



This edition of *Sustainable Columbia* addresses Earth Day-related initiatives and briefly shares some news about Columbia's new Green Fund and the making of a more sustainable Commencement ceremony.

EARTH DAY AND RELATED INITIATIVES

Dear Students, Staff and Faculty,

On April 22nd, we join with the international community in celebrating Earth Day and our own commitment to sustainability. With each passing year, Columbia makes additional progress in reducing the University's environmental footprint through waste reduction and energy conservation programs across our campuses. Please take a moment to learn about the rich variety of initiatives underway at Columbia's new [Environmental Stewardship website](#) and see how you can become more involved.

For Columbia to achieve its sustainability goals, we have to address two distinct areas of action. One concerns the built environment, technology and physical asset management. The other focuses on stakeholder engagement, education, individual action and behavior change. The first necessary step toward success is to embrace the familiar axiom that individual actions hold the key to global change.

Earth Day at Columbia this year is a moment for sounding a call to action for changes in personal behavior. We are launching two pilot initiatives which will be planned and monitored by working groups, as described below. These initiatives set measurable and attainable goals, while holding the promise of significant reductions in energy use and waste:

Reducing paper consumption of the Mailman School and Morningside campus

The project will explore, identify and implement strategies for reducing the amount of paper entering the waste-stream. The Mailman School of Public Health and University Facilities and Operations have volunteered to work with Environmental Stewardship to develop innovative solutions for waste reduction. Together they will work with pilot groups to measure and track paper consumption over the course of the project. Regular progress reports will be shared with the Columbia community, providing lessons learned and best practices.

Reducing energy consumption in University graduate housing

The goal of this initiative, coined “Cool Columbia,” is to reduce energy usage and save money on energy bills. Any graduate student who lives in University housing and is interested in participating can do so [here](#). Twenty participants will be selected to work with a team of energy experts who will educate participants and offer tips for behavior change sure to lead to a lower energy bill and smaller carbon footprint.

Sincerely,

Robert Kasdin

GREEN FUND—AND A GREEN COMMENCEMENT



Ingenuity on display in first Green Fund awards

Environmental Stewardship announced the recipients of the first ever Green Fund at Columbia University. [Read more](#) about the selected projects.



Turning Commencement Green

Columbia University undergraduate and masters graduation gowns will be made from recycled plastic bottles! [Read more](#) about Columbia's green commencement efforts.

Visit the brand new Columbia University Environmental Stewardship website.