



Community Colleges in the Emerging Green Economy: Charting a Course and Leadership Role

A strategic plan by the American Association
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Sustainability Education & Economic Development

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements

Leadership

Part I: Community College Network: Shared Green Vision

- Introduction to a Green Economy 1
- Why Community Colleges Play a Central Role 1
- Understanding the Challenges 4
- Community Colleges: Call to Action 6

Part II: AACC and a Coordinated National Support Structure (SEED)

- SEED Accomplishments 9
- AACC’s Four Strategic Support Areas 9
- AACC’s 18 SEED Initiatives 11



Acknowledgements

The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) is the primary advocacy organization for the nation's community colleges. The association represents nearly 1,200 two-year, associate degree-granting institutions, and more than 12 million students. AACC promotes community colleges through five strategic action areas: recognition and advocacy for community colleges; student access, learning and success; community college leadership development; economic and workforce development; and global and intercultural education. Information about AACC and community colleges may be found at www.aacc.nche.edu.

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Leadership

The AACC Sustainability Task Force, which guided this plan, includes the following college presidents and members:

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Message from AACC Leadership



Community colleges are positioned to be at the very heart of this new green economy movement.

The country's transition from energy dependence on fossil fuels to energy independence through conservation and renewable energy will continue to create new, high-quality jobs and lead to a new way of thinking about achieving strong, healthy, and sustainable communities.

Given our role in building a flexible workforce, our work to prepare students for long-term career options and our direct ties to industry and the public, **community colleges are positioned to be at the very heart of this new green economy movement.** In addition, this new movement supports a call for increased completion of college programs and credentials that lead students to viable careers.

As chair of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) Board of Directors and a member of the AACC Sustainability Task Force, I have had the pleasure of learning about the truly visionary green jobs training and sustainability efforts community colleges have initiated across the country. But we've got a long way to go. Now is the time for us to advance these efforts to prepare our students for jobs and lead our communities in the expansion of American prosperity.

AACC has started down this path with its Sustainability Education & Economic Development (SEED) initiative. This strategic plan highlights the direction of SEED over the next several years. Specifically, this plan comprises two components:

- The national *community college sector's* shared, overarching vision for promoting sustainability practices and preparing students and workers for careers in the emerging, high-growth green economy
- A plan for AACC and its partners to support community colleges, on a national scale, in realizing this vision

I am delighted to share this plan and look forward to working together with you as we build a strong green economy.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John J. Sygielski". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

John J. "Ski" Sygielski
President, Mt. Hood Community College (OR)
Chair, AACC Board of Directors
Member, AACC Sustainability Task Force



The 1200 community colleges across the nation have the reach to touch millions of students with the message that environmental leadership and economic growth can and must go hand in hand....

Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education

Launch of the SEED Center,

October 10, 2010

PART I: THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE NETWORK: SHARED GREEN VISION

Introduction to a Green Economy

The clean energy and green economy presents an unprecedented opportunity to grow American prosperity. Billions of dollars stand to be generated and saved by using energy and other resources more wisely, drawing on non-polluting energy and material sources that never run out, and otherwise developing our world with a commitment to sustainability.

As this transformation occurs, America will need millions of skilled workers for new jobs that are being created in renewable energy, energy efficiency, green building, transportation, green manufacturing, and environmental and resource conservation. Further, America will also need to train and equip its existing workforce with the skills needed for the growing number of green products, practices, and services that are being integrated into almost every existing job.

For an *emerging* green economy like this—where job growth potential is significant but great uncertainty surrounds market conditions—**community colleges will be one of the most influential and impactful networks to lead its development nationally.** Only with

significant contributions of community colleges will America's green economy be able to reach its full potential, bringing America a prosperous and healthy future.

The nation's community colleges recognize the uncertainties and embrace the challenge.

Why Community Colleges Play A Central Role

Sustainability is rooted in our mission—and community colleges connect with tens of millions of people who will be the sustainability leaders of tomorrow.

Community colleges in the United States have been referred to as the engines of higher education for a long time. Over recent decades, the community college network, including nearly 1,200 colleges, has had a positive impact on the lives of tens of millions of Americans, providing a pathway to a better life regardless of socioeconomic status and without encumbering students with unmanageable debt.

Explicit in the community college mission is this commitment to sustainability—building healthy and economically viable

\$2.8 billion of venture capital investments in clean technology have been made in 2010 through the third quarter, more than those made through all of 2007, pre-recession.

PricewaterhouseCoopers

Between 1998 and 2007, clean energy economy jobs—a mix of white and blue-collar positions, from scientists and engineers to electricians, machinists and teachers—grew by 9.1 percent, compared to 3.7 percent for total job growth.

The Pew Charitable Trusts

communities by preparing students for lifelong learning opportunities.

Because of their track record of bringing value to the lives of millions, and because of their steadfast commitment to a community-focused mission, community colleges are an essential vehicle for advancing the green economy by providing green education and promoting sustainability to a new generation of leaders.

We supply the skilled workforce.

Developing a flexible workforce and providing continuing education to meet changing skill demands are what community colleges do better than any other sector of higher education. Community colleges are agile institutions tied closely to industry—a relationship that is paramount for the green economy where technologies are changing so rapidly and a variety of training and educational needs are emerging.

While green jobs continue to need much more definition, colleges have moved aggressively in response to specific regional labor market demands, generally developing or adapting education and training programs around three groups of occupations: new direct jobs, existing jobs needing new technical skills, and the overall greening of existing jobs (see Figure 1).

Regardless of the occupational group, studies show that most of the fastest-growing green jobs—whether in solar, wind, green building, energy efficiency, alternative fuels, green manufacturing or other sectors—will be at the “middle skill” level. That is, they will require some postsecondary education, most likely an associate degree or industry certification. Therefore, community colleges will continue to **train much of the nation’s**

supply of clean technology and other green economy workers—and will do so through the development of green career pathways that will open doors for entering, transitioning, and displaced workers.

Hundreds of colleges are well on their way toward educating needed skilled workers and placing them in jobs. Colleges such as Columbia Gorge Community College in Oregon have initiated short-term training projects (with placement rates above 90 percent for the wind sector and graduates earning \$24 an hour), as well as longer-term programs that forge career pathways toward a two-year degree. The American Wind Energy Association has recognized the college as a premiere national model.

Community colleges will continue to invest in the *long-term* potential of the green economy by aligning green jobs training with labor market needs and with students’ career education goals.

Community colleges are the fastest-growing sector of U.S. higher education

- 1,200 colleges, 12 million students
 - Serve 46% of all U.S. undergrads
 - 90% of U.S. population lives within 25 miles of a community college
-

FIGURE 1: GROUPINGS OF OCCUPATIONS REQUIRING TRAINING

- **New direct jobs** that will be created because of rapid industry sector growth and the introduction of new technologies (e.g., solar and wind technicians, building auditors).
- **Existing jobs needing new technical skills.** These jobs will require workers to acquire additional training to fully transition their skills to new industry opportunities (e.g., traditional building trades such as electricians, plumbers, construction workers, and HVAC technicians, all of whom must understand new green design principles).
- **Greening of existing jobs across all industry sectors** that will require a deeper awareness of environmental challenges and their associated technological changes.

We are positioned to drive *demand* for new jobs.

Community colleges will not only provide a prepared workforce in response to industry demand but also will be out in front of **building the green economy itself**.

For the green economy to thrive and become a real job generator, several things must take place:

- Policy changes (from federal and state renewable portfolio standards to local energy audit requirements) that incentivize market growth to occur
- Investors, financiers, and business owners must understand green technologies and recognize their capabilities and encourage continued investments in research and development
- Knowledgeable consumers must understand, embrace, and demand new green products and services

Community colleges are key to helping **drive this demand** for renewable energy and energy efficiency. Colleges already are:

Educating all students and the general public about the overall importance of sustainability practices

Lane Community College (OR) is infusing sustainability principles throughout its college curriculum and continuing education programs. Through its printed and online publications, Lane now affixes a “green stamp” icon to help students recognize which courses—whether science, economics, political science or other—have integrated sustainability principles. The college also offers professional development opportunities to faculty, with a goal of establishing an eco-literacy requirement in all degrees.

Educating local businesses about green products, processes, and technologies to expand company capacity

Oakland Community College (MI) established an Environmental Solutions Center and Energy Awareness Center to promote community engagement on campus and increase visibility, enrollment, and positive public relations for both the program and the college. These centers host dozens of specialized workshops in renewable energy technologies and energy efficiency methods, which attract attendees from the local business community. In turn, these companies employ college students to conduct company energy audits and develop energy master plans.

Working with regional economic development entities to attract new clean energy firms

As a lead convener for a public-private, clean energy consortium, San Diego Miramar College (CA) helped secure an \$8 million regional investment to deploy 2,550 charging stations for an electric vehicle pilot initiative. The project is expected to lead to significant job creation—and capital investment—in Southern California as it expands electric vehicle infrastructure. The college has not only spurred the creation of new jobs but is primed, through its Associate Degree in Automotive Technology, to fill these openings by preparing students to diagnose and repair complex electrical systems used in modern automobiles.

Incubating green businesses

The Hocking College Energy Institute (OH) delivers comprehensive entrepreneurial services to its students in the areas of fuel cell manufacturing, solar and wind energy, automotive hybrid technology, and hydroelectric power. Recently, the Institute has successfully lent commercialization support to help students building fuel cell components sell them to a local manufacturer.

Using the campus for green economy teaching and demonstration

Hundreds of colleges are taking significant measures to change the way their campuses operate, from integrating green building strategies and renewable energy systems to implementing green purchasing practices, offering recycling and composting programs, and more.

Colleges such as Butte College (CA), which produces more electricity from on-site solar than any other community college in the country, are moving aggressively to produce all of their electrical power on site in the next couple of years. These colleges are using facility enhancements not only to improve campus energy efficiency, but also as critical living laboratories for educating academic and technical students to better understand energy sources and technology applications.

All of this—workforce development, education, entrepreneurship, advocacy, and outreach—will be required to build both the supply and demand of the industry, ensuring that workers have the skills they need and the green economy grows.

Understanding The Challenges

While positioned for these roles, community colleges are not there yet.

Some community colleges have been engaged in green job training and sustainability efforts, in some cases for a very long time. However there are many, including those that are significantly under-resourced, that are just beginning and need support.

As green industries and technologies are emerging and changing, colleges must overcome a host of challenges to be effective and leaders in this evolving field:

Duplication of Effort. Community colleges are developing and implementing new green jobs training programs at a rapid rate, comprising an array of programs funded through various public and private sources, often with little coordination at the local, regional or state level.

Lack of Specific and Accurate Labor Market Information. Although the U.S. Department of Labor is making progress classifying green occupations, currently forecasting green jobs in the labor market varies from place to place. This makes it difficult for colleges to have a clear sense of the occupational and training needs of employers in their communities.

Limited Resources to Invest in New Programs, Facility Improvements, and Equipment. While enrollment of community college students has reached record numbers across the country, campuses are simultaneously facing drastically reduced budgets. Colleges have difficulty finding reliable and adequate resources to help them expand their sustainability practices and develop green facilities, equipment, and programs.

Rapid and Uncoordinated Emergence of Green Certifications and Career Pathways.

The proliferation of green jobs training programs has led to the emergence of a variety of green certifications, credentials, and competency models. Many of these credentials are still evolving and are not standardized, portable, nationally recognized by employers, and/or connected to a career pathway, leaving workers and students unable to navigate a clear, seamless, and affordable route to a family-sustaining green job.

Limited Collaboration Among Key Stakeholders in the Green Economy.

Community colleges, community-based organizations, four-year institutions, K–12 systems, industry, and other workforce development stakeholders all provide a continuum of programs and services important to preparing and educating a green workforce. Given the emerging nature of the industry, however, there continues to be limited alignment among these stakeholders' efforts.

Difficulty in Keeping Up with Changing Government Policy Drivers Impacting the Industry. The potential of the green economy will be fully realized through

strong greenhouse emissions reduction or clean energy public policies that advance sustainability, maximize public-private investments, and spur job creation. Community colleges trying to wade through a maze of federal, state, and local policies as well as hundreds of varying financial incentives can find the task both daunting and intimidating.

Generating Community College

Buy-In. Many community colleges have recognized that the true value of sustainability is only realized when its principles are embedded into their institution's culture and have buy-in at all levels. However, the ability to do so requires that college leaders, faculty, and staff understand the value of sustainability and how to practice it. Many internal stakeholders at all levels at community colleges still lack a basic understanding of the issues and the role that colleges play in preparing workers for the green economy.

I believe that [the green economy is] so fundamental that it's going to allow us to reinvent ourselves in the context of a new framework of thought and a new relationship to our communities, the environment, and certainly a whole new curriculum. I believe it is nothing less than the next Industrial Revolution.

**Rusty Stephens, President
Wilson Community
College, NC**

COMMUNITY COLLEGES: CALL TO ACTION

Much like the IT revolution in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the emergence of the green economy offers community colleges a new sense of purpose organized around a national movement.

While overcoming the challenges will not be easy, the community college network, as a whole, is positioning itself to embrace ALL of its potential roles in building America's green economy. Now is the time to articulate our vision of a green economy that will positively impact the environment, the nation's workforce, and the economy in all our communities.

Over the past year, the AACC Sustainability Task Force—a dedicated group of 36 community college presidents—along with its technical advisory committee has crafted a green mission and a set of long-term priority areas for the community college network.

Community Colleges' Green Economy Mission

By transforming their curricula, workforce development, community collaboration, and campus operations, community colleges will generate the skills, values, and behaviors that will prepare society and students to participate in a thriving green and sustainable economy.

Within this mission, college leaders have embraced three goal areas—or pillars—that reflect the different roles that community colleges can take in advancing sustainability and building the green economy.

The activities within these pillars are very much interrelated. This call to action is a movement for colleges to not only take action within each pillar, but also to integrate operational greening with academic curricula and regional social and economic

FIGURE 2: COMMUNITY COLLEGE ROLE IN A GREEN ECONOMY



development efforts. This will allow achieving “sustainability” to be a seamless effort at colleges—to be the platform on which community colleges design programs and meet industry demand while ensuring that all students have the means to succeed in this new economy.

Each of these pillars encompasses an ambitious set of priority targets that support community colleges in addressing the most critical challenges—on the way toward becoming true leaders in building a green economy.

These targets are designed to be met over the next three to six years.

While colleges are primed to be a lead in achieving these targets, they will, in most cases, be collaborating with a number of important state and local organizations, from state departments of environment, state energy offices, and regional economic development entities to regional workforce boards, universities, labor unions, school systems, and, of course, employers.

FIGURE 3: COMMUNITY COLLEGE LONG-TERM GREEN GOALS AND AREAS OF FOCUS

Workforce Development	Community Engagement	Sustainable Colleges
<p><i>Colleges will develop quality green job training opportunities for students and workers that lead to long-term careers and that are responsive to regional industry needs.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in collaborative and regional green program development • Lead in the development of energy conservation, renewable and clean energy, green building career pathways • Work to align green offerings with K-12 and 4-year programs • Partner with industry to understand regional green occupational demand, including capacity gaps in employees, clients, and customers • Lead in the use of green energy sector competencies and recognized credentials 	<p><i>Colleges will serve as regional catalysts in moving communities toward building sustainable and just regions.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene and/or support local economic, community, and workforce development stakeholders to develop regional green economy and clean energy strategies • Educate businesses, policymakers, and the public about the importance of sustainability and ways to become involved • Foster green small business development and entrepreneurship 	<p><i>Colleges will make sustainability a guiding principle for all institutional practices, offerings, and academic programs.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a variety of formal sustainability commitments such as becoming carbon neutral • Utilize the campus (e.g., model green buildings, renewable energy systems) as a demonstration and teaching asset for engaging students and the community • Infuse green and sustainability principles across academic disciplines • Integrate sustainability principles into campus governance structures and operations
<p style="text-align: right;"><i>As designated by the AACC Sustainability Task Force</i></p>		



Sustainability Education & Economic Development

PART II: AACC AND A COORDINATED NATIONAL SUPPORT STRUCTURE

Sustainability Education & Economic Development (SEED)

A Coordinated National Strategy to Support Community Colleges in Building the Green Economy: SEED

For community colleges to be successful in this endeavor, they need active support on a national scale.

In an industry where there is a great deal of uncertainty and still few knowledgeable faculty and staff, a nationally coordinated strategy is crucial to accelerating completion of quality sustainability education and training for green occupations. Until now there has not been a centralized national effort that focuses explicitly on building the capacity of community colleges to lead in this space and share practices, curriculum, and innovations.

With its direct access to the 1,200 community colleges across the country, knowledge of green issues, and existing networks of nationally recognized green industry leaders, AACC is a critical player in this national movement.

Fortunately, this effort has already begun at AACC through its Sustainability Education and Economic Development (SEED) initiative. Developed in partnership with ecoAmerica and supported initially through the Kresge, Flora, and Surdna Foundations,

SEED is designed to support and inspire all community colleges to become leaders in encouraging sustainability practices and preparing students and workers for careers in high-growth sectors of the emerging green economy.

In 2010, AACC and ecoAmerica, in accordance with the planning grants, laid the essential infrastructure for building a successful long-term green economy initiative. Together they:

- Formed a leadership group to guide SEED
- Developed a green resource repository and dissemination platform
- Performed aggressive marketing and outreach to secure college membership
- Leveraged external partnerships
- Designed funding mechanisms for long-term sustainability initiatives

Over the next several years, AACC aims to take SEED to scale—to truly position community colleges as leaders in stimulating the green economy nationwide by supporting colleges across the three green pillars of workforce development, community engagement, and sustainable colleges.

Sustainability Education and Economic Development (SEED)

A comprehensive initiative to advance sustainability and green workforce development practices at community colleges by identifying and sharing innovative models and resources, and building the capacity of college leaders, faculty, and staff to build the green economy.

SEED Accomplishments in the Planning Year (Through End of 2010)

- **Sustainability Task Force**—Unified group of 36 community college presidents from across the country providing overall guidance to SEED and speaking nationally on the role of community colleges in the green economy
- **346 SEED Members**—346 college presidents who became official SEED pledge signatories
- **SEED Center**—Online clearinghouse of promising practices and resources to help colleges develop and expand green workforce development and sustainability programs
 - 250+ curated green jobs resources
 - 100+ community college program and course descriptions
 - 16 colleges' in-depth success stories
 - Instructional guidance for colleges on developing and advancing green-focused programs on campus
 - Wiki to incorporate curricular materials submitted by colleges
- **Technical Advisory Group**—Cadre of green industry and college faculty experts to provide subject matter expertise and peer review for SEED Center resources
- **Outreach Campaign**—Aggressive outreach to drive SEED Center adoption (more than 20 SEED articles/blogs, SEED ads planted, 1,000 SEED mailings, SEED 101 webinar, SEED video from Education Secretary Arne Duncan)
- **Partnership Development**—Future partnerships being cemented with critical national associations, industry groups, and federal agencies on collaborative future SEED program initiatives
- **AACC SEED Corporate Sponsorship Structure**—Reconstituted AACC corporate structure including SEED-specific funding opportunities
- **Project Management**—Dedicated project management team to lead and coordinate efforts

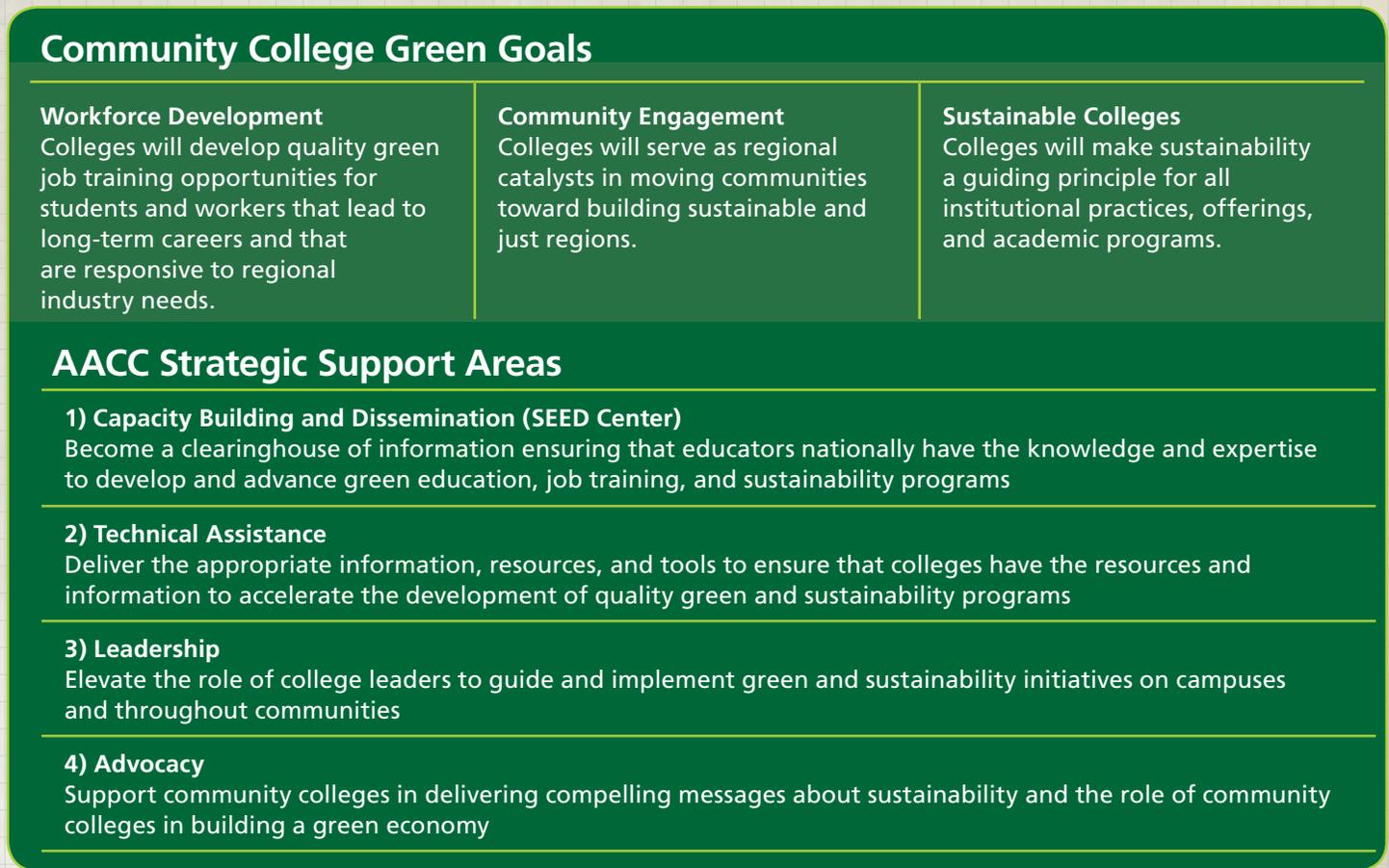
AACC's FOUR STRATEGIC SUPPORT AREAS

AACC's strategic plan supports the community college network pillars—workforce development, community engagement, and sustainable colleges—through **four cross-cutting Strategic Support Areas** that align with AACC's core competencies. By collecting and disseminating best practices, providing technical assistance and networking opportunities, and building

leadership and advocacy efforts, AACC will support colleges in becoming leaders in the green economy.

Of note: While AACC has a role to play in supporting the community college network within these pillars, the SEED priority, in the near term, will be the areas of workforce development and community engagement. Other organizations, such as the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education, Second Nature, the Association for Career and Technical

FIGURE 4: AACC’s GOALS AND STRATEGIC SUPPORT AREAS



Education, the United Negro College Fund, AACC affiliated councils, and the National Wildlife Federation, continue to advance sustainable college practices and offerings.

In the third area of sustainable colleges, AACC will begin as a collaborative player, ensuring that two-year institutions are receiving the information and support they need and that models are shared and taken to scale.

AACC Support Begins with the SEED Center

AACC will use the online SEED Center as a centralized platform for announcing and disseminating its future suite of green programs from workshops to toolkits to research documents.

In partnership with ecoAmerica, AACC launched the SEED Center (www.theSEEDcenter.org) in October 2010.

While the SEED Center is especially instrumental as the medium for advancing workforce development goals, the Center will support the other two pillars—community engagement and sustainable colleges—as a communications hub, access portal, and network link. It will continue to provide access to the strategies, tactics, and tools deployed in fulfillment of AACC’s national green efforts.



AACC's STRATEGIC AGENDA: 18 SEED INITIATIVES

AACC has identified 18 priority SEED programmatic initiatives to implement over the next four to five years. These are intended to be modular; while very much integrated, the initiatives can be assembled and arranged as needed. In addition, while they are designed to be led by AACC, AACC recognizes that a number of national and state organizations (both public and private) will play critical roles.

Finally, this list should not be interpreted as unfunded mandates, but rather a list of achievable strategies to be supported financially by additional grant, corporate, foundation, and other funding.

Support Area: Capacity Building and Dissemination

To reduce duplication of effort and improve curricular and educational quality in hundreds of community colleges across the country, AACC proposes to continue identifying quality curricula, programs, and other resources and share

them widely. Many of these initiatives will revolve around the maintenance and further development of AACC's SEED Center, which will become the primary collection and dissemination vehicle for all SEED initiatives. The success of the SEED Center is critical to the success of the SEED initiative as a whole, and AACC and ecoAmerica will work together to further drive adoption of the site as the portal and hub for SEED initiative activity nationwide.

- **Build and Maintain the SEED Center¹** – Continue to populate the site with curated resources, quality curricula, and toolkits, while expanding into additional green sectors (e.g., water, smart grid technology, and alternative fuels). Continue to sync to other relevant national organizations and their online resource centers as a means for disseminating key green information to community colleges.



SEED CENTER IS:

A leadership initiative: 340+ presidents taking pledge to support and promote SEED principles

A resource center: 250+ green resources for faculty, staff, and leadership

An online sharing community: Materials and models shared by faculty, staff, and leadership

¹ See SEED Communications Plan for more details about planned initiatives for building out and driving adoption of the SEED Center.

- **SEED Center Advisory Group Formalization** – Support a small group of nationally recognized green economy thought leaders to conduct periodic reviews of SEED Center resources to ensure the quality of information.
- **Annual College Success Story Dissemination** – Continue to collect and highlight community college case studies and promising practices from across the country.
- **SEED Ambassador Networks** – Create a pilot network of SEED Ambassadors in designated states who will be responsible for promoting SEED and encouraging college peers to use the SEED Center to share best practices and materials. Use key AACC affiliated councils, including the Partnership for Environmental Technology Education (PETE), the National Council for Continuing Education and Training (NCCET), and the National Council for Workforce Education (NCWE), and other networks as well.
- **Green Genome Project** – Recruit national team of community college administrators, staff, faculty, and students from across the country who are leaders and innovators in green education and training to collaboratively decode the “DNA” of successful green training programs and practices, including competencies such as program design and strategy, teaching methodology, strategic partnerships, and use of technology. Unveil a “Green Star” recognition program aimed at exemplary colleges in these competency areas.
- **Green Innovation Studio** – Provide a series of Innovation Challenges on the SEED Center website. Community college faculty would submit their most pressing green challenges and an innovative solution, and SEED judges would select the best potential ideas and recognize awardees at the AACC annual convention.
- **Emerging Green Fellows** – Targeted to beginning to mid-level professionals at community colleges, through a competitive process, support individuals (fellows) to spend two to four months working on a specific green project to drive innovation in the field.
- **Green Toolkit Series** – Develop detailed “how-to” tips targeting two-year institutions and their different structures and roles within a green economy. Priority areas would include colleges’ expanding “community engagement” role (e.g., understanding and catalyzing positive green industry policy drivers, reaching out to the public and businesses to impact demand, and influencing local/state energy regulations that spur demand for green jobs) and creating “living labs” on campus, tying energy-efficient facilities improvements to enhanced green workforce development programs.
- **SEED Webinar Series** – Create a series of webinars aimed at topics discussed above as well as those challenge areas identified through the SEED Center’s discussion boards.
- **Green Track at AACC WDI** – Create a “green-focused” program track for AACC’s annual Workforce Development Institute.

Outcomes:

- A world-class source of materials, and promising practices for use by all community college faculty, staff, and leadership
- Increased awareness of the SEED Center among target groups

Support Area: Technical Assistance

AACC proposes to deliver the appropriate information and tools to ensure that colleges (primarily faculty and staff) have the resources to accelerate the development of quality green and sustainability efforts.

- **Peer-to-Peer Exchange Workshops** – Develop peer-to-peer workshops between colleges that develop best practices and other individuals and institutions seeking assistance in building green job training programs. Building on the workshop at AACC’s WDI 2011, focus will be on areas such as building partnerships with industry and economic development entities, revamping existing programs to focus on energy efficiency, and positioning green programs to support transitioning and displaced workers.

Outcomes:

- Creation of knowledge management tools and activities to create a robust innovative learning community among SEED members
- Set of promising college programs/models that are recognized and shared

Support Area: Leadership

AACC proposes a number of initiatives to build the capacity of community college presidents and their executive teams to spearhead local, regional, and national green and sustainability initiatives.

- **Sustainability Task Force** – Provide support to keep the task force active and focused on the three pillars identified in the strategic plan. An offshoot “speakers bureau”—a pool of college leaders to speak and present at national and state conferences—would also be developed.
- **Green Circuit Riders** – Support for a small group of community college administrators (green experts) to provide on-site counsel to other colleges’ leadership teams/trustees at key turning point moments as colleges prepare to design and implement sustainability plans and/or new training programs on campus.
- **Increased presence of “sustainability” workshops at AACC annual convention**
- **Greening “Future Leaders”** – Incorporate sustainability practices and principles into AACC’s Future Leaders Institute to ensure a new generation of educated college CEOs.
- **“Building Sustainable Communities” Report** – Develop a visioning document for community college leaders patterned after *Building Communities: A Vision for a New Century* (a landmark guide for the community college network published in 1998).

Outcomes:

- Increased awareness and education among community college administrators of the value of green and sustainability programs and activities in fulfilling their institutional missions
- Creation of a national group of college “green” thought leaders

Support Area: Advocacy

AACC proposes to support community colleges in delivering compelling messages about the SEED initiative, sustainability, and the green economy as a whole, and the role of community colleges across the three pillars.

- **Messaging/Branding Campaign²** – To promote SEED, implement outreach activities that range from standard marketing materials to social media campaigns to encouraging participation at national meetings and conferences. The campaign would also include development of various talking points for college administrators to use to promote SEED and its principles at local and state meetings.
- **Organize AACC Sustainability Legislative/Advocacy Teams** – Disseminate information and provide support to mobilize colleges to understand and advocate for key federal, state, and local energy legislation. Hold periodic, coordinated conference calls between advocacy teams and federal agencies responsible for developing curriculum and training grant programs.

Outcomes:

- Increased awareness among target groups on the role of community colleges in contributing to a green economy
- Increased understanding among community colleges of green industry markets and policy drivers
- New tools to mobilize colleges to influence green and sustainability policies

A communications plan that offers a detailed review of planned SEED-specific marketing and outreach activities is available.

² See SEED Communications Plan for more details.



The American Association of Community Colleges is a national organization representing the nation's close to 1,200 community colleges and their more than 12 million students. Community colleges are the largest and fastest growing segment of U.S. higher education. AACCC is headquartered in Washington, DC. For more information, visit www.aacc.nche.edu.

Sustainability Education and Economic Development (SEED) is a comprehensive initiative to advance sustainability and green workforce development practices at community colleges by identifying and sharing innovative models and resources. For more information, visit www.theSEEDcenter.org.

The Kresge Foundation is a \$3.1 billion private, national foundation that seeks to influence the quality of life for future generations through its support of nonprofit organizations in six fields: health, the environment, arts and culture, education, human services and community development. In 2009, the Board of Trustees approved 404 awards totaling \$197 million; \$167 million was paid out to grantees over the course of the year. For more information, visit www.kresge.org.

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