NSF, NASA, and other research funds to study Arctic environments and societies. Dr. Petrov, his colleagues, and his students have made and continue to make contributions to understanding social and climate change in the Arctic by conducting field work in the region and by presenting and publishing research at international and national levels. UNI researchers have been involved in important circumpolar initiatives such as the International Polar Year, Arctic Human Development Report (Arctic Council), International Caribou Research Network (CARMA), Arctic Social Indicators (Arctic Council), Resources and Sustainable Development in the Arctic, Creative Arctic, and others. A large effort at UNI is devoted to studying the implications of climate change for both wildfires in the Arctic tundra and for caribou migration. This new funding will expand the opportunities for UNI faculty and students to interact and engage in research with the community of Arctic scholars while simultaneously raising the profile of UNI as a center of Arctic sustainability science and research in the United States and beyond.



UNI will work closely with collaborators from University of Alaska, Fairbanks, University of Maryland, and Colgate University to fulfill the project's objectives.

### University of Iowa

Making the transition from high school to college can be challenging. Starting Fall 2013, all new University of Iowa students living on campus participated one of thirty unique [Living/Learning Communities](#) (LLCs).



Living/Learning Communities bring together students who share a common interest and offer opportunities for team building, mutual support, and integration between the campus living experience and coursework.

[Research](#) shows students who get involved in LLCs are more likely to:

- Stay in college
- Earn a higher GPA
- Make connections to faculty and staff members that can aid in future careers
- Form lasting friendships
- Gain valuable experience and preparation to be a student leader on campus
- Give back to the local and global community through service projects
- Experience and report a greater degree of satisfaction with their overall college experience

Two sustainability-focused LLC's were offered this year: the Green Adventure LLC and the Kitchen Table LLC. The Green Adventures LLC participated in an exciting new event this year, [The Amazing Sustainability Race](#). In a fun, team-based competition, students cleared weeds in the Student Garden, paddled on the Iowa River, set up tents, bicycled, and sorted recyclables.



Later in the year, both the Green Adventures and Kitchen Garden LLC participants viewed a screening of the movie *Food Fight* and dined on a meal of local foods. Following the meal, the group discussed the importance of local foods and how local food systems support a healthy economy and healthy lifestyle.

### Iowa State University

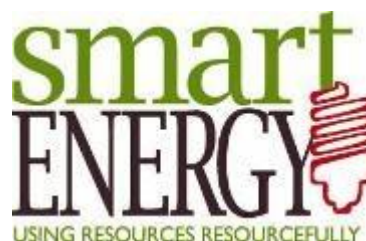
Providing students with unique and relevant experiences that not only add to their academic excellence, but also instills a connection and dedication to making a difference in the world as resilient global citizens is an important focus at Iowa State University. During the 2013-2014 academic year, students in the Business, Engineering and Liberal Arts and Sciences Colleges provided consulting assistance to the City of Ames on projects designed to help ensure a sustainable future for the community.

In collaboration with City of Ames departments of Electric Services, Information Technology, Parks and Recreation, Public Relations, Public Works, and Water and Pollution Control, as well as the City Manager's Office, students completed thorough research and data gathering for the completion of various projects. These projects were aimed at increasing and enhancing education, awareness, and engagement in the city's Smart 150 Challenge. This challenge celebrates the city's sesquicentennial by encouraging city businesses to make additional commitments to sustainability and EcoSmart programs, with specific focus on the city's comprehensive strategy to reduce energy consumption and decrease its carbon footprint.

College of Business management students served as project consultants for the city, focusing specifically on the effectiveness of and opportunities for enhancing education, marketing, and engagement resources and processes related to the five [EcoSmart](#) program areas: (Smart) Energy, Ride, Trash, Water, and Watershed, with specific focus given to program website content and end-user navigability. As well as being important components to the City's commitment to sustainability, these programs also offer resources to support the [Smart 150 Challenge](#), specifically targeting businesses. As a part of a semester-long course, students engaged city and university officials, businesses, and residents through discussions, surveys, and focus groups aimed at providing program directors with comprehensive proposals.



Senior software engineering and design students from the College of Engineering and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences served as software design and programming consultants specifically focused on an action item of the city's [Sustainability Plan for Electrical Consumption Reduction](#) and in support of [Smart Energy](#), a program aimed at more fully engaging residents in electrical conservation and efficiency. As part of a two-semester project, students are working with energy officials and organizations to create an online interactive tool that offers Ames Electric Services customers a comprehensive and comparative look at their personal electrical consumption (and overarching impact on community sustainability goals) and connects customers to opportunities to reduce their "electric footprint". At the completion of their first semester, students presented the City with a prototype design which will be beta tested with residential focus groups and finalized during their second semester, Fall 2014.



## CAMPUS OPERATIONS

This STARS category encompasses everything that goes into the daily operation of a campus. It includes quantitative data reporting in the areas of Building Operations, Climate, Dining Services, Energy, Grounds, Purchasing, Transportation, Waste, and Water Usage. This overarching category notes that institutions can design, build, and maintain a campus in ways that provide a safe and healthy environment for the campus community. It recognizes the outstanding efforts to maintain a more sustainable campus environment.

Sustainability in campus operations is often the most visible commitment that institutions can make. This commitment is easily noted in a number of ways in all three campuses. For example, in the last two years it is becoming much easier to carry refillable water bottles and coffee mugs. Each week a combined 28,086 refills are noted from water bottle refill stations across the three campuses. Additionally, 124,470 coffee mug refills were noted from the three campuses during 2013. When it comes to managing the campus and its grounds, a staggering 3,246 acres are maintained through an integrated pest management strategy. This results in a reduced need for chemical treatments on campus grounds. Universities are also huge generators of waste. Annually, over 6,650 tons of waste is diverted from the landfill via recycling and reuse programs; in 2013, over 22,200 tons of construction and demolition waste was diverted. These waste reduction efforts are just some examples of campus sustainability operations across the three state universities.

University of Iowa

[RecycleMania](#) is a friendly competition and benchmarking tool for college and university recycling programs that promotes waste reduction activities. Over an 8-week period each spring, colleges and universities across the United States and Canada report the amount of recycling and trash collected each week and are subsequently ranked in various categories based on who recycles the most on a *per capita* basis. Institutions are also ranked by which schools have the best recycling rate as a percentage of total waste and which schools generate the least amount of combined trash and recycling. With each week's updated rankings, participating colleges and universities follow their performances against other institutions and use the results to rally their campuses to reduce and recycle more.



At the University of Iowa, eight weeks of activities were planned around the RecycleMania competition so that faculty, staff, and students could become more engaged in campus recycling and waste reduction efforts. The activities started with the [Knowledge is Power Quiz](#), designed to empower participants with the knowledge to recycle and help the UI win RecycleMania. Other activities highlighted the "how to's" of recycling. [Recycle Like a Hawk was another fun week-long event.](#)



The University of Iowa's second year of competition in RecycleMania earned a second place finish among Big Ten schools:

2014 RecycleMania Big Ten rankings

School	Rank	Recycling Rate
Purdue University	1	39.44
University of Iowa	2	34.99
Michigan State University	3	31.29
University of Wisconsin	4	30.19
University of Michigan	5	29.12
Northwestern University	6	27.78
University of Nebraska	7	26.27
Indiana University	8	16.14

Iowa State University

[Stormwater management](#) at Iowa State University is addressed on an ongoing basis through a variety of processes, practices, and partners. In 2013, specific focus was given toward increasing the level of student, faculty and staff involvement in activities that directly and indirectly supported greater awareness of and engagement in water quality. In 2013, activities included active participation from students, faculty, and staff in the planning and design of capital projects, water sampling, and cleanup projects.

*Capital Projects* - With the addition of six student apartment buildings in [Frederiksen Court](#) and the accompanying parking needs, Facilities Planning and Management staff and a Landscape Architecture Studio class capitalized on an opportunity to integrate storm water management solutions (primarily focused around soil erosion and stormwater retention, as well as flooding concerns) into the project in the form of a former horse pasture that promotes infiltration into the aquifer and provides a green space for stormwater retention and filtration system before surface water enters a nearby creek.

In addition to its green roof, Facilities Planning and Management also found an opportunity to incorporate a state-of-the art stormwater management system beneath the brick pavers around the newly constructed [Troxel Hall](#). The underground Silva Cells system, the first to be implemented in Iowa, provides room for tree roots to grow, filtration and absorption of storm water, and prevents soil compaction. Through collective efforts on all 2013 permitted construction sites, Environmental Health and Safety staff calculated soil loss savings of fifty-six tons of soil saved from erosion processes.



*Water Sampling* - Through collaboration with Environmental Health and Safety, the Wetlands Research Lab, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources IOWATER program, and students enrolled in a [two-semester sequence of courses](#) for the Science of the Environment and Sustainable Systems [Learning Community](#), an overarching and dynamic perspective of the quality of water passing through campus is being achieved. Through this opportunity, students are taking samples, completing testing, and monitoring the health of several streams that pass through campus. As well as offering early career students with instruction and practical experience, a sense of how science can shape public policy is also provided.



*Clean-up Projects* - Engagement from the campus and Ames communities in clean-up efforts that not only beautify the landscape, but benefit water quality has a vibrant past. Efforts include land quality (Stash the Trash and [Adopt Campus](#)) as well as water quality-focused initiatives (including the [Skunk River Navy](#) and [College Creek Clean-up](#)). These activities engage thousands of students, faculty, staff, and community residents, resulting in several tons of trash being removed from the ISU campus on an annual basis. The newest addition to these efforts is the adoption of Lake LaVerne by the newly formed student organization [Greeks Go Green](#) that organizes and completes clean-up events around the lake once a semester.





**University of Northern Iowa**

*Baker-Bartlett Project* – The University of Northern Iowa continues to focus its capital project attention on maintaining and improving existing historic facilities. The Bartlett-Baker project consisted of the renovation of Bartlett Hall from a residence facility into an academic space. The newly renovated space, opened in January 2014, is now home to the former occupants of Baker Hall, which was subsequently demolished in March 2014.



Renovating Bartlett Hall into faculty offices, seminar rooms, and laboratories preserved a historically significant building on the campus. While the building no longer provides a housing environment for students, the Department of Residence was able to absorb Bartlett Hall's occupant load through the LEED Silver-certified Panther Village complex. The renovation of Bartlett Hall and the demolition of Baker Hall will allow the university to decrease overall building space square footage and the associated costs for utilities and operations, including \$99,000 in annual energy costs. In addition, Bartlett Hall's renovation allowed for the utilization of existing space that was previously wasted. For example, a previously unused attic was converted into functional office space, resulting in much more efficient energy usage throughout the building. The project will also avoid \$6.5 million in expenditures for deferred maintenance for Baker Hall while also addressing more than \$2.9 million in deferred maintenance for Bartlett Hall.

The Bartlett Hall LEED Design and Construction process included LEED credits in areas of:

- Sustainable Sites
- Water Efficiency
- Energy and Atmosphere
- Materials and Resources
- Indoor Environmental Quality
- Innovative Design Process
- Regional Priority Credit

**PLANNING, ADMINISTRATION, AND ENGAGEMENT**

This STARS category encompasses a wide variety of planning, engagement, and outreach areas. It includes quantitative and qualitative data reporting in the areas of Coordination and Planning, Diversity and Affordability, Human Resources, Investment, and Public Engagement. This overarching category notes that institutions of higher learning can make significant contributions to sustainability throughout society by sharing their experiences and expertise with others. Sharing best practices and lessons learned can help other institutions, communities, and individuals realize efficiencies that they otherwise may not have considered.

One area measured in STARS that all three institutions excel in is the area of community service. During the one year reporting period, nearly 22,000 students participated in community service at the three Universities. Those students volunteered a staggering 739,000 hours to projects ranging from work in local schools to environmental cleanups. This culture of volunteerism and civic mindedness is just one example of what makes Iowa's state universities thriving sustainable communities.

### **Iowa State University**

[The Community Design Lab \(CDL\)](#) is a partnership between the Iowa State University College of Design and Iowa State University Extension and Outreach. CDL engages Iowa State students, staff, and faculty with communities and organizations to address design issues of health and wellness, agricultural urbanism, energy, sustainable community design, and the built environment. In 2013, CDL worked with an array of communities including Cedar Rapids, Centerville, Clarinda, Des Moines, Maquoketa, and Waukon. Through these projects, CDL partnered with numerous stakeholders including city boards, elected officials, non-profit organizations, economic development coordinators, and community residents and resulted in a number of impactful and empowering accomplishments.



Projects in Cedar Rapids began with the floods of 2008 and have since expanded to numerous other projects in the TimeCheck neighborhood. The initiation of the Cedar Rapids partnership was through the multi-disciplinary [Bridge Studio](#) that began looking at the neighborhood in terms of post-disaster relief and catalyzed into a project working with sustainable housing (with focus on vacant lots) and an urban farm project with a non-profit organization, Matthew 25. These efforts were recognized with a Merit Award for Community Service in 2013.

In Des Moines, CDL worked on a commercial corridor in a low-income, urban neighborhood that



was in need of enhanced connectivity for walking, biking, and public transit in order to re-establish its historic position in the heart of the neighborhood. Working towards this purpose, the CDL worked with community stakeholders to design the streetscape with bike lanes, equitable access to public transportation, and stormwater infrastructure. At an additional site in Des Moines, CDL partnered with two schools, Hiatt and Carver, to visualize expansion ideas for school gardens and to link the gardens to existing community projects

and organizations. These gardens are just one of three communities incorporated in a grant that CDL received from the Leopold Center for a research project on Agricultural Urbanism in 2014.

CDL's outreach to Maquoketa brought resilient design concepts to a rural community that lost an iconic building to a fire, thus rendering their main street barren and in need of a new public image. From this loss came the opportunity for collaboration related to inclusive design around the vacant lot, eventually resulting in a streetscape scheme to influence community health. Plans are underway to transform the existing downtown into a well-connected place that provides for economic growth within an environment designed to draw people downtown.



### University of Northern Iowa

*UNI Hardwoods: A mind for business and a heart for the environment* – When Joshua Koppes first came to UNI in 2012, he struggled to balance his love of business with his desire to help the environment. Thus began UNI Hardwoods, a student organization that promotes sustainability through a variety of initiatives. One of those initiatives is the group's annual tree planting project, which replaces trees that were damaged by the 2008 floods or that are infected by the emerald ash borer. Not only is this a great way to help the environment, it also gives UNI Business students a chance to apply their skills and learn about new business opportunities.



This year, 200 volunteers from the campus and surrounding community came together to plant 6,500 trees on Saturday, April 12. The organization more than doubled the amount of trees planted during last year's inaugural event, earning them a "rose" from The Des Moines Register's editorial board. This accomplishment is thanks to a number of students and organizations, including senior construction management major Riley Freiling who introduced Koppes to Living Lands



and Waters, the organization that donated trees to the project. These types of personal connections have helped the group grow quickly into a driving force for campus and community sustainability. UNI Hardwoods has a number of other projects and events in the works. The Save a Tree Program helps elementary and high school students get involved in sustainability initiatives. The Impact Hardwoods Mission addresses clean air and climate change by providing bicycles to children who could not otherwise afford them and encouraging the use of alternative methods of transportation. Additionally, the group plans to host a Make a Difference (MAD) 5K and a "Save the Air, Ride a Bike" bicycle tour next year.

**University of Iowa**

[The Iowa Initiative for Sustainable Communities](#) (IISC) is a campus-wide effort at the University of Iowa to enhance the capacity of Iowa's communities to address the economic, environmental, and social-cultural issues they face today and build a more sustainable future.

IISC's purpose is to apply the talent and knowledge of the students and faculty of the University of Iowa to develop plans and initiatives that will enable Iowa's small towns and cities to enhance the sustainability of their communities. In 2013 and 2014, the work of University of Iowa IISC students and faculty focused on three communities: Cedar Rapids, Muscatine, and Washington.

**Cedar Rapids**

*Self-Supporting Municipal Improvement District (SSMID) planning, creation and implementation* – A SSMID would create the necessary funds to maintain the recent improvements to Main Street and would also allow city staff to move forward with new developments. Students began this process by conducting research on the best practices for creation of a SSMID. From this research, a SSMID plan was developed, including a projected yearly budget, potential uses for the funds generated, and evaluation metrics.



“The IISC program is a great economic and environmental tool for communities and businesses to increase their vibrancy in local economic growth.”

—Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds

*Evaluation and development of iGreenCR Program* – The iGreenCR program was developed in late 2011 as a coordinated strategy to promote and brand Cedar Rapids' sustainability efforts under one program. The city is now seeking to develop additional tools and programming to promote sustainability in Cedar Rapids. Students conducted research to evaluate community awareness and willingness to embrace sustainability, as well as current levels of awareness about iGreenCR. The students also developed a sustainability plan for each element of the iGreenCR and connected these plans to Cedar Rapids' guiding sustainability principles adopted in January 2012. They also worked with representatives of each element to set goals and metrics to measure success.

*Attracting and retaining a quality workforce in Cedar Rapids*

– A significant concern facing Cedar Rapids employers and community leaders is the struggle to both attract and retain a quality workforce. Students sought to understand the reasons for both attracting and retaining new workers by holding focus groups and collecting data. A particular focus of the project is on attracting and retaining young professionals (workers under 40). Students surveyed other cities with strong young professional workforces to propose steps that Cedar Rapids can take to become a more attractive place for young professionals to live.



**Muscatine**

*Redevelopment of the Mississippi Riverfront* - The Mississippi River is one of Muscatine's greatest assets, but currently the land along the river is underused. New initiatives seek to improve the aesthetics of the area, but a redevelopment plan is needed to guide strategic growth along the riverfront. Students surveyed best practices of similar communities' riverfront redevelopment efforts and solicited community input to

identify the best uses for the land, ultimately producing a redevelopment plan for the riverfront. Potential pieces of the redevelopment plan include opening up the riverfront to vendors, public art, a new outdoor entertainment venue, relocating the farmers market, and promoting the riverfront as a recreational amenity. The redevelopment plan sets forth action steps for the community to take to enhance the riverfront while paying particular attention to the history of Muscatine as a community.

### **Washington**

*Washington Library* – Libraries are the hearts of Iowa’s communities. Masters' students in the School of Library and Information Science worked with the Washington Public Library during the fall term. Two groups of students in the Resources for Children class completed projects supporting children's services at the library. A group of four students developed a proposal for reclassifying the children's non-fiction section, while two more researched and drafted a new floor plan for the children's room.

These projects involved site visits to Washington and other area libraries, allowing students to see how regional libraries approached the need to improve access to collections and use of space. Library reclassification was carried out using various frameworks, and students met with library staff to demonstrate the ways in which a variety of children's books would be classified using several popular systems. Students sought to make the children's room more user-friendly. They also researched low-budget redesign and conducted observations to see how the current layout was being used by young library patrons and their caregivers.

