Office Elevated to Strengthen UNH’S Commitment to Sustainability; Founding Director Named Chief Sustainability Officer

This July, UNH President Mark Huddleston announced the elevation of the University Office of Sustainability (UOS) to strengthen its across-campus mission and reflect its leadership role in continuing the university’s national visibility in sustainability. Along with its move to the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President, the office’s founding director, Tom Kelly, assumed the role of Chief Sustainability Officer (CSO) for the university.

“Sustainability is now recognized as one of UNH’s core identities and strengths with faculty, staff, and students from many disciplines working together in new and innovative ways to advance a common goal,” said Huddleston. “The role of the chief sustainability officer is to help ensure that we are considering every strategic opportunity to unite the spirit of discovery with the challenge of sustainability across our land grant, sea grant, and space grant missions.”

The longest-standing endowed sustainability program at an institution of higher education in the country, the newly named University Office of Sustainability’s mission remains the same - to unite the UNH community in advancing the university as a nationally recognized Sustainable Learning Community that integrates sustainability across its curriculum, operations, research and engagement through four broad initiatives in biodiversity and ecosystems; climate and energy; culture and sustainability; and food, agriculture, and nutrition.

Did you know?
Tom Kelly, UNH’s Chief Sustainability Officer as of July 1, has directed UNH’s sustainability program since its inception in 1997. He is also a 2007 Presidential Excellence Award winners.

Tip of the Month
Sign up for our listserv & module!

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sustainableunh.unh.edu
Profile in Sustainability

Tom Kelly, Ph.D., UNH Chief Sustainability Officer & Director of the University Office of Sustainability

How did UNH first become committed to being a sustainable learning community?

Sustainability at UNH began with the grassroots leadership of faculty, students, and staff, which lead to the establishment of the University Office of Sustainability as an endowed, university-wide program in 1997. UNH has always recognized its unique responsibility to the state and region. Its commitment to sustainability extends this vision to future generations and to national and international issues as the university undertakes the purposeful reform of its cultural and ecological relationships with the broader world in a manner consistent with sustaining the foundations of human development.

After 10 years of success, what do you envision for the next 10 years at UNH?

We will build on our past decade of collaborative work in order to address the unprecedented challenge of sustainability with innovative curriculum, campus operations, research, and engagement that empowers all graduates to advance sustainability in their civic and professional lives.

What motivates you personally to be involved in sustainability?

My motivation is rooted in a sense of responsibility and obligation to community in all senses of the word, including future generations. Freedom and responsibility are inseparable.

You’re Invited!

Visit the “Pathway to Sustainability” area of University Day on September 18, 3:30 – 6:30 PM, Thompson Hall lawn on the UNH Durham campus, to learn more about organizations and offices involved in sustainability in the UNH community.

Then bring your appetite to the 3rd Annual Local Harvest Dinner on September 20, 4:30-9 PM, Holloway Commons, UNH Durham. Eat gourmet, local foods, talk with local farmers, pick up information on buying local, listen to live music, and view photographs by Charter Weeks taken at Lasting Legacy Farm in Barrington.

Contact: www.cleanair-coolplanet.org/conference_GWS07/index.php

UNIVERSITY OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY

Since 1997, the University Office of Sustainability – the oldest endowed sustainability program in higher education in the U.S. – has been uniting faculty, staff, and students in integrating sustainability across UNH’s CORE (curriculum, operations, research and engagement) through four initiatives that follow four foundational systems of sustainability – Biodiversity Education, Climate Education, Culture & Sustainability, and Food & Society – while advancing sustainability in civic and community life across the state, region, and nation.

A spirit of discovery. A small, New England liberal arts college feel. A top-tier university with research in climate science, sustainable energy and engineering, sustainable agriculture and food systems, marine science, natural resources, public health, nutrition, and more. A dedication to community, citizen engagement, diversity, cultural and natural resources, and public arts.

Discover sustainability at UNH.

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