

Oberlin College
Marvin Krislov

Environmental stewardship is a central calling of our time and a driving force in Oberlin College's educational mission, as it has been since 1914, when alum Charles Martin Hall gave us significant tracts of green space that still exist today. Our tradition extends to the Adam Joseph Lewis Center for Environmental Studies, opened in 2000, which is one of the country's most advanced examples of ecological architecture.

Oberlin's Committee on Environmental Sustainability is working to ensure that environmental stewardship informs all aspects of our planning and decision-making. Oberlin's status as a charter signatory of the ACUPCC and its public commitment to climate neutrality is moving us toward that goal and enhancing our national reputation. The Sierra Club's *Sierra* magazine, for example, recently ranked Oberlin number one among America's top-ten "coolest schools," meaning ecologically-minded institutions of higher education.

Over the past year, the Presidents' Climate Commitment has been a key driver in a broad range of plans and actions geared to balancing our carbon budget. Three recent initiatives are:

1. Completion of a comprehensive greenhouse-gas inventory for the college. This effort was the major thrust of Oberlin's new Office of Environmental Sustainability and also served as the focus of a newly created undergraduate course on Campus Sustainability.



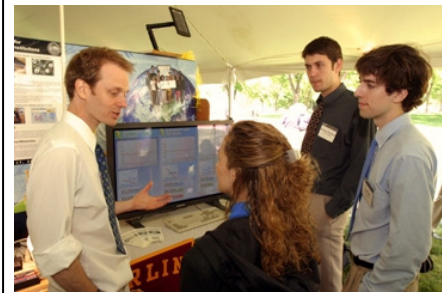
The Adam Joseph Lewis Center for Environmental Studies was one of the first and most innovative green buildings on a college campus when it opened in 2001. It helped launch the green building movement and its innovative systems have since inspired green buildings in many other locations and settings. With over 150 environmental sensors installed throughout the building and landscape, the AJLC's data monitoring and display system provides a unique opportunity to visualize in real-time the flows of energy and cycling of matter that are necessary to support the built environment.

2. Raising \$500,000 to initiate two planning studies. The first, managed by the City of Oberlin, will comprehensively assess alternatives that the community has to a long-term investment in a coal-fired electrical power plant. The second will examine, with the goal of climate neutrality, the College's options in redeveloping its central heating plant and renovating buildings.

3. Initiating a feasibility study for a "College and Community Green Arts District." If realized, this project could create a vibrant, mixed-used district built to the highest environmental standards and focused on education and the arts.



The Living Machine processes wastewater into reusable grey water via the natural cleansing methods that occur in a wetland—plants, bacteria, protozoa, and other aquatic microorganisms are used to clean and condition the water for reuse. It is located in the Adam Joseph Lewis Center for Environmental Studies, and it is operated by a group of about 10 students.



Associate Professor of Environmental Studies John Petersen discusses the campus resource monitoring system with students at the Environmental Protection Agency's "People, Prosperity, and the Planet" (P3) student-design competition for sustainability in May 2005. The award-winning system that provides feedback on the use water and electricity is installed in 21 dormitories and student houses on Oberlin's campus.



The installation of a solar parking pavilion adjacent to the existing photovoltaic (PV) array on the roof of the innovative Adam Joseph Lewis Center for Environmental Studies makes Oberlin College the home of the largest PV array in Ohio, with a total rated production of 159 kW. Sunlight collected by the panels on the 8,800-square-foot pavilion roof is transformed into a maximum of 100 kilowatts of electrical energy, bringing the center's total rated production (based on peak theoretical output under ideal conditions) to 159 kW, equivalent to the amount of energy needed to power nearly 15 single-family homes.