REGIONAL CENTRE OF EXPERTISE
ON EDUCATION FOR
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

ACKNOWLEDGED BY

UNITED NATIONS
UNIVERSITY

Title of Project

An Examination of Sustainability Initiatives in Salisbury from HONR 311

Socioeconomic and Environmental Characteristics of the Area

Economic

The Eastern Shore began the twenty-first century with strong growth across multiple economic indicators. The region gained jobs at double the rate of the rest of the state from 2001 to 2007 while also outpacing the state in net business creation and keeping pace in wage growth. However, there are more people experiencing poverty now than there were 30 years ago. Maryland's poverty rate is 19 percent higher than it was in 1990 – a year that the U.S. economy entered a recession – and nearly 200,000 more Marylanders trying to get by on incomes below the federal poverty line. Nearly every county in the state has a higher poverty rate than it had in 1990. While unemployment rates have continued to decline since the 2008 recession, wages often are not high enough to support a family.

Partly as a result of the average unemployment and below-average wages, families on the Eastern Shore are more likely than families in other parts of Maryland to struggle to make ends meet. The median income of Wicomico County in 2017 was estimated at $54,493. With nearly fifty percent of the population making under $50,000, this provides insight to the estimated 15.0% of the population in Wicomico County to be living below the poverty line.

Social

The State of Maryland has an estimated population of 6,052,177 people based on the most recent US census calculations. When broken down into regional populations, the Eastern Shore of Maryland region includes the following nine counties: Cecil, Kent, Queen Anne's, Talbot, Caroline, Dorchester, Wicomico, Worcester, and Somerset. See Table 6 for the population breakdowns. The sparsely populated counties of the Eastern Shore of Maryland have a combined population of 454,889 or 13% of the state population.

The three most southern counties in Maryland on the Eastern Shore are: Wicomico, Somerset, and Dorchester. While they have the most diverse populations and more closely resemble the data of the entire State of Maryland they also have the highest poverty rates on the Eastern Shore.

According to Maryland's Department of Legislative Statistics in their "Maryland Demographic: Summary of Maryland's Diverse and Growing Population," Maryland ranks number six nationwide in the leading states for Minorities Percent of the population, with African Americans being the largest minority group.

Environmental

The Delmarva Peninsula is the core region where the writers of this report are located. It is a delicate ecosystem composed of two critical habitat types, wetlands, and upland forest/farmland interfaces, with the Chesapeake Bay to the West and the Atlantic Ocean to the East. Due to the location, Maryland, Delaware, and Virginia's Eastern Shore counties have faced great changes in recent years. Virginia, for instance, has a chain of 14 barrier islands that up until 1933 had an abundance of pine forest and small villages; however, a major hurricane caused the destruction of the villages, submerged the pine forests, and eroded dunes. A combination of hurricanes, along with diseases, greatly affected sea life by killing off the seagrass where wildlife, such as shellfish, flourish. This is just one major example of the constant changes that occur in this fragile environment. Today the barrier islands are protected by the Virginia Coast Reserve. Research shows that in recent years various islands have lost an estimated 300 yards of the shoreline, which puts the region at great risk.

The Chesapeake Bay is the largest estuary in the United States. It is overseen by the Chesapeake Bay Commission and the health of the entire region is impacted by their decisions. Much of the bay is surrounded by Maryland and Virginia which, together, have more than 11,000 miles of shoreline. The entire watershed encompasses over 64,000 square miles that expand to include the District of Columbia and six states: Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, (Eastern and Central) Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and parts of

central New York. The Chesapeake Bay watershed has more than 150 tributaries that flow into it. The bay is also the largest regional source of seafood production, particularly clams, crabs, and oysters.

Description of Sustainable Development Challenge(s) in the Area the Project Addresses

SDG 13 - Climate Action

The core area in the region constitutes the "shore counties" or those that reside either within or on the Chesapeake Bay (watershed) and along the coast of the Atlantic Ocean. This includes all of the counties in Delaware, Maryland, and nineteen of the forty counties in Virginia. These physical locations are being subjected to the quickest increases in climate change activities and the poorest residents in these locales will experience severe detrimental impact on their quality of life.

Rationale

The rationale of this project is to bring awareness to the campus community and City of Salisbury about sustainability initiatives that are happening at the local level and to further the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) or Global Goals. There are seventeen SDGs but this project will focus on 7: Affordable and Clean Energy, 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, 12: Responsible Consumption and Production, and 13: Climate Action. The goals are a collection of seventeen interlinked global goals designed to be a blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. The SDGs were set up in 2015 by the UN General Assembly and are intended to be achieved by the year 2030.

The purpose of this research is to develop an understanding and evaluation of what sustainability practices have been engaged and developed within Salisbury. Despite sustainability being identified as a primary goal, by both the city and the university, policy implementation has lacked a substantial coordinated effort and this is one of the significant reasons for this research. By compiling a complete list of initiatives across the city of Salisbury, Salisbury University (SU), and the Clarke Honors College, future sustainable efforts can be better coordinated between the city and University to reduce redundancy and increase effectiveness. The cross-institutional collaboration will result in larger initiatives across the entire Salisbury community, allow for better use of resources, and better serve the UN SDGs 7, 11, 12, and 13.

Objectives

1. To give attendees an understanding of sustainable practices and the UN SDGs.
2. To inform the community about sustainability initiatives in Salisbury, specifically within the University's Honors College, along with the City.
3. To demonstrate correct implementation of sustainable practices.
4. To identify trends and correlations between efforts within the City and the Campus.
5. To provide examples of initiatives that display the full spectrum of sustainability efforts.
6. To encourage sharing of best practices through local collaboration between students, staff, and faculty of SU, community members, and elected officials.
7. Identify gaps or sectors of sustainability that SU is currently lacking in.

Results

Through this project, we have discovered that there is an overwhelming focus on specifically "environmental sustainability" here in Salisbury, as well as many environmental initiatives within SU. We've seen that individually the city of Salisbury, SU, as well as, the Clarks Honors College can make their own initiatives and be successful in those initiatives. However, we assert that if collaboration between the city of Salisbury and SU occurs we can make greater successes in sustainability. If collaboration and transparency do not occur we will have overlapping programs between the city and University and college. This could lead to a waste of resources and funding if similar programs do the same thing. By researching the efforts that the city and University and college have taken, we have grouped our results based on "City of Salisbury Results", "Salisbury University Results", "Honors Program Overall Results", and "Honors Program Personal Examples/Results". By doing so, we clearly show where overlap occurs in initiatives and where collaboration can take place.

City of Salisbury Results

Within the City of Salisbury, there exists the Sustainability Advisory Committee or Green Team, which acts in an advisory capacity to help develop policies, assist with identifying grant opportunities, implement programs, and assist with educational opportunities for staff and community leaders. Five members of the committee meet once a month. The members may include municipal staff, elected officials and volunteers, members of community boards and commissions, citizen leaders, and representatives from community organizations. These members are residents of the city of Salisbury. Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 5:30 pm at the Government Office Building, located at 125 North Division Street, Salisbury. Some of the main initiatives of the committee include outreach, partnerships, action including team building planting and cleanups, and policy. We include some specific instances below.

The Green Yard Certification Program is currently being explored from within a small subgroup committee for the city of Salisbury, which would allow an expert to certify citizens' laws as "green". The typical "American Dream" green lawn is monoculture, meaning it is only one species of grass and requires a lot of resources to maintain. Fertilizers are often used to maintain growth height and color, and massive amounts of water are needed to maintain this level of growth. Looking at a more native and diverse lawn that incorporates wildflowers is the goal, as that can bring back habitat for native pollinators and many other plant species.

One of the members of the committee and undergraduate student of SU, Cassandra Duncan, is working to bring a composting program to the city of Salisbury. Currently, Salisbury does not have the infrastructure or funding to support curbside city-wide composting, so she is modeling Go Green OC's program, where they work with local restaurants to compost all of their food waste. This cuts restaurant waste almost in half and is excellent for the environment. She has secured a truck, and she is going to buy and transport the microbes that will house the compost to Salisbury. Cassandra is researching and networking to find a suitable place for the micro bins and contacting local businesses that may be interested in working with the pilot program.

The City of Salisbury, also, has an Environmental Task Force, which is focused on helping the City of Salisbury establish a framework for establishing long-term sustainability goals to become a more resilient city and community. The goal of the City is to ensure that it will make decisions in an informed manner to become a more resilient city and community. Specifically, the task force is charged with reviewing the 2008 plan and determining the priority of initiatives not yet implemented; working with City staff to establish and prioritize broad sustainability goals, detailing measurable objectives and actions to achieve those goals; and forming official recommendations that will serve as the backbone of the City of Salisbury Sustainability plan. The recommendations fall within these categories energy use and emissions; water, wastewater, and stormwater; management of public open space; transportation, sustainable operation, and design; and education and outreach.

The Energy Use and Emissions Subcommittee have provided these specific recommendations: embedding energy and emissions assessments into city planning, which is a prerequisite for being able to adequately implement and track these efforts into the future; building usage, which in 2009 accounted for nearly twenty percent of the City's emissions of two thousand and fifty-seven tons; transportation usage, which in 2009 accounted for more than nineteen percent of the City's emissions of two hundred and fifty-nine tons and the most expensive category at over four hundred thousand and thirty-five thousand per year; and sustainable energy sources, which are critical for moving the needle forward. The Water, Wastewater, and Stormwater Subcommittee focuses on water resource conservation, policies, and infrastructure that minimize negative impacts to our watershed. Their recommendations have focused on increasing public outreach and data accessibility synopsis, lead poisoning prevention, stormwater inlet trash inserts, and gray water infrastructure development. The Parks and Open Spaces Subcommittee envisions a diverse and thriving Salisbury with public open space access within a ten-minute walk of every resident, varied forms of active and passive recreation, ample access to clean waterways, a vast tree canopy, limited impervious surfaces, very little to no stormwater runoff, sustainable infrastructure and practices, and multi-modal transportation safely interweaving between neighborhoods. The Transportation, Sustainable Operation and Design Subcommittee envisions a sustainable planning and practice model that encourages a dynamic and resilient pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly network and multi-modal transportation infrastructure that engenders a dense city center and accessible residential, commercial and work zones, enhances open-space access for all residents, and which espouses an urban growth model that unambiguously discourages urban sprawl into the city's rural surroundings. Recommendations from this committee have focused on transportation, smart-grown zoning alternatives, and bay-friendly and sustainable landscape options. Lastly, the Education and Outreach Subcommittee are focusing on drinking water stations, efficient and effective plumbing conveyance systems, broadening partnerships focused on environmental education, recycling and solid waste, environmental health, and a nuisance or "sunny day" flooding.

The Task Force has been appointed by the Mayor to help him develop a policy recommendation for consideration by the City Council and Department leadership. The membership has been drawn from a broad base of interests and backgrounds to facilitate discussion

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Furthermore, the City of Salisbury has created a monthly event every third Friday, entitled “Third Friday” to engage local citizens. What happens in this event is local citizens of Salisbury show off their art skills and talents, such as in sustainability efforts. These events help grow community support for citizens to expand their own talents and show off their creative skills. Not only does third Fridays help those people, but they are also able to show off their own initiatives to help sustainability in Salisbury. In 2018, Mayor of Salisbury Jake Day announced new green initiatives that were funded by the Coca-Cola Foundation, as well as, the Keep America Beautiful Public Space Grant. The initiatives helped encourage recycling by informing the public of how quickly landfills fill up and how recycling helps keep the parks clean. Instead of the Coca-Cola Foundation who is created by a corporation that creates glass and plastic bottles that harm the environment. In the city's tests efforts for these green initiatives, they incorporated SU students to test the following at the National Folk Festival the following year, where different teams would help keep the festival clean. This test-run came as a great success and helped encourage sustainability in the city of Salisbury.

Small communities such as the city of Salisbury tend to be in search of ways to boost their local economies in conjunction with protecting water resources through integrated planning and the design and construction of stormwater best management practices (BMPs). Building green infrastructure projects help to address three important issues that communities face creating jobs, building livable communities, and sustaining a healthy environment. Currently, the City of Salisbury is in the process of reconstructing and revitalizing the Main Street of its Downtown and is setting standards to incorporate more pervious surfaces and water quality features in its future streetscape: the Green Street. The City’s 2010 Comprehensive Plan included an emphasis on environmental concerns and resulted in the subsequent update of the City’s Stormwater Management Ordinance.

The Masterplan incorporates stormwater management, erosion and sediment control, and green infrastructure elements to improve the City's ecological footprint. Innovative techniques to reduce runoff and water quality include added vegetation, pervious pavers, improved soils for water quality, and bioretention areas. Additionally, the project will replace all utilities and provide improved pedestrian access and crosswalks, traffic calming, bike-friendly roadways, street lights, and landscape features. The elements of this project specifically focus on impervious pavement removal, native trees, and bioretention areas.

Impervious pavement removal entails replacing hard surfaces that do allow water to penetrate with vegetation that allows rainwater to soak into the natural ground. Common impervious surfaces replaced with vegetation include unused parking pads, driveways, patio, sheds, and other structures with roofs. Rain hits impervious surfaces such as parking lots and roads, and because it cannot soak through, it instead runs off into storm drains or directly local waterways. The new Salvation Army Harrisburg site contains 5.5 acres of impervious surfaces that drain directly into the adjacent Spring Creek. The unnecessary area of this parking lot is expected to be removed and planted with native vegetation. In regards to the second area of concern: native trees, restoring a native plant habitat is vital to preserving biodiversity. By creating a native plant garden, each patch of habitat becomes part of a collective effort to nurture and sustain the living landscape for birds and other animals. Furthermore, in urban areas, a single tree can intercept from five hundred to four thousand gallons per year. Trees not only treat stormwater, but they also provide a host of other benefits, including energy cost reduction in both summer and winter, aesthetics, property value enhancement, business traffic enhancement, and health benefits. In the summer, they provide shade, and in the winter, proper placement can result in the reduction of energy use by twenty to fifty percent. To conclude with the Masterplan’s focus on Bioretention areas, these will be constructed to provide water quality treatment via filtration for the drainage areas along the Main Street right-of-way

Salisbury University Results

SU, an institution with strong academic programs and a “servant” spirit educating students to live and work in a global society, strives to be a national leader in campus sustainability. The location of the university on Maryland’s Eastern Shore makes it the perfect place to learn about how to protect various ecosystems from wetlands to woodlands. On-campus, administrators, faculty, staff, and students have championed initiatives from special gardens and energy-saving practices. This section will focus on the significant results we have found in environmental sustainability best practices here at SU: including the green infrastructure at the university, American College and University Presidents’ Climate Commitment (ACUPCC), the replacement of carbon emission, the Fulton Sustainability Committee, the development of an Environmental Studies Major, the Green Fund, Recycling Program, the SGA’s I Love Salisbury and Earth Day, the Gulls Leave Small Footprints Initiative, housekeeping measures, joining the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education, and the creation of Regional Centre of Expertise (RCE)..

To begin with the infrastructure at SU, the campus has employed many environmentally sustainable aspects to campus. A total of eleven LEED-certified buildings are scattered across the university falling under the “Gold” and “Silver” status. In addition, the parking garage has been deemed an honorable mention. These buildings have much to offer, including a solar panel-covered parking lot, a solar panel roof on Nanticoke, geothermal heating, a rain garden, water bottle refilling stations, and a unique green roof, composed of living vegetation for stormwater management and building insulation. The university dining hall has also made steps to be environmentally friendly, investing in its own food digester and choosing to replace trays to reduce food waste. SU is also a bike-friendly and bronze-certified campus.

SU utilizes solar energy to power three residence halls, through a photovoltaic solar canopy that produces 765,000-kilowatt-hours of electricity annually. Occupancy sensors are installed in offices and classrooms to save on about 30 percent of energy annually. Electric tools are also used in the Maintenance and Landscaping Departments, where mulching blades on SU lawn mowers are used in order to reduce waste and add nutrients back into the soil.

In 2008, after the Former President of SU, Dr. Janet Dudley-Eschbach, signed the ACUPCC, there was the adoption of the University Sustainability Committee composed of students, faculty, and staff who works toward developing and promoting the use of environmentally sound practices campus-wide and to incorporate sustainability into the delivery of instruction. To further complement the ACUPCC, the university has advocated reducing the university’s carbon emission down to zero by the year 2050. In 2008, a group of students from SU’s Small Business and Technology Development Center (SBTDC) and the Business, Economic, and Community Outreach Network (BEACON) conducted a comprehensive inventory of greenhouse gas emission sources in accordance with the requirements of the Presidents’ Climate Commitment. The scope of the inventory included collecting data associated with electricity, fuel combustion, commuting, air travel, fleet vehicles, solid waste, refrigerants, and certain other chemicals associated with global warming. The greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory, also referred to as a “carbon footprint,” was developed using the Clean Air-Cool Planet (CA-CP) Campus Carbon Calculator tool, which converts GHG data into metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions, or MTeCO2. Emissions have now been monitored on a yearly basis and we have seen a significant reduction in carbon dioxide equivalent greenhouse gases.

The Dean of the Fulton School of Liberal Arts developed the Fulton Sustainability Committee to address a range of sustainability issues within the Fulton School, the university, and for broader communities. Their belief is that the liberal arts make significant contributions to the understanding of sustainability as well as developing skills and knowledge required to achieve a sustainable future. Since 2014, their primary project has been the development, coordination, and hosting of a public lecture series each Spring called “Changing Climate/Changing World,” also offered as a one-credit course, IDIS 205. Each Spring, the lecture series includes experts from across our university and beyond who engage enrolled students and community members in discussions in their areas of expertise after a formal presentation. Through this, they have developed three rotating topics, each focused on a different aspect of sustainability: food, economic inequalities, and climate change.

The Fulton School of Liberal Arts has also excelled in providing a multidisciplinary and experiential approach to environmental studies through the development of the Environmental Studies Major and Minor. This multidisciplinary approach integrates courses in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences to give students the tools they need to examine complex environmental issues in-depth and assess them from a variety of perspectives. Within the program, students can explore some of the mid-Atlantic’s most intact river systems, the Nanticoke and the Pocomoke; study coastal barrier islands such as Cedar and Assateague Islands; visit major wildlife refuges at Blackwater and Chincoteague; observe working watermen’s communities on Smith and Tangier Islands, and investigate close to a hundred thousand acres of regional wetlands. Abroad, students can snorkel coral reefs in Honduras, investigate glacial landscapes in Iceland, or explore biodiversity in the Amazon. Some share meals with rural villagers in India, while others study sea turtles in Trinidad. There are various career paths in which Environmental Studies Major or Minors can specialize in which include: land/resource management, pollution control/abatement, environmental advocacy, eco-tourism/environmental education, sustainable business, and graduate or law school. Furthermore, the university’s Sustainability Offices frequently collaborates with the Environmental Department on campus-wide initiatives.

Students within the Environmental Studies Major and Minor have also had the opportunity to build up their grant writing skills with SU’s Green Fund. This is a university-wide program designed to improve environmental sustainability on campus by giving students a say in how their sustainability fees from tuition are spent through developing a project that must be completed within a year. Current university faculty and staff may also apply, but both students and faculty/staff will be expected to work collaboratively on a project together. Some projects have included natural resource conservation, energy conservation, carbon emissions reduction, recycling, and waste reduction, and education and outreach initiatives aligned with the university’s Climate Action Plan. One of the major examples of these projects included the development of the university becoming a “Bee Campus USA”. This project entailed the installation of

four beehives on the periphery of campus, and wildflowers in a small meadow behind the hives, where the bees may feed and pollinate. The applicants of this Green Fund had a desire to more closely study honey bees, a species that has seen a decline in recent years and are crucial pollinators of fruits, nuts, and vegetables of which are regularly eaten. The distinction of honey bees could lead to a loss of one-third of crops that are solely pollinated by bees.

The Environmental Studies Major and Minor is not the only credential here at Salisbury University of which students can study Environmental Conflict. One specific example is a course for undergraduate students within the Conflict Analysis and Dispute Resolution (CADR) Department: CADR 403 Resolving Environmental Conflicts, taught by Dr. Thomas Boudreau. Dr. Boudreau works with many undergraduate and graduate students on publications focused on climate change, the earth's atmosphere as a global trust, the Paris Agreement, and much more. Some of his publications can be found here: https://mahb.stanford.edu/post-author/boudreau-thomas/, https://lawpublications.barry.edu/ejejj/topdownloads.html.

Within the university, there have existed many long-standing programs that continue to be recognized and built upon. In 1980, SU started a recycling program that has been in effect since. Through the development of twelve large outdoor recycling containers, along with smaller receptacles in hallways, office suites and classrooms of all academic and administrative buildings at least fifty percent of all campus waste is being recycled. The large receptacles are "single-stream," meaning that one can place glass, cardboard, paper, and plastics in the same container. Salisbury University's Recycling Program, also, collects and recycles a variety of batteries to keep them out of landfills. These include carbon-zinc, alkaline, lithium cadmium, nickel, and rechargeable batteries. In addition, the university, through the Student Government Association's (SGA) Sustainability Committee, hosts its Recycle Madness Competition, where student organizations compete to see who can turn in the most recyclable material in a single day.

Also established even earlier in time was the university's SGA. The SGA is a body of student leaders who are committed to representing and advocating for the entire undergraduate body on our campus, especially sustainability concerns. Established in 1945, their mission is and always will be to listen to the students and use their voices to help manifest positive change for the entire campus community. In striving to achieve this mission, they collaborate with shared governance, student organizations, and individual students alike to help create an understanding community where students will feel comfortable voicing their concerns and the changes they wish to see. One of the main environmental initiatives that the SGA has partaken in has been "I Love Salisbury!". This is an event where students sign up to help clean up the surrounding Salisbury community. This year students will be cleaning up and doing some grounds work at the Salisbury Zoo. In the past, they have helped Salisbury City Park, various playgrounds and parks around the city, and the Camden Community Garden. The SGA also hosts a table for Earth Day on April 22nd and has invited the Director of the UN RCE location, Dr. Brittany Foutz, to partake in the event to engage with students on campus who have an interest in fellowships, research, and more.

SGA has also worked in collaboration with the Campus Sustainability and Environmental Safety Office, Student Organization for Activity Planning, Environmental Studies Department, University Dining Services, Horticulture and Grounds Department, Physical Plant, and SU Garden Club to develop the "Gulls Leave Small Footprints Initiative". Through the Gulls Leave Small Footprints initiative, members of the campus community can take an online pledge to reduce their carbon footprints by making one or more small changes. Through tracking pledges, they can calculate the total impact of all Small Footprint Pledges and demonstrate the collective effect of our individual actions. Some examples of pledges have included carrying a reusable water bottle, which saves an average of thirteen plastic water bottles per month, or walking or biking short distances instead of driving, which saves an estimated twenty pounds of carbon dioxide per month.

Housekeeping has also taken an active role in promoting a green atmosphere. This was in response to the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification process and to disinfect and clean the campus in a healthy and sustainable process. Housekeeping predominantly focuses on using green concentrated chemicals for cleaning purposes and practicing green cleaning methods. They also use cloth towels instead of disposable towels.

The writers of this report would also like to acknowledge the university's new active role in the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). AASHE is an association of colleges and universities working to advance sustainability in higher education in the U.S. and Canada. Its mission is to promote sustainability in all sectors of higher education — from governance and operations to curriculum and outreach — through education, communication, research, and professional development. They seek to lead higher education to be a foundation for a thriving, equitable, and ecologically healthy world.

To conclude this section, here at SU, exists RCE Salisbury, of which is acknowledged by UN University (UNU) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and focuses heavily on environmental sustainability efforts. In response

to the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD, 2005-2014), UNU called for the development of regional networks for the promotion of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). These networks address local sustainable development challenges through research and capacity development. This was the birth of RCEs on ESD. Here at RCE Salisbury, of which is Co-Directed by Dr. Brittany Foutz and Dr. Brian Polkinghorn, their focus is on conflict prevention and creative problem solving - but also on SDG # 13 - Climate Action. RCE Salisbury is hosted by the Bosserman Center for Conflict Resolution. The Center is also the hub site for the United Nations Association Salisbury Chapter, Model United Nations, and many UNESCO fellowships.

Honors Program Overall Results

Since it began in 1980, Salisbury University's Honors program has been dedicated to giving high-achieving college students the tools they need to succeed. The College fosters close individual contact between students and faculty and brings together engaged undergraduate students with varied interests to explore and enrich their overall academic university experience. In addition, the Honors College seeks to provide an intellectual environment where students pursue inquiry, explore curiosity, exhibit creativity and engage in undergraduate research all while engaging larger communities on the Eastern Shore and beyond. Honors courses and activities are intended to enhance other educational opportunities available to Salisbury University students and meet national expectations for Honors education. This section will provide an examination of projects within the Honors College focused on environmental sustainability efforts.

The Chatham and Clarke Honors College at SU strongly encourages all types of civic engagement for Honors students. The Honors College staff often organizes community service events for Honors students with activities that are often environmentally related, including trash clean-ups throughout the community and countless other volunteer opportunities. Honors courses, also, emphasize sustainability and community development. Overall, the Honors program and the Honors faculty encourage sustainability and community service among its students through its courses and initiatives and are seeking to make a difference in the Salisbury community through, furthering the UN SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities.

One of these specific examples involves a Spring 2021 ENVR 102 course of Honors students helping tend to a community garden. Honors students have helped clean up the Camden Community Garden, such as weeding and replanting vegetables for the upcoming season. The garden provides free food for the local community. There is also a partnership with the Newton Street Community Center to host a planned commercial kitchen, where kids will learn how not only to grow food but prepare that food. By engaging in this project, it helps fulfill the UN SDG Goal No Hunger. Collaboration and helping students and people of Salisbury is the main part of creating a sustainable ecosystem.

The students enrolled in the HONR111 course have embarked on field trips and activities and engage in many community service projects, many of which are environmentally related. Most importantly, Honors 111 is a class that all Honors students are required to take with a focus on helping the community reach their sustainable practice goals. Students are split into groups to research various charitable and environmental organizations in the city of Salisbury. Some students used this opportunity to team up with organizations like "Habitat for Humanity'' and participate in a trash pick-up around the city of Salisbury. Honors 111 students also participated in the Folk Festival where they sorted the trash and recycling to ensure that it all went into the correct bin.

Other Honors students have participated in the Johnson Lake Neighborhood Playground cleanup, involving the Honors Dean Dr. Andrew Martino and the Honors Student Association; the involvement of over twenty students in SU's United Way to volunteer at the historic Parsons Cemetery to remove old flower arrangements and trash; and the cleanup of the Salisbury Zoo, organized by Professor Hill. We will be sharing examples of specific Honors student's projects below.

Honors Program Personal Examples/Results

In this section, we would like to highlight some specific examples from the authors of this report of environmentally-focused initiatives that they have engaged in within the local community. These examples are from Kieran Bethke, Sean Kelly, Taylor Windmiller, and Haley Taylor.

As part of the Honors College, Kieran Bethke has attended local farmers markets in the Eastern Shore, especially the Salisbury Camden Avenue Farmers Market. Over the seasons and years, the Camden Avenue Farmers Market has grown to become a successful market, featuring not only organic produce but a wide variety of locally grown products from local farms and homemade craft and food products as well. Fresh flowers, fresh free-range duck and chicken eggs, organic and pasture-raised meats, fresh milk and yogurt, seasonal orchard fruit, seafood, baked goods, local honey, jams and jellies, artisan bread, nut butter, hummus, fresh and dried herbs,

transplants for your own gardening, and other products take their place in the tent city that forms every Tuesday, year-round, from 2:30 pm - 6:00 pm. Small businesses cater more to the increasing demand for businesses to use ecologically sustainable practices in producing and distributing their products or services. Supporting small businesses furthers the cause of sustainability. Kieran has helped inform people in the Greater Salisbury area about the opportunity to stock up on some of the best produce and wholesome foods that the area offers and also to support local farmers and small-scale food producers who strive to bring you the very best that Mother Earth has to offer. Kieran highly recommends the hand-pressed apple cider and homemade apple cider donuts.

Sean Kelly has engaged in what he describes as "a huge farmers market throughout downtown Salisbury but with live music", known as Third Friday. Third Friday is an organization in Salisbury that creates community events scheduled for the third Friday of every month. These events focus on highlighting Salisbury's new up-and-coming artists, restaurants, bands, groups, and more, but also focused on sustainability projects, green initiatives, and local environmental groups. He has volunteered at these events since last year, but due to the pandemic, the organization is having a hard time reaching a wider audience and not a lot of people even know about these fun events downtown. He insists that they are amazing for creating local connections within the community.

Taylor Windmiller has also been able to get involved with the community. "I have had so many opportunities through the honors college, of which two of my favorites being the Folk Festival and attending Habitat for Humanity's 'Make a Difference Day". At the Folk Festival, Honors students stood by the trash cans to make sure recycling and trash were both put into the correct spots. "Make a Difference Day" was an event through Habitat for Humanity in which they painted rocks to replenish the rock garden held by the community, picked up trash around the city, and attended a house blessing. "These events were a lot of fun and allowed us to get involved in our community."

Haley Taylor has led SGA opportunities involving environmental practices for the campus community to share with the locals in Salisbury. As Director of Civic Engagement for SGA, she has organized "The Big Event". For this, students went to houses within a three-mile radius to rake leaves and then brought the leaves back to Salisbury for compost. SGA, also, does the "I Love Salisbury" Campaign in the Spring Semester, which is being reimagined as a day of service where individuals help out at a variety of sites across the city including the Salisbury Zoo, local parks, schools. The Sustainability Committee organizes semesterly recycle madness events, as well as Earth Week.

Micah Weber has shared his experiences taking HONR 111, a required course, of which they have a group project that involves doing something that benefits the city of Salisbury, such as environmental cleanups. Once students have completed their projects, they share them with the rest of their colleagues in the course, which not only shows that you got involved but can give others ideas on where they can volunteer as well.

Lessons Learned

What we have learned through our research is that SU is focused on the idea of improving environmental sustainability throughout the University as well as the community of Salisbury. This focus leads to a multitude of programs and initiatives that the school enacts which are in line with keeping the school, as a whole, environmentally conscious. The Honors College within SU focuses on giving back to the community, especially environmentally. There have been many volunteer opportunities for students a part of the Honors College to connect to the Salisbury community and provide assistance in helping clean up local parks and public spaces in order to improve the community's sense of cleanliness and decrease the amount of waste thrown about in these areas. With so many events and opportunities for students and faculty to volunteer their time to the Salisbury community, it is clear to see the importance and value of improving environmental sustainability in the University.

Key Messages

Our world is facing unprecedented challenges and the global epidemic is reshaping our world as we know it. We are at a crossroads at a time when our world seems so divided. Our world is struggling to believe in a vision and future. What is that you hope for in the future? If you could choose one thing what would it be? We have to recognize our individual future but also our "futures". This is the future that we want. The UN's SDGs are never just facts and statistics of what we have to and need to work on, but they are an aspiration that is as strong as our lasting hope. The COVID-19 Pandemic has brought pain, death, and unemployment in one way or another to the entire family of humanity. In response to COVID-19, greater solidarity is urgently needed. We need hope, solidarity, and the will to see this crisis together, especially through environmental measures. The global disruption caused by the COVID-19 has brought about several effects on the environment and climate.

For optimism for the future, we need to look to our young people. The overwhelming majority of us believe that cooperation is more vital than ever. We rather think that this pandemic is actually incredibly revealing: if we examine it closely, it highlights the nature of the challenges and the strength of the dangers that communities have to face for many years. What is common to these challenges is that they do not know borders and that no country escapes from them, such as climate change and the loss of biodiversity, on the environmental level. In the face of such challenges, common sense calls for collective and concerted responses. These challenges concern us all. They generally affect us at different times and to varying degrees, to such an extent that some ignore their global reach and turn their backs on their responsibilities. This time around, the sudden spread of COVID-19 leaves no room for ambiguity: we are 'all affected', on all continents and, within weeks of each other, at the same moment. So the solution can only come from the efforts that we will carry out together, such as coordinating academic efforts with the local community.

Furthermore, we must prioritize today. Prioritizing today means more resources for environmental development because the "world of tomorrow" could be much worse than the "world of yesterday. Throughout history, we have accomplished unimaginable things, propelling each generation further than the last. There is no limit to the amount of good that we can achieve together to make this world – our world – a better place.

We must embrace the complexity of tasks, not shy away from it. Through the use of sustainable practices, SU, the Honors College, and the city of Salisbury are working towards changing the world for the better. This can be seen through the multitude of programs and events that have been recognized in the results section of this report. We would like to reflect upon the Gandhian philosophy of how one can make a difference in the world, even as an individual. This can be done even during a global pandemic.