

## **UW Oshkosh names director of sustainability**

by News Bureau - Wednesday, February 04, 2009

<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/1659/uw-oshkosh-names-director-of-sustainability/>

The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh has taken the lead by appointing one of UW System's first sustainability directors. Almut Beringer, a leader with 20 years of experience in the higher education sustainability movement, has been named the director of sustainability at UW Oshkosh. Her appointment is effective Feb. 16.

Beringer will lead the effort to carry out goals outlined in the [Campus Sustainability Plan](#), which was unveiled in April 2008. She will work closely with campus stakeholders to ensure that environmental stewardship is integrated, aligned with and supportive of overall UW Oshkosh goals and objectives.

Among the operational goals Beringer will tackle are:

- Reduce the annual consumption of fossil fuels for heating by 50 percent from 2000 levels by 2012;
- Reduce overall water consumption levels by 50 percent from 2000 levels by 2012;
- Utilize energy efficient and sustainable design standards on all new construction and applicable renovation projects undertaken after 2007. All such projects shall seek to meet or exceed LEED "Silver" level of sustainability.
- Reduce automobile trips to campus by 20 percent by 2012 through incentives and improvements in sustainable alternatives; and
- Increase biodiversity and usable green space of the campus while reducing dependence on fossil fuels, other extracted materials, chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

Beringer will also work with the provost on incorporating sustainability into curriculum.

She will work directly with UW Oshkosh senior leadership in both academic and administrative areas, as well as the Campus Sustainability Council, other governance groups and external constituencies. Beringer will report jointly to Tom Sonnleitner, vice chancellor for administrative services, and Al Hartman, interim provost.

"Dr. Beringer brings to the University a wealth of knowledge and experience in sustainability in higher education," said Chancellor Richard H. Wells. "With more than two decades of related experience, Almut will provide leadership in the University's sustainability efforts, including developing strategies that will ultimately provide substantial savings on energy costs."

"Appointing a director of sustainability who reports directly to both the provost and the vice chancellor for administrative services suggests to me UW Oshkosh recognizes that sustainability is a moral imperative across the university, for all units and departments," said Beringer. "I am impressed with the comprehensiveness of the Campus Sustainability Plan, and am excited that the plan is framed by the Earth Charter. I look forward to working with administrators, faculty and staff in moving UW Oshkosh's

sustainability forward.”

Beringer comes to UW Oshkosh after serving as a senior research fellow for the Sustainable University Project at the University of Lüneburg in Germany. In that role, she participated in a research project exploring ways to make post-secondary education institutions community leaders in sustainable development. Previous to that, she served as the director of sustainability for the University of Prince Edward Island, Canada where she undertook sustainability projects in the areas of transportation, food services, construction, procurement and ethical investment. She has also worked in the field of sustainability at the University of Victoria and La Trobe University, Australia. Beringer holds a doctorate in natural resources (environmental ethics) from the University of Michigan.

Hiring a sustainability director is not the first step the University has undertaken in its efforts to become more sustainable. In 2002, the University became one of the first to endorse the Earth Charter — an international declaration of interdependence that outlines fundamental principles for building a just, sustainable, and peaceful global society for the 21st century.

In 2003, UW Oshkosh became the first Wisconsin university to join the Environmental Protection Agency’s Green Power Partnership by agreeing to purchase at least 3 percent of its energy from renewable sources, making it at the time the largest purchaser of green energy in Wisconsin. As a result, the University won an EPA Green Power Purchase Award and was listed by the EPA as an Energy Star Case Study. The University also received the 2003 EPA Leadership Award – the 11th U.S. university to receive the EPA’s highest leadership award. In 2004, UW Oshkosh won a National Wildlife Federation Campus Ecology Recognition Award for its campus environmental audit and in 2005, the University received a second Energy Star Award from the EPA.

In 2008, the University adopted a policy to purchase cage-free eggs and unveiled its Campus Sustainability Plan, which guides its efforts to continue as a national leader in responsible environmental stewardship, education, outreach and research. The campus also became the nation’s first Fair Trade University.

Additionally, UW Oshkosh is one of only 41 universities in the United States listed on the U.S. Department of Energy’s Web site as a large purchaser of renewable energy.

For more information about the University’s sustainability efforts, visit [www.uwosh.edu/sustainability](http://www.uwosh.edu/sustainability) and [www.uwosh.edu/engage](http://www.uwosh.edu/engage).