



## Kresge Foundation Fellowship Program 2009

### Strategic Outreach and Education for Advancing Green Building in Higher Education

To the Kresge Foundation,

In September 2009, I attended the conference *Greening of the Campus VIII: Embracing Change* which was held in Indianapolis, Indiana. The conference was well attended with hundreds of institutions and vendors represented. I was pleasantly surprised to see the number of attendees but found that most institutions were of the four-year university variety as opposed to community colleges. The distinction is important because the availability of funding and resources for community colleges is very different from the four-year institutions. As a result the challenges in implementing a climate action plan are very different because not only is Sustainability a change in culture but also a change in funding prioritization. I was hopeful in that by interacting with other community college representatives I would be able to share my experiences with them and gain from hearing their experiences as well.

I attended a number of sessions that involved the development of an institutional Climate Action Plans which were very helpful to me in developing the Onondaga Community College's plan and also what software products are available to help in tracking the measurement of the college's carbon footprint. The speakers at all of the sessions were very willing to share their information and contacts to help everyone else learn how to proceed. I was able to bring a lot of information back to campus that I have since used in implementing the college's climate action plan.

I found the guest speakers at the lunches and dinners to be very interesting and passionate about Sustainability and also very informative. Even better though was the contacts I was able to make at the lunches, dinners and at the training sessions. I also had the pleasure of meeting a number of students who are very interested in this topic and are taking a very active role in helping their colleagues to learn about sustainability. I met a number of colleagues from all across the country with different challenges and levels of success. I was pleasantly surprised to learn of the many institutions that are building sustainability into their academic programs. I have suggested to the college's provost that Onondaga Community College should send some its faculty to future conferences so that we can learn from other institutions. The most important lesson I learned is that we are not in this alone and that there are many different resources available to everyone as the college works its way to climate neutrality.

I would highly recommend this conference to anyone else that may be interested in Sustainability. I met a number of people who have similar challenges and opportunities in helping to reduce their college's carbon footprint. Thank you for the opportunity to attend the conference and please know that the Kresge Program has been very beneficial to Onondaga Community College.

Sincerely,

William Emm  
Chief Financial Officer