

Outreach Turns Green

Our role in the University's energy initiative

Three years ago our annual goals incorporated a focus on three strategic themes: health, education, and economic and workforce development. Much work has been done to advance each of these areas. Over the next few months, I will provide an overview and update on each. First, I'll start with our new and fourth strategic theme, energy and the environment.

The direct emphasis on outreach in the final report of the 2006 Penn State Energy Task Force was the catalyst for our new energy and the environment strategic theme.

Charged with developing a strategic vision and roadmap for energy science and engineering at Penn State, the Task Force proposed a bold new initiative in energy to integrate the University's strategic missions in energy and environmental sciences and engineering.

The public knows a lot about energy. The problem is, much of what they know is wrong.

We have a duty and an opportunity to lead Pennsylvania and the nation in traditional and alternative energy and energy efficiency.

*-Outreach Strategic Theme Group
conversation with the Penn State Energy
Task Force*

The three-part initiative recommended new undergraduate and graduate energy curricula; an interdisciplinary research program in energy science, research, and policy; and a vigorous outreach program to engage scientists, engineers, stakeholders, and the public.

Such a vigorous outreach program calls for our broad array of energy and environment programs such as those through Extension and Shaver's Creek, and our expertise in connecting and engaging the public with the University. To focus and lead our work, the Outreach Energy and the Environment Strategic Theme was launched this past November.

With the leadership of Daney Jackson, associate vice president for Outreach, director of Cooperative Extension, and associate dean for the College of Agricultural Sciences and Nancy Franklin, director for Strategic Initiatives, a group of twelve people* from across the organization began exploring how Outreach will support the University's energy initiative.

To date, the Outreach Energy and the Environment Strategic Theme Group has met twice to review the report and to participate in a half-day retreat with Tom Richard, the director for the Penn State Institutes of Energy & the Environment (PSIEE).

Richard set the stage for the Group by discussing the energy climate, Penn State's strengths in energy research, and suggestions for syncing outreach activities with the University's research. In addition, the Group reported on and discussed various energy topics.

Presently, the Group is developing a framework for a long-term plan that will leverage Penn State's research and its outreach assets to address technical, political, social, and economic

needs and opportunities in energy. This spring and summer the Group plans to develop the long-term plan and implement some short-term opportunities. Among many opportunities, the Group is considering an internal Outreach green focus.

Although our work has just started, the Group envisions Penn State as a model leader for integrated research and outreach in energy and the environment across the state and throughout the nation. Having already established a great partnership with PSIEE, they are confident that facilitating communication and fostering collaboration among the expertise in the colleges, campuses, and centers will realize this vision.

I look forward to sharing the work in our other strategic themes over the next few months.

Craig

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***Strategic Theme Group Members**

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For More Information on Energy Visit

U.S. Department of Energy, <http://www.doe.gov/>
Penn State Physical Plant Energy Program, <http://energy.opp.psu.edu/energy-programs>
Penn State's EMS Energy Institute, <http://www.energy.psu.edu/oeo/>
Penn State Institutes of Energy and the Environment, <http://www.environment.psu.edu/>
