

4 April 2007

Dear EnviroAlum,

Last month I was on campus for the spring Alumni Council Executive Board meeting. The Trustees were there. Nancy Dye's portrait was unveiled at a dinner honoring her presidency. The new Alumni Council Development Committee chaired by Andy Goldner met. Oberlin's new Sustainability Coordinator, Nathan Engstrom, is on the job. The Jazz Center is going to be LEED gold. The Environmental Sustainability Committee, with John Peterson as chair, has been established. And more.

At meetings and in conversations I sensed a sea change. Environmental issues are gaining traction—they are being brought to the table in a variety of settings. EnviroAlums (E) has worked diligently to effect this change and position Oberlin to achieve environmentally sustainability. From our "Climate Justice: What is Oberlin's Role in Climate Change" event in June 2003 to the "Climate Justice Challenge Campaign" this past fall—and all in between—E has made a difference.

You should feel good about it—Sustainability is on the agenda! This is what E has advocated. Now the good times and fun really begin. E can do much, but it will require us to become better organized and to be supportive of all initiatives that facilitate Oberlin achieving sustainability.

E needs to be as robust as possible. First, the membership's response to E's fall mailing was not robust—just 17 people returned forms (\$430, dues; \$206, student fund). E spent much more last year on 30 climate change books given to selected faculty, trustees, and administrators; Gore's DVDs sent to all Trustees and others; sponsoring on campus environmental alumni seminars on environmental careers; and expenses associated with the annual Steering Committee Meeting. If you were not one of the 17, please use the attached membership form to send in your updated information, dues and student fund contributions.

By sending in your dues (\$20; more if you can), you not only support E's activities but also you make a donation to Oberlin. This is very important because alumni annual giving is equated to alumni satisfaction and is the foundation of all fundraising. Oberlin's ranking in *US News and World Report* is negatively impacted because so few Oberlin alumni give annually—it's the number giving not the amount that counts here!

Second, we need more people to be involved in the many things E can be doing to facilitate Oberlin's shift to sustainability. Think how you can/wish to be involved. I will be in Oberlin for a week in April discussing with Nathan Engstrom, John Peterson, Laura Gobbi, David Orr, and others how E can be most helpful.

I'll report back in May. Meantime, please return you membership. Let's have all 150 people on E's email be contributors!

Best regards,
Carl N. McDaniel
Chair, EnviroAlums