



December 5, 2013

“Sustainable Columbia” offers a look at the many ways in which our students, faculty, and staff are getting involved in environmental stewardship and producing impressive results. In this edition, we showcase new ways to participate, significant University and student initiatives, and public recognition of our collective efforts. We thank all the members of the Columbia community who make this great work possible.

### **Get Involved**

**Clean & Go Green on Dec 12-13:** Columbia University Facilities collaborates with Environmental Health & Safety, Environmental Stewardship, and other University partners to sponsor an event that provides staff, faculty, and students a unique opportunity to lower the campus’s environmental footprint. Receptacles are made available across Morningside campus, at no cost, for the collection of large items to be recycled, re-used, or disposed of in an environmentally sound way. Clean & Go Green encourages responsible waste segregation, which helps divert trash from landfills. This year, the event will also include an educational component through which participants can learn more about the comprehensive recycling and re-use opportunities available at Columbia. The next Clean & Go Green days are December 12 and December 13, 2013. Click [here](#) for more details.

**Green Fund:** The Office of Environmental Stewardship has introduced the University’s first Green Fund, one-time grants to support student-led projects that improve sustainability in Columbia’s campus operations. All full-time Columbia students are invited to submit applications for this newly created \$25,000 fund, subsidized by Columbia Dining, Housing, and University Event Management. Four to six projects are expected to be funded. Applications are due by February 14, 2014, and must be submitted online through the Environmental Stewardship [website](#). Questions can be directed to [environment@columbia.edu](mailto:environment@columbia.edu) or addressed in person during office hours (check the Environmental Stewardship website for details).

### ***COLUMBIA'S NEW ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARD***

**Jessica Prata**, formerly the sustainability officer of NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital, has joined the Office of Environmental Stewardship as Columbia's new assistant vice president. As head of the office's operations, she will lead the charge in collaborating with University leadership, departments, and student organizations to reduce Columbia's environmental footprint. An alumna of the School of International and Public Affairs, Prata will also be working to improve the office's visibility on campus and increase student engagement. Previously, she played a key role in guiding NewYork-Presbyterian's new sustainability program and drafted the hospital's first hazardous waste minimization plan. Accompanying Jessica in Environmental Stewardship are Operations Manager **Helen Bielak**, Office Manager **Janice Erskine**, and Assistant Manager of Communications and Data, **Allie Schwartz**, the office's newest member.

**Composting:** Columbia Dining, Housing, and the EcoReps jointly manage a composter in Ruggles. A partnership between the University and [GrowNYC](#) ensures that all members of the community can compost their foodscrap at the [Greenmarkets](#) located near the [Morningside](#) and [Medical Center](#) campuses.

**CUMC Green Team:** As part of CUMC's growing focus on sustainability projects, students, faculty, and staff can join this grass-roots group that works to enhance current initiatives and create new ones across the campus, specifically within laboratories, departments, and offices. For more information, email [cumc-energy@columbia.edu](mailto:cumc-energy@columbia.edu).

### **University and Student Initiatives**

**Core Research Computing Facility:** Situated under the plaza between Havemeyer and Uris Halls, the new [Core Research Computing Facility](#) consolidates physically dispersed computer clusters into a single facility that will enable complex and data-driven research to be performed in more energy efficient and sustainable ways. Funded by grants from the National Institutes of Health, Empire State Development, and the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, the Facility will be used at its start by 10 departments in five schools—Arts & Sciences, Engineering, SIPA, Journalism, and Social Work. When a series of standard high performance computing jobs were run on the new site, they went from taking 8.7 hours to 16 minutes, using 5% of the energy.

**Muscota Marsh at Baker Athletics Complex:** The recently completed [marshland](#) creates new public access and amenities on the waterfront at West 218<sup>th</sup> Street, adjacent to Inwood Hill Park.

The environmental restoration was originally dubbed "Boathouse Marsh" because of its location next to Columbia's rowing dock. The site enriches the biodiversity of the Harlem River valley by restoring one of the only remaining salt marshes in Manhattan. The open space includes a deck through native water gardens, wildlife observation, and places to sit and picnic across the river from the dramatic cliffs of Spuyten Duyvil to the north and the Palisades to the west. The local Community Board 12 selected the name Muscota, which means "place in the reeds" in the language of the Lenape, the land's original Native American inhabitants.

**Greenhouse Gas Reduction:** Since 2007, Columbia's Morningside campus has reduced its emissions by 13.6%—equivalent to 13,040 metric tons of carbon dioxide or the annual greenhouse gas from 2,717 passenger vehicles. From 2010, Columbia University Medical Center has cut its emissions by 9 %, which is 6,400 metric tons of carbon dioxide or the annual greenhouse gas from by 1,333 passenger vehicles. These savings move both campuses towards their goals of reducing emissions by 30% by 2017 and 2025 respectively.

**Eco-Friendly Coffee Cups:** Columbia Dining has introduced a more eco-friendly "ripple cup" coffee cup that will eliminate the need for coffee sleeves. Made from 75% recycled materials with non-toxic, water-based ink, the cup will divert approximately 4,500 pounds of waste from landfills annually.

**EcoLions:** This group of student varsity athletes is the official "green team" of Columbia's Athletics Department. Through the [ShoeBox Recycling organization](#), they have launched a program that has donated more than 200 pairs of shoes to individuals in developing nations. They have also created light-switch signs for the athletic buildings, encouraging people to conserve energy. Follow EcoLions on Twitter and Instagram (@cuecolions) for more information about sports sustainability events and initiatives.

## **Awards**

**Campbell Sports Center:** The [Greater New York Construction User Council](#) recognized the Center as an outstanding construction project in the Greater Metropolitan Area. By installing devices such as a high-efficiency lighting system and boilers, the Center is reducing annual energy costs by more than \$45,000 and decreasing electricity use by more than 150,000 kilowatt hours per year. The project is also supported by the [New York State Energy Research and Development Authority](#), which is offering Campbell Sports Center a \$98,000 Incentive Award to help offset the cost of implementing these energy efficiency measures. The Center recently received the Municipal Art Society's coveted [2013 MASTerworks Award](#) for Best New Building.

**Muscota Marsh:** The marsh recently joined nine other outstanding public projects in receiving an award for [Excellence in Design from the Public Design Commission of the City of New York](#).

