



Maryland
Green Registry
MEMBER

The Maryland Green Registry promotes and recognizes sustainable practices at organizations of all types and sizes. Members agree to share at least five environmental practices and one measurable result while striving to continually improve their environmental performance.

Anne Arundel Community College

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Higher Education
Member since October 2009

Management and Leadership

Environmental Team

AACC has a Sustainability Learning Design Team, which meets regularly to evaluate new initiatives for conservation on campus. Faculty, staff and students have created ways to conserve, preserve and reuse, discovering along the way that it's easy being green at AACC.

Environmentally Preferable Procurement

AACC buys cleaning products that are almost exclusively green, landscapes with native species of trees and shrubs, uses recycled paper where possible, buys low-wattage fluorescent bulbs for replacements, is replacing gas-powered carts with electric-powered carts, and buys recycled plastic products such as picnic tables, benches and toilet partitions. When replacing carpeting, the college tries to buy carpet products loomed from recycled materials wherever possible and recycles the used carpet.

Environmentally Preferable Products and Services

AACC offers more than 210 distinct online courses, six online degree programs and more than 10 online certificate programs, reducing infrastructure needs (buildings, parking) and conserving resources (electricity, water, etc.) In FY 2009, 8,809 students or 38.4 percent of the credit student body took at least one credit course via distance learning vs. 7,585 students in FY 2008.

The AACC Bookstore sells recycled paper products including binders from recycled plastics, has a special Green Zone for sales of ecofriendly merchandise and books, and offers mainly U.S. manufactured sportswear to reduce fuel consumption in transport. The store also reuses much of its shipping and packing materials.

Among the bookstore's more popular green programs is its shopping bag loan program. In 2008, the store printed a supply of reusable shopping bags with the slogan, "My Carbon Footprint Just Got Smaller." Students take home their large purchases in the bags and return the bags to the store the next day.

The college Dining Services facility offers reusable Chico bags, wraps sandwiches in paper instead of foam and plastic containers, offers reusable coffee mugs made of corn plastic and buys local products when possible to cut transportation costs and fuel use.



Environmental Restoration or Community Environmental Projects

In fall 2009, the college planted a wildflower meadow in a ¾ acre plot as part of its green initiatives. In addition to its inherent natural beauty, a wildflower plot is more adaptable to drought, requires less maintenance, mitigates carbon emissions and increases habitat for native flora and fauna. AACC staff and students also planted four rain gardens on the college's campus in 2009 as described under the Stormwater section below.

The college Environmental Center has a nationally renowned underwater grasses replenishment program. Begun in 1980 to help the county monitor water quality and aquatic life in the Bay and its tributaries, the center regularly partners with federal, state and county agencies as well as nonprofit organizations and groups to provide environmental solutions. For example, through a partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, the center has produced more than 10 million underwater grass seeds for bay restoration and another 5 million seeds for a North Carolina restoration project.

The Environmental Center also works with the Anne Arundel County Department of Health each summer, monitoring water quality at community beaches. Its staff and students worked with the Providence Center and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to develop 80,000 wetland plants for the Poplar Island restoration project.

The college also offers a free series of information and demonstration sessions each fall and spring on alternative and sustainable energy systems,

energy inspections, green products, green career opportunities and more. The one-hour presentations are followed by a 30-minute Q&A period.

Waste

Solid Waste/Material Use Reduction and Reuse

The AACC Bookstore has a shopping bag loan program (see above) and reuses much of its shipping and packing materials. The Bookstore used only two bags of packing peanuts in 2007 vs. 18 bags in 2004. It also cut the need for new shipping cartons by 50 percent from 2004 to 2008. AACC also launders and reuses cleaning rags and uses green laundry soap.

Recycling

AACC has accelerated its recycling efforts by changing to single stream recycling of paper, cardboard, glass, plastic bottles, aluminum and metal cans, plastics with the numbers 1-7 on the bottom. In 2009, it added 108 large green totes to large meeting spaces and conference rooms. Smaller recycling containers were placed in classrooms on the Arnold campus, too.

The college recycles paper, cardboard, glass, plastic bottles, aluminum and metal cans, plastics with the numbers 1-7 on the bottom, printing plates, metal desks, large plastics, toner cartridges, computer monitors and printers. AACC recycles all motor oil and tires from its fleet of vehicles. The Information Services Department donates all computers for reuse or electronic recycling. The Grounds crew chips all tree and shrub prunings for use as mulch in campus landscaping beds.

Students can recycle their textbooks by selling them back to the AACC Bookstore or by donating them and other used fiction and nonfiction books to the Parole Rotary's Books for International Goodwill project. Collection bins are periodically placed in campus buildings for the donations.

The college Center for Learning through Service has sponsored the Cell Phones for Soldiers recycling project for several years and seen such success it is now a year-round program. Old cell phones and accessories are recycled with proceeds used to buy calling cards for soldiers overseas so they can call home at no personal expense. The fall 2008 drive, for example, netted 113 cell phones and 163 accessories.

Energy

Energy Efficiency

The college has installed sensor-controlled lighting in four buildings on the main campus, is replacing its gas-powered carts with electric-powered carts and is burning biodiesels in the plant boilers. It also is replacing boilers with high efficiency units as funds allow and retrofitting general area lighting to T-8 technology, reducing energy use by 21 percent.

AACC is systematically converting all buildings to centrally controlled heating, ventilation and air conditioning. The Physical Plant building renovation, which is now in the design stage, will add energy efficiencies to boilers, pumps and circulation systems.

The Information Services Department deploys Energy Star compliant computers, replaces obsolete CRT monitors with energy efficient LCD monitors, and also networks and has employees and labs share printers where possible. The IS Data Center has implemented server virtualization, using up to 80 percent less energy, is purchasing low wattage CPU servers which are 30 percent more energy efficient than existing servers and has reduced power consumption through use of room-sized uninterruptible power supply in the Data Center.

Transportation

Employee Commute

In 2007, AACC launched a carpool program to give students, faculty and staff access to close-in parking spaces designated for carpoolers (three or more to a vehicle). This program operates through the college Department of Public Safety (www.aacc.edu/carpool) and offers help connecting those wishing to carpool with those willing to share rides.

In 2008, the college began promoting to students the opportunity to purchase discounted monthly Maryland Transit Administration bus passes for those students taking at least six credit hours of classes. The AACC Bookstore sells the passes.

Water

Water Conservation

Since 2000, the college has required contractors to install water-conserving fixtures in new construction on campus and is having its facilities staff do the same when fixtures wear out. These include low-flow toilets and hand-washing sink sensors.

Stormwater Management and Site Design

AACC staff and students planted four rain gardens on the college's campus in April 2009 at areas around parking lots and storm drains to catch water runoff before it flows into a creek that crosses the campus and leads to the nearby Magothy River. A student evaluated the need for campus rain gardens and potential sites as part of an honors biology class assignment. Her research was so good and her argument so compelling that her project adviser, a biology professor, asked for and obtained the college's approval to make the rain gardens a reality. With help from the college's grants office, the adviser applied for and received a \$24,354 grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust. Fundraising efforts of the college Biology and Environmental Club added another \$1,000 to the project's coffers. A contractor dug the gardens and students and staff planted the native flowers and grasses, which are thriving.

When the college constructed its 97,631 gross square foot Center for Applied Learning and Technology, it included a green roof planted with native species and serviced by an irrigation system to reduce maintenance. The roof helps curb heating costs and reduces stormwater runoff while also serving as a living classroom for architecture, construction management and science students. The facility opened in 2004.

Other

AACC in April 2009 received the green (highest) level of the PLANT award (People Loving and Nurturing Trees). The college has received this award for the last five consecutive years and also in 1998 and 2000. Given by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, the award recognizes Maryland plant communities that increase the tree canopy through planning, planting and caring for trees to beautify the landscape and provide shade and habitat for wildlife. In 2008, the college Landscaping Committee and Grounds Department added 43 trees to the campus landscape, in addition to those planted by contractors working on renovation of the Careers Center building. In 2007, the committee added 54 trees to campus.

The Mid-Atlantic chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture named AACC a 2008 Maryland recipient of its Gold Leaf Award for outstanding landscape beautification projects in the mid-Atlantic region. The organization includes among its members municipal arborists and horticulture professionals.

In January 2007, AACC was one of two recipients of the Arnold Preservation Council's Community Enhancement Award for its work landscaping the two median strips on West Campus Drive near the intersection with Route 2. The college planted trees and perennials in the well-mulched medians.



Help build a greener, more sustainable Maryland through voluntary practices that reduce environmental impacts and save money.

Learn more at www.green.maryland.gov/registry

