Student Sustainability Task Force Projects

Chair: Elizabeth Anderson ’14

Connectivity and Communication: Last year, SSTF created a Facebook group for all RPI students interested in sustainability, RPI Students for the Environment (url here: https://www.facebook.com/groups/521522774602570/). SSTF has also started an email list for environmental club officers. Please contact sstf@union.rpi if you are not on the list and should be! The Ecotalk email list for all environmental RPI-related discussion still exists; contact sstf@union.rpi.edu if you want to be on it.

Green Revolving Fund: SSTF is currently working on a green revolving fund proposal. If you are interested in the project, please contact sstf@union.rpi.edu to receive more information on how to get involved.

SustainAffinity: SSTF is partnering with SEP to create an alumni network. SustainAffinity’s goal is to connect alumni and current students for the purpose of networking and mentorship. This network is currently a Google Group and can be joined by filling out the form here: http://goo.gl/forms/B7VsLs50sp.

Sustainability Report: This report was completed last year and can be found here: http://sstf.union.rpi.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/STARSReportFinal.pdf. The report measures where RPI is doing in terms of various sustainability metrics and suggests potential improvements.

Urban Gardening/Green Food: Project members are working on building a sustainable greenhouse on campus. The greenhouse will be constructed out of recycled materials and will potentially use renewable technology. We hope to have a design built by December. Our project involves a lot of
research on sustainable greenhouses and growing food indoors. Our project is in the beginning stages. We are currently looking for people to join our project to assist in the design and construction of our project. The goal of the project is to teach people about food, food security, and the food system through the greenhouse.

**Have project ideas to green RPI?** Contact [sstf@union.rpi.edu](mailto:sstf@union.rpi.edu) and we will put you in touch with the right person/group!

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**EcoLogic**

**President:** Jesse Noviello ’15

EcoLogic successfully hosted EarthFest last April, with several hundred attendees. EcoLogic is now adding a fall event—the Eco Princess Festival on November 22nd! Adrienne Wilson ’13 had a huge success with her Eco Princess Festivals last year. Now that she has graduated, EcoLogic is taking over the event. This year’s Eco Princess Festival will be funded by SSTF. EcoLogic has also seen good attendance at meetings and has had a couple of very good discussions of environmental issues—one about fracking, and another about nuclear energy.

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**Engineers Without Borders**

**President:** Zlata Chernyshenko ’16

In January 2015, five members of Engineers Without Borders RPI will be traveling to Panama to implement a water catchment and treatment system for the 350 community members of Isla Popa II. The members of the community support themselves on 6 times less than the average American and half
the usage of an average Panamanian. Currently without a reliable source of potable water, the island-
dwelling Panamanian community members have been collaborating with EWB-RPI since 2010 in drafting
a large-scale water harvesting system that will sustainably provide water for the community’s school.
EWB-RPI is hard at work finalizing the designs for a pavilion-based rainwater catchment system that will
be constructed during this first Implementation Trip. Two 600-gallon tanks will be mounted near this
pavilion and will store water collected on the roof. As a preliminary water treatment procedure, a “first-
flush” system designed by EWB-RPI club members will pre-flush the first few millimeters of water that
falls on the pavilion roof to rid the water of turbidity and solid contaminants. Furthermore, four to five
bucket-based Biosand filters will be constructed and placed in the school cafeteria for use in filtering the
gathered rainwater. EWB-RPI prioritizes sustainability of projects, and thus will ensure that community
members have been trained about how to properly use and maintenance the constructed system.
Before leaving the community, club members will search for future construction sites, analyze current
drinking water practices, and collect water contamination data using microbial testing kits.

Green Greeks

President: Jesse Noviello ’15

Green Greeks is back in business we have meeting every Wednesday at 9:30pm in union 3510. The main
projects we are working on are the recycling can/bottle drive happening now until November 5th where
Greek houses return there cans to recycling centers and we pool the money and donate it to a charity of
the winners choice. We are also looking into Terracycling Solo cups that the houses use in order to
recycle and raise money for charity. We are also compiling a sustainable best practices list that
documents things houses are doing in sustainable ways and shares that information so that other
houses may copy those practices.
Society for Environmental Professionals

President: Joelle Woodson ’16

The Society of Environmental Professionals is back! For those of you that don't know, SEP is a group devoted to getting young Sustainability students connected to professionals, companies, faculty, research, ANYTHING related to what we care about. Originally geared toward Environmental Engineers, we’re broadening our horizons to just about any major—STS, Econ, Art/Design/Architecture, Engineering, Science, ETC! So far, in addition to being dedicated to connecting environmentally-conscious students connected to job opportunities, SEP is working towards making links with professionals, professors, students, and many more people in the field. Currently, we are working towards finalizing a fundraising event, as well as a networking event. SEP has had around 15 members at each of their first two meetings this semester.

Terra Café

President: Marina Alexander ’16

Terra Cafe is a student-run volunteer organization dedicated to providing locally sourced and organic meals to the RPI community every Wednesday at EMPAC. Over 200 people have attended most of the lunches so far this semester. This semester we have worked in partnership with 2 other RPI clubs to help them fundraiser and raise awareness of their clubs. Both the Quiddich Team and Active Minds at RPI have had their members volunteer alongside Terra's. We welcome clubs to collaborate with us in serving the campus community with fresh and delicious food.