

Transcript of Webinar

Building Sustainability into the College Strategic Plan AACC SEED

Date: Wednesday, March 4, 2014

*Transcript By
Federal News Service
Washington, D.C.*

MODERATOR: (In progress) – to turn things over today, I’m going to kick things off by turning things over to Todd Cohen with the SEED Center. And Todd, I’ll turn things over to you.

TODD COHEN: Great, thanks, Brian.

Hi, everyone. Appreciate you being here. Welcome to “Building Sustainability into the College Strategic Plan.”

I suspect that you all will find this to be no doubt a critical topic, particularly for those of you who are responsible for or at least interested in driving sustainability at your institutions. I’ve been to a lot of colleges, and I’ve talked to a lot of folks who I think are in positions much like yours, that have developed some innovative but ultimately isolated sort of green activities – maybe it’s a recycling project; maybe it’s a student group devoted to sustainability; maybe it’s a course, a program devoted to clean technology – and are looking to move beyond that to a culture of sustainability, letting things like the triple bottom line drive the way your institution makes all of its decisions.

And so that’s really the topic of the conversation today. We’re going to do that through highlighting two case study colleges, two great schools, Santa Fe Community College and Austin Community College District in Texas. So it should be, I think, two of the colleges that have done this as well as anyone in the country.

A couple words about SEED Center. I suspect most of you know who we are, but we are a program that comes out of American Association of Community Colleges. There are 473 colleges that are members of ours. So we’ve got a pretty large network of schools that are sharing best practices in – on the curricular side and other – around sustainability and the clean economy.

Before I get done, I just want thank a couple folks at Johnson County Community College’s Center for Sustainability. For those of you who don’t know JCCC and Jay Antle, they have got some monthly webinars that I urge you to join, get on. It’s a tight-knit group of sustainability passionate folks. And so if you email Jay there, you get on their list. And then our co-sponsor for this particular event, Snap-On Tools, thank you guys.

Couple of quick thoughts I’ll – (inaudible) – then I’ll turn it over. At the SEED Center, we’ve got a unique perspective in that we can kind of look across the country at all the community colleges across the country and look at what they’re doing on sustainability. We’ve documented a number of great best practices. There is a lot of pockets of excellence that have happened. I suspect you’d agree with me on this, that there’s everything from – and we’ve got a lot of new sustainability-related curricular programs that are out there. A myriad of colleges have developed some great LEED buildings on campus.

So a lot of great sort of pockets that are happening, but many silos within the colleges. So sustainability, I find, is either being driven through a group of faculty, or it’s through operations, or maybe it’s a student group, and oftentimes they’re being led by all three, but they’re not

together aligned. And it's rare, I think, where we would find a community college that has really moved on the whole systems integration, and that's really what we're interested in, so where sustainability becomes part of the DNA of your institution, where the way that you design or retrofit buildings and – (inaudible) – their campus is tied to career programming that you have in clean technology areas, which is aligned to academic programming on sustainability, which is aligned to the way that your community looks and thinks about sustainability, energy, conservation, things like that.

And so that's what we really want to fix at the SEED Center and we want to address through this topic today. And it really starts with the institutional strategic plan. I think that – if you've got that in place with sustainability in there, that's the foundation that you need.

So we did a survey last year, and we asked one question for our community colleges, which is do they have a commitment to clean technology and sustainability as an institutional focus? And I think – (inaudible) – pay attention here to our – (inaudible) – over half of the colleges identified sustainability as important, but not a strategic priority. They don't – in other words, it was something that the college recognized was an interest for them, but that in no way was reflected in their strategic plan at this master plan or what have you. And about a third of colleges did say that it was part of their institutional strategy, or perhaps if not a strategy, then at least a value of the institution itself.

Now, I think that's trending upward. And that's not a bad thing. If you checked that three, four years ago, I suspect it'd be much less. But bottom line is I think we can get that percentage up much more significantly, and that's sort of the path that we're moving on today.

So with that, I'm going to turn it over to our speakers. Let me do quick introductions. So we're going to highlight, as I mentioned, two colleges, Santa Fe Community College in New Mexico and Austin Community College District in Texas. So Randy Grissom and Xubi Wilson will be coordinating together.

Randy is a – now president of Santa Fe Community College, but he was – (inaudible) – inaugural of the community college itself in 1983. He's held a variety of positions across – leadership positions across the institution, everything from CSO to VP of administrative services to VP of academic affairs, dean of their – (inaudible) – development and sustainability technology center. So he actually is very interested – (inaudible) – huge proponent of sustainability, clean technology. And so – but he's held a variety of these positions that cut across the different units of an institution, so I think that perspective is really key, and those insights that he's going to bring today.

And then Xubi is the renewable energy program coordinator at Santa Fe. He also was a student, I believe, when Santa Fe started its sustainability plan as part of its institutional larger strategic plan. So he provided in put at that end and is now on the – is part of the faculty helping implementing programs, so another unique perspective.

And then Andrew Kim is director of environmental stewardship for the Austin Community College District, and he's – I mean, you'll see what he's described – he's developed a host of

really phenomenal programs. And in particular, I think the – what he’s going to talk about today has really been a methodical process that the ACC District went through, which is adopting a sustainability policy, which set a strategic plan that really actually helped justify his own position as a paid director of environmental stewardship, and then how he manages to that plan and updates the board of trustees and shows outcomes, all those things he’s going to touch on today.

So without further ado, let me turn it over to Randy and Xubi.

XUBI WILSON: OK. Well, this is Xubi Wilson. I’m the renewable energy program coordinator here at the college. And one of the things I want to start with is it’s really critical that – how you perceive yourself as a college. So sustainability for us is about academic programs. It’s about the facilities on our campus. But it’s also playing a key leadership role and responding to the needs of our community for sustainability within the community. So I think all those things are really critical to developing a strong sustainability program.

A little bit about our college. I’m not going to read through all this, but we are celebrating our 30th anniversary. And for about half that period, we’ve been – had a commitment to sustainability at that – at the college here, and probably more than that, but a real conscious way, for at least 15 years, we’ve been really working on sustainability on the campus.

And the keys to success here are commitment from the top and having good leaders, and especially now with Randy, who has had the perspective of working with sustainability programs on campus as someone in leadership, is critical, but also our trustees, in making sure that – you know, we have elected trustees here in Santa Fe, and getting good trustees that are really committed to the sustainability effort is also critical, businesses and industry collaboration, and also public and private funding.

So I’m going to turn it over to Randy to talk a little bit about some of the leadership initiatives that have helped us to develop a good sustainability plan and be really connected with our community in sustainability development.

RANDY GRISSOM: Great. Thanks, Xubi.

You know, it’s been exciting to have – I’ve been in and out of the college now for 30 years. I came back five years ago to put together our sustainable programs. We didn’t know what it was going to be. And somehow, I’ve ended up being the president now. So it’s been an interesting ride.

But I do want to say that it’s been a commitment from the top as well as a push from our community that has gotten us to where we are today. And I’m going to go through just some – quickly some slides here. But our board has adopted policies related to building LEED-certified buildings, green purchasing policies. But the main thing they really did is they adopted a sustainability plan as part of our campus master plan. And that gets linked to our strategic plan, and we’ll talk about that a little bit later. They’ve also voted to include in bond elections, because we do have our own bond capacity here at the college, and in our last bond election, we

set aside \$10 million for green projects, and our community overwhelmingly supported those requests even in the midst of a recession.

The president's role has also been key. And the predecessors – (inaudible) – American College and University Presidents climate commitment back in 2007. She was the first in our state to do so. And so we've continued to have, and up to the present day, a strong commitment from the president.

Quickly about what's happened in our community. Our community is very green and sustainable-focused. We've got a community desire to make our town, our county, our northern region more sustainable. We even had a governor whose goal was to make the state the renewable energy state. And so that's been important in helping push us as a college to do more.

A couple of examples of where we've been involved in the community. We've worked with the Santa Fe Area Home Builders Association and the city in updating and developing new green building codes for the city. They've now been adopted by the county also. But we were at the table because we put together the training programs for the contractors, for the apprentices, for the designers, for the architects. So that's a good example of what we've done there. We've served on an energy task force for the county, been part of a statewide coalition to put together a plan for biofuels. And, you know, some of these things I'm not going to talk about now, but I'd be glad to answer some questions on those later.

So really a lot of this started back in 2004 with a push by the city to try to figure out how we could develop ourselves economically. And so they commissioned a national study, and in that, it talked about the college developing curricula to help the city become a model for water and energy conservation. So that gave us a little bit of a push. They then developed a very comprehensive Sustainable Santa Fe plan for the city, and in there it called for further development of what we've been doing at the college.

That all kind of led up to two things happening. In 2008, at the beginning of the recession, we actually had a Green Jobs Forum on campus to see what we should be putting in this new building we were going to build, what programs were needed. And that also led to the development of a comprehensive sustainability plan by the college. This is the plan – it is available to anybody who wants it – that was approved. It's an add-on to our campus master plan, and it is now, as Xubi will talk about later, linked to our new strategic plan. But in this plan, we had both goals for operations as well as for educational goals in doing that. And we're measuring these on a day-by-day basis.

So before Xubi takes over to talk about our current strategic plan, I just want to say that we had a strategic plan that was seven years old, and we do five-year strategic plans. It didn't have as much in it on sustainability, the original one. We had a president that was retiring, so we delayed updating the strategic plan for that last year of that president, and then we had an interim president, which I won't go into, but we've been working on the plan since then.

Now you're going to see and Xubi's going to talk about how we have now integrated key components of sustainability into our next strategic plan, which instead of being a five-year plan, is a living document that we're reviewing and updating every year.

So Xubi, you want to talk about that?

XUBI WILSON: Sure. So one of the things – we have a great fellow working in our plans that's really a great number cruncher, and so we talk a lot about metrics. And so we know that we've made progress in sustainability on the campus, but now we're getting down to really strong levels of measurement. So if you look here in our strategic plan, for sustainability we included key performance indicators for energy consumption, with electricity, natural gas, and we have a biomass boiler. So we have the option to run our entire campus heating system just on biomass.

And generally in the last number of years we've chosen to do that, although whether or not that's the best financial choice is always something we have to look at. We can save on some carbon and do – use a more renewable source or we can use natural gas. Right now, obviously, natural gas has been ridiculously cheap, so that's a choice that we have to make as an institution. So we measure in kilowatt hours, dollars spent and carbon equivalents, and we look at it compared with FTEs but also as compared with per-square-foot of building space.

Waste reduction. The number of dumpster hauls, the number of recycling pickups. It's measured in tonnage, dollars spent or income, because we've now gotten a baler this last year as part of our initiative. So instead of having someone else get paid to haul away our recycling, we're beginning to bale cardboard, bale plastic, bale cans, and we can actually get some pretty good income off of that. We even have some neighboring businesses who are interested in giving us their recycling so we can actually begin to make money off of the baler, as well.

Water use. We have carried water purchases and effluent re-use. We have our own water treatment plant on campus, and so all of our outdoor landscaping is watered with effluent from our wastewater treatment plant. But we're also looking at those issues that we could evaporating more than we need to off of our pond, so we're looking at not only how much we are putting into our irrigation system, but compared with what we're using, how much of that totally is getting re-used.

So strategic initiatives, the next steps, what do we actually do to try to make progress on our KPIs, key performance indicators. That's the actual numbers we crunch. And so in energy consumption, we're putting in a photovoltaic array. Part of that money from the bond issue is going to be putting in a 1.5 megawatt photovoltaic array, which will produce about 40 percent of the campus's electricity. We're building a new campus closer to downtown, and we'll be getting above that in the PV array that we're putting in down there. We're not exactly sure on the final design of that, but it looks as though we could be pushing towards 75 percent of the electricity from photovoltaics array down there.

Lighting retrofits have been very big. We get rebates from our utility for doing the installation of lighting retrofits. So that's been very financially successful for us. But in the long term, again,

what we're able to do with some of this bond money is turn some of our capital expenditure money into operating expenditure money by saving money on utilities. So it's really – these things are not just good green ideas; they're great financial ideas, and I think that has to be emphasized, especially when you're – if you have a reluctant board or president. We were speaking with some folks up in Michigan, and the president up there told us, bring it to your financial people. And after a couple years, the financial people are the ones going to their sustainability people, saying, what do we do now, what can we do next, how can we get more of the savings? And so it really does work. It's not just a – not just a green idea, it's a green money idea, as well.

So waste reduction. We're doing a campus waste audit this year to see what kinds of waste come out. And the students are going to be out there with a big bag looking through all of our garbage to see what we could – what we can recycle and how we can – what kinds of things can go into our baler, what kind of things could be composted. And we're really working on that. And we have a composting system that we set up that's constantly expanding.

And one of our students has really pushed on a single-use plastic water bottle reduction campaign. And in addition to the fact that it's a really great idea because those single-use plastic water bottles are very wasteful, we're also looking at – we're also looking at we make a lot more money baling and selling cans than we do bottles. So to the extent we can, we're trying to move things into cans that we can re-use.

And again on the water use, we've been doing water audits. We actually discovered a couple of leaks that we're working on solving right now, and we're also optimizing our irrigation system. So that really makes a big difference. And we're – you know, again, we're not only doing great good green ideas, we're also saving a lot of money.

So current practices. We don't want to go into a lot of detail. We only have a couple minutes left here. But things like using solar, the water treatment plant, the biomass boiler, getting – one of the key things we found from the president's climate commitment is that the key problem here in terms of our carbon footprint is really we're a commuter campus; we don't have any residences. So working on getting more people to ride their bikes, getting more people to use public transportation instead of building new parking lots. Again, building new parking lots are very expensive. If we get everyone to use public transportation, we have car pooling areas, where you get preferred parking if you carpool, lots of initiatives like that are pretty big.

So the other thing is in terms of getting things into the curriculum. And we have been able to put in a sustainable living requirement into our curriculum. And so students now have to take three credits in sustainable living, and as well as cultural perspectives. And those are really good programs because then everybody across campus has to have some exposure. And a lot of students who take one class are intrigued then. They decide then to go take a solar class, take a biofuels class, just learn more. Now we have an aquaponics program, and students are getting really excited about that, as well.

And if you look, it's part our general education requirements here. If you look there, this is a little bit more you can read, after the webinar is over, on a little bit more about that.

MR. GRISSOM: Let me – this is Randy – I’ll add to that – what we did is, part of our degree requirements for common student learning outcomes requires those three credit hours of a course that meets the category of sustainable living, but it is not a new course necessarily. We’ve gone through – and that courses that were already in the curriculum – identified or certified as meeting the sustainable living criteria.

And on this slide here, there are eight different criterias (sic) that a class could meet, and they have to meet a minimum of four of these in order to receive this designation as sustainable living. So we tried not to add new classes to the degree program, but we tried to identify courses that we wanted students to take to do that. So that’s just a little bit of an update on that one.

MR. WILSON: And the latest thing we’re doing now is, we’ve been working with – learning from other colleges, like the (CL Central ?) Community College – working on a curriculum where people are doing cross-curricular collaboration between classes on that curriculum involving water. And so this semester, a lot of faculty from different disciplines are all collaborating projects that involve water, and so we’ll be moving on, maybe, energy last year; they talk about corn, possible, but we’ll see what else we do.

So these are some of the programs we’ve developed – and some of the funding and support and collaborations we’ve been doing – Los Alamos National Laboratories, Caterpillar Clean Air Systems helped put together our welding program – the city, council and regional water treatment systems – the EPA jobs training program – the National Science Foundation has given us a grant this year; we have the New Mexico EPSCoR Infrastructure Seed Grant to work on advanced biofuels, and we have the New Mexico EnergySmart Academy, where we’re training people now from five states in the neighboring area in weatherization programs – so biofuels, green energy efficiency as well as our center of excellence.

This is just a picture of our new building; it tells you a little bit more about what’s going on. And we did get recognized by SEED for some of our innovations and things that we’ve been doing here as well. And again, there’s Randy and my contacts information if you’d like to ask us more questions, and we’re really excited, and we thank you so much to the SEED Center for inviting us today, and we look forward to talking – and you can always contact us – come for visits – people come to visit our campus all the time, and we love to share.

MR. COHEN: Thanks, Randy and Xubi. And also, I want to – you presented a lot there, and particularly, I suspect, people are going to have some questions around how you certify sustainability and the student learning outcomes prior to sustainability. So even though that’s not necessarily the heart of what we’re talking about today, I would encourage you – everyone on the phone to really reach out to Xubi there and reach out – they’re very willing to share any and all information they have on those kinds of topics, so I do want to stress that. You know, take Xubi’s name down and pursue that.

And then, with that – (inaudible) – turn it over to Andy Kim – Andy, are you ready with your presute (sp)?

ANDY KIM: Yes, I am.

MR. COHEN: All right.

MR. KEATING: All right. And this is Brian Keating again; just for this part of the presentation, you'll notice at the top right-hand corner of Andy's presentation, there's a full-screen button that looks like four arrows pushing outward – you can also zoom in. There's a button right next to it as well. There's a lot of animations already built into the presentation, but in case you're having trouble seeing and you want to play with those features, please go ahead and do that.

Andy, back to you.

MR. KIM: All right. Thanks for having me. My name is Andy Kim; I am the director of environmental stewardship for Austin Community College District. Not to confuse with the Canadian singer Andy Kim – (chuckles) – but as Todd mentioned earlier, I'd like to share AACC sustainability policy development and the current status – where we are.

In brief, Austin is the 11th largest city in the U.S. – the fourth largest city in the Texas. We have about 1.8 million people in the metropolitan area. As some of you know, Austin is the live music capital of the world – South by Southwest and Austin City Limits radio fest. We have many tech industry housed in the Austin area; Apple, Samsung, Intel, AMD, and newest addition is F1 race – the Circuit of the America.

And Austin Community College District is 41 years old this year – 2014. We offer 250 degree programs – 10 campuses – instructional campuses and 12 centers covering seven square miles in eight counties. And we are structured in a way that the centrally-located administration covered this large area. So this become, quite often, a challenge for our staff to cover this large area and many campuses. We serve about 43,000 credit students and 50,000 – 15,000 noncredit students, including continuing education as well as the adult basic education.

So how we started the sustainability initiative and a policy at AACC – we can look at the history of how we developed the sustainability policy. It goes back to fall 2007. And this is – a trustee expressed interest in reaffirming the sustainability as a high priority; also, student group also approached administration to talk about the sustainability development at AACC.

In spring 2008, executive team heard the presentation on American college and university (present ?) climate commitment, and also, students joined the discussion for that. In summer 2008, trustee approved a (master ?) plan in the budget that includes the sustainability, and the (stepping ?) budget essentially created my position. In fall 2008 seven student work together as a committee and set the baseline for how we can develop the sustainability goal at the AACC.

So 2009 – this was the year that AACC trustee approved the policy (C-9 ?) – sustainable practices – and the AACC hired me, so I started to work in AACC spring 2009 – that was five years ago. And AACC trustee approved signing the ACUPCC and approved also \$1 credit hour for sustainability fee. That became a huge springboard foundation for sustainability initiative.

So with the sustainability, we have many audiences, as you would have at your colleges. We have trustees, students, faculties and staff. Trustee (as ?) interested in providing affordable and renewable energies, and transit is huge at AACC. We are also a community college like Santa Fe, so the transportation – especially the committee is – accounted for over 40 percent of our carbon footprint – so reducing our carbon footprint from the commuting is a huge goal for us, and also resource management – saving energy and water.

Of course, the student want a good career that is sustainable – not necessarily just financially, also the environmentally. And faculty – this is one topic that we hear quite often these days, that we'd like to use the campus as a living lab. We already offer many job training that is green-collar job at AACC, but we'd like to also expand the sustainability into other curriculum as well. And staff interested in greener workplace, commuting – transportation is a big part of it.

So it's been five years. So we established AACC sustainability policy five years ago, and I'd like to share some examples of how we developed sustainability at AACC. Well, we had ups and downs, but we believe that we made a good progress in five years. Annually, more than (once I often ?) present a sustainability to our trustee or the students' group or community – so usually, presenting a categorized and the – presentation to our audiences.

We had good success, as you can see. We won the climate leadership award from Second Nature and ACUPCC in 2012, and also, we won (commuter ?) transportation award, and we achieved many milestone over the five years, and I'd like to share some examples with you today. Water conservation – it's amazing how many new technology comes to the market every year. There are many innovative plumbing products in the market, and we constantly evaluate new products to implement into our new campuses. By the way, AACC has been expanding dramatically the last few years, so we opened the one campus last fall; we opened another campus this spring, and we are expecting to open another large urban campus in this fall.

So such as the 0.3 gallon-per-minute aerator saves a lot of money on the faucet and we are evaluating waterless urinal retrofit and dual-flushing toilet. Smart gardening, smart landscaping – we work with our building and grounds folks and also we closely work with a designer to design the native and drought-tolerant landscaping for our new campuses.

Greywater harvesting. We installed a large cistern to collect rainwater from our roof as well as the AC condensation. In Texas, we collect amazing amount of the water from AC condensation, so we are collecting them to use in our irrigation system. Also, on the new campus we actually collect all surface water – the rainfall from the roof and hardscapes from the parking lot and sidewalk – we collect all the rainwater into the retention pond and we are using rainwater collection and then the AC condensate provide irrigation water throughout the college, especially in the campus that we expect to – not to use any potable water for the irrigation system. So we are very excited about that. And also, in new campus, we are trying to use this greywater to flush our toilet.

And energy conservation. We've been using occupancy sensor. We all know that we should turn off the lights, but often we forget, so we try to make it easier for our students and staff. So we've been installing occupancy sensor, wall-mounted or ceiling-mounted. New technology really makes it easy. Previous technology with a just passive infrared system, quite often it failed, but with a ultrasonic sensor built in, we find out that works really good, and it is very successful. We've been installing for new campuses as well as retrofitting into the existing campuses.

ACC supports the LEED building, so we tried to build our new facilities all LEED Silver or above, so that being said, energy efficiency is a huge part of a LEED certification, so efficient chiller is a very big part of our goal to make our facility efficient.

Some of you already adapted many LED technology in your campuses. LED technologies are here, price is affordable, and the quality of the light has increased and then – became really good and quite – sometimes it's better than previous technology. And not just the energy saving. Often we also find out that LED has other benefits, such as increasing the security measure and the safety measure, as well as the learning environment in the library, as you see in the photograph on your right. And saving energy – that's a added benefit.

Transportation. As I mentioned earlier, we are commuter college, so everybody commutes. The students commute and the staff commutes, so transportation is one big area that we really focus our sustainability initiative. We offer alternative modes. We try to work with partners. We have a Zipcar parking station in the campus and also Car2Go in Austin is very popular, so we housed Car2Go parking spaces for our students' needs. And also one of the newest addition is we worked with Austin B-Cycle nonprofit bike-sharing program to provide a bike-sharing program at our campus. And ACC have a contract with a local transit authority that we offer transit services to our students and staff. This is, I would say, the biggest program, in terms of ACC's transportation program, financially; also, how the program impacts to community and our students.

Reducing the landfill is also a very important area for us, reducing and then reusing. We work with a project coordinator from our facility department and also our warehouse folks, so any time when there's any surplus we collect them and then try to use it before we look out for the new product. And also, ACC offer public surplus auction site, so when there are products that we don't need anymore, we try to put that on a public auction site so that we can use the fund to support other program.

Recycling is, I guess most (quoted ?) and most engaging initiative in our college system, so we offer single-stream recycling and also we found a way to recycle the Styrofoam as well. So it's been a very successful. Sometimes when we offer zero-waste event, we often accomplish over 80 percent of the waste diversion.

This is one of the recent success stories from ACC. We evaluated composting at our campus where we offer culinary arts program, and we have two landfill dumpster and one recycling dumpster, and we did landfill dumpster-diving, or observation, and we found out that if we adopt a composting dumpster, we could have – the land – one of the landfill, we could have just got rid of them. So we did research and then we worked with our culinary arts department. We made it work, and then it actually – the initiative actually saved money for the college while we are offering composting services for the students, as well as the composting the paper towel in our restrooms, so it's been very successful and had a very good response from our students and staff.

Renewable energies. We are looking for any funds, just like you, probably. We don't have enough money to install large PV grant – PV installation in our campuses. And – you know, Austin area, unfortunately, we don't have a PPA – power purchasing agreement – program available. So either we have to buy it – and often the incentive and grants are limited – we were lucky to get a large grant from the ARRA grant – American Recovery and Reinvestment Act grant – also often called the stimulus grant – so we installed over a 600 KW system – a large area in our three campuses. It was very successful, especially second ARRA grant that we installed

\$1.2 million worth of the PV – actually, ACC didn't spend any money, with a federal grant and a local utility incentive. Actually, combined, it was more than the cost of the project, so we installed \$1.2 worth of the photovoltaic project and we saved money from the day one.

Education and outreach. So the living laboratory is a huge topic for ACC as well. We already teach many green job through our job training courses and also we've been talking to faculties to expand our living lab concept to their courses.

Marketing. I think the sustainability with good marketing can go far – farther than what you would expect. We work with the marketing department very closely. We try to send out a good message to our students and the community, and also we work with a local broadcasting company – local media – to share ACC initiative with the local community.

In the far-right corner – the photograph – is our recent addition that we purchased, a Chevy Volt, with a State Energy Conservation Office grant. So we added some sustainability message to the vehicle, so when we drive around it is our moving billboard.

We launched a green team. It's something that we launched last year because we have many instructional campuses. We focus on campus-specific sustainability initiative for this green team, including the students and our staff.

So that's just a few samples of what we've accomplished in the past.

So is it working? I think it is. We think it's working out, and what would be the next? Documenting the progress. Results can be appreciated if you can only show, and then sharing your success story. Knowledge is contagious, as you know. And collaborate with your local partners and you don't have to reinvent the wheel. Go grassroots. You know, we find out many – we have many hidden resources, you know? Bring them aboard. That's very important as well. And present and deliver (what we ?) experience. Of course, a good package sells well.

So that's a presentation from me. Again, if you are interested in any of our initiative, I shared only a few samples. If you visit our website, austincc.edu/sustainability, you'll find many other initiatives that we are working on. And I'd like to share your experience as well with us. Thank you.

MR. COHEN: Thanks, Andy. Andy, so we'll have two (rounds ?). Actually, I urge everyone to please, you know, post your questions, and we'll get to them. Andy, though, before that if you would just say a minute about how you interact with the trustees and how you present once a year, I think, correct? I mean, just give us a –

MR. KIM: That's correct. So, like you, probably many schools have many policies. Some policies get updated, some policy – sometimes just paper updates. Our policy – our trustee likes to have the sustainability policy update, so annually I prepare these policy updates with the trustee, so giving them the updates of the previous initiative that we already launched the result, the track record. And also every year we have many new initiatives coming up on board as well. I share the new initiative and how we are developing the sustainability plan as well as our

climate action plan. So it's been well-received. And I think that one thing that it's really important to have the support from your trustee and your students group. So delivering the good message and what you've done, packaging it well, I would say, that's been working out very well for AACC.

MR. COHEN: Great. Thanks.

Well, before we get into more Q and A, let me just – a couple things. All of this really – this sort of driving sustainability into the DNA of our institutions is something that we at the SEED Center award colleges for. And if you don't already, I urge you to apply for our annual Green Genome award. You can find it on our website. We give away five prizes, about \$7,500 in cash, plus this really awesome tool set, which is full of agriculture equipment from Snap-On. It's got a value of about \$7,000 or \$8,000. So really it's a great exercise, I think, to go through the application. It's not a difficult lift. I urge you to check it out.

I won't spend a lot of time on this, but the area that we're looking to award colleges on would be how you engage with your community around sustainability, actual program design, so that could be career-technical education, it could be academic, could be workforce related, the quality of those programs as they relate to building a clean economy. Partnerships that your college has formed – could be with business, could be with your local – your city or county. Governance, which is really all about your own institutional governance; do you have a strategic plan in place, what is the process for engaging trustees, students, things like that. And then finally the one award that would be given to colleges that have mastered really all of this.

So you don't have to be expert, but colleges – we're looking for colleges that have made some real progress in any of these areas, so urge you to go – you've got about 28 days to complete those applications.

So with that, we open it up for questions. So let me start with this and really let each of you take a stab at it. So you're obviously doing a lot. I'm wondering if you could each kind of tie it back to how the plan has laid the foundation. So Andy, for you, you've got – I mean, you're doing a whole bunch of operational-type things. To what extent has the plan, the policy provided the foundation for you to pursue some of those things? Even the funding, the \$1-per-credit fee, how did the plan actually give you the sort of goal to do that?

And then same with you, Randy – (inaudible) – time for faculties and things like that, and is that funded and does that tie back to the plan? I wonder if you'd each take a crack at that for a minute.

MR. KIM: This is Andy from ACC. So ACC trustee approved the \$1-per-credit-hours for sustainability fee. We collect a sustainability fee and then use that fund to support many sustainability initiatives. As I mentioned earlier with the few solar grant projects, without the reserve fund, we could not have applied because many grants ultimately requires a matching fund, and such as the \$2 million worth of photovoltaic project. We had to come up with the \$400,000 matching fund. Without that reserve, we could have not even applied. And now we applied and then gotten that – the grant, it was very successful, and now we own \$2 million

worth of the photovoltaic project. And I think some – college has a green fund. I think having the funding available is a great way to jumpstart many sustainability initiatives.

MR. GRISSOM: This is Randy. So at Santa Fe, you know, the sustainability plan that we put together really was the roadmap for what we needed to do to update our infrastructure, get more high-efficiency chillers, add solar PV, to address all those carbon footprint initiatives that we wanted to reduce our carbon footprint. So that initial plan identified what was the low-hanging fruit and what was the longer-term things to aim for, and then that guided our board and our administration into figuring out where do we get the budget for doing that.

And so throughout the years, we have set aside dollars in our budget for specific projects, but we've also gone out and either gotten bond funding from our voters for our \$10 million in projects, but we also get annual dollars from our state legislature through severance tax and our GEO bond – general obligation bonds. And so we've included many of those features in our infrastructure improvements that related to the sustainability plan and those requests.

We've also had – we didn't talk about it, really, but we have a green task force that we've had for a number of years. It's a combination of students, faculty and staff who get together. There's always been at least a small budget for them to do some things. But it's kind of interesting – I'm almost a little worried that we've gotten sustainability so much into our DNA that we're losing a little of the focus because we just do it all the time. And so the budget appears all over the place. And we're going through our budget cycle right now, and that's true for next year, too. So it's kind of – it's not all in one place, so you can't just really identify it anymore. It's become part of our DNA because we see it, it's a good business move, it's saving us costs, in addition to helping the environment and providing our students the opportunity to learn, because our whole campus is also a living lab.

MR. WILSON: And this is also Xubi. And one of the things we're doing as part of the strategic planning process is now we've set up a building energy management team, and we're working, and as we make investments, some of the savings we're going to be re-investing back into future projects so we can demonstrate. You know, we're willing to take chances on some experimental things to see if they'll turn out well for us, but it's based on a budget from something like a revolving loan fund.

Also, when we went out for our RFP on that, we are really focused on the living lab concept, so we have PV and solar thermal classes working on the – our trades and technology building, working on optimizing some of the systems there. And we also – when we went out for our RFP for our photovoltaic array, part of what we put in there is we want the installers to hire students from our program in order to do the installation. And so that's really good for our students; it's really good for our relationship with the folks out in the community, as well. So those are all key elements.

MR. COHEN: Great. So when we go back in the beginning here, when you got your trustees to buy in, adopt, did you ever come across some roadblocks? Maybe it was a trustee, maybe it was strong faculty who said this is something that we don't want to do, it's not part of our mission. Did you come across that? And then what did you do, I guess, to overcome it?

MR. KIM: At ACC – you mentioned the sustainability fee. There was a lot of debates about it, and one thing that I can tell you is that the majority of the students actually approved it. That's why actually it went onto the agenda and the trustee approved the \$1 sustainability fee. And that is really a good financial funding source for our sustainability initiative. Also ACC, because policywide we support the LEED green building,, we've been expanding campuses the last few years because we support the LEED silver by policy. We now consider that many sustainability initiative into the new (ecology ?) development as a default. So that's been working out very well.

And one thing that I'd like to share, as we talked about, the transportation is a very big part of ACC sustainability initiative and goal. Recently that we are experiencing the popularity with the transit service, now the funding for the transit service is overwhelmed by the cost. So we are evaluating how we can make it sustainable and then providing the future transit services to our students. So we've seen progress, and there are a lot of discussion is happening at AACC.

MR. GRISSOM: Todd, this is Randy. In Santa Fe, it was kind of interesting that a lot of the push for us actually came from faculty early on. We started to get sustainability across the curriculum, but actually our English faculty, including in our introductory freshman composition and rhetoric course, a sustainability reader. So every class had that reader and did papers based upon it. So there was the push from there. You know, our community, I think, is somewhat unique in that, first of all, we're not that large, but there is such a push for sustainability that it was real easy to do. Originally, in our board, we had one board member who was really the business board member, and one – although he was never against sustainability, once he saw the bottom line, the triple bottom line effect, that profits was also in there, he was bought in. And he turned into our biggest proponent.

MR. : (Inaudible) – in our situation our trustees are elected and making sure that the base supports sustainability is motivated to get out and vote in those trustee elections, because it's stand-alone relatively low turnout election. So if the people who really care about sustainability in your community get out there and vote, then we elect really supportive trustees.

MR. : Yeah, they do.

MR. COHEN: Great. And I guess Randy and Xubi, you mentioned – you talk a lot about key performance indicators, and I think, Xubi, you highlight, I mean, some of the ones – some are easier on the operational side to measure. What about on the student outcome side, learning outcome side? Is there anything you can do to determine whether our sustainability curriculum is having a positive effect on student success? Anything you're looking at in that frame?

MR. GRISSOM: Yeah, this is Randee again. We're – I mean, we're looking at pretty much the standard things. We do have a regular program review process. So we're looking at the cost-benefit analysis. We're looking at are we getting student enrollments, are we getting completers, are we getting graduates, and are they getting placed, and so we do look at all of those aspects of it. And that's for all of our programs, even the ones that aren't sustainability-focused. And we're seeing pretty positive trends from that.

The interesting thing for us is that you get Department of Labor grants, and they want you to tell them how many jobs you people got. Our students are creating businesses, and they never show up in a Department of Labor database because they're employers, not the employees. And so we've been having to do a lot of work, and we're interacting with the Department of Labor at the state level and the federal level to try to address that issue, because if you have one graduate who goes out and opens a business and hires 10 employees, we're not going to know who those 10 employees are because they didn't enroll in our program, because that's a better and greater economic impact than training 10 people and three haven't got a job.

MR. COHEN: Great, Randy. Thanks.

Andy, anything on your end and – or you had those sessions about outcomes on the students side (and learning side ?)?

MR. KIM: Well, we have a lot of job training courses, and also we started training our students for LEED certification. So the – (inaudible) – lab is one thing that we are trying to engage with many faculties, but we do not have any outcomes on that measurement yet. But it's an area that we are very interested in, so I'd like to learn from other colleges as well.

MR. COHEN: Yeah, it's a tough one.

So let me do – since we've got really just about one minute left – and if you download the presentation, you'll see Randy and Xubi's contact information. Certainly, you know, reach out to Xubi on any of these questions. Because Andy's presentation was on – (inaudible) – it's not part of that. But Andy, since you can provide – I guess you can provide – (inaudible) – link, correct, to the YouTube-based presentation.

MR. KIM: Yeah, I can – I can present the link.

MR. COHEN: So what I would do for – (inaudible) – is provide the link to that – (inaudible) – piece and you can take from that. And then, Andy, when we're – can you pass along your contact information as part of that link, too?

MR. KIM: Yes, absolutely.

MR. COHEN: Because a few of you have asked – you were asking some very specific questions, I think, for each college. And we don't have time to get into those, but I would ask maybe, Xubi and Andy, you see the questions there. Maybe we'll figure out how to get answers to those out to the right folks.

MR. WILSON: Sure, absolutely. I will add my email address into that presentation so that the audience can contact me for specific questions.

MR. COHEN: Great. Well, with that, I'd really like to thank you, Randy and Xubi and Andy for your time and efforts. You're doing some really fantastic things. And for all of you participating, thanks for your time. Appreciate it.

MR. : Thank you.

MR. : Thank you.

(END)