The Southern Miss Office of Sustainability was recently recognized as one of the top green campuses in the United States by the Princeton Review.

STORIES IN SUSTAINABILITY - February 2013

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by
The Office of Sustainability
The University of Southern Mississippi

Catching up with Haley McMinn

Q: Where are you from, and how did you choose the University of Southern Mississippi?
I grew up in Orlando, FL. I received my Bachelor degree in Psychology at The University of West Florida. During my undergraduate years at West Florida I got really involved in student life, specifically residence life. I came to Southern Miss to earn my Master's Degree in College Student Personnel.

Q: During your career as an undergrad, did you see yourself working in sustainability?

Never during my years as an undergraduate Hall director at West Florida, or a graduate Hall Director at Southern Miss did think I would be involved in Sustainability. In fact, in 2008 when I graduated from my Master's program the word "sustainability" was just becoming a strong movement with higher education.

When I heard that Southern Miss was going to develop an Office of Sustainability I was 100% sure I wanted to be involved. Growing up in Orlando I was exposed to practices that were sustainable, at the time I just didn't see them that way. For example, recycling was just something everyone did.

Q: What are the brightest and toughest parts of your job?

The brightest part of my job is the wide array of responsibilities I have. In one position, I get to wear many different hats. From teaching students about sustainability in class, to putting together a spreadsheet of energy consumption on campus, to overseeing new initiatives like game day recycling, working with administrators, faculty, staff, and students to begin new programs. Every day brings a new challenge and a new success. I like that.

The toughest part of my job is also why I love my job. Sustainability is a movement, a thought process, and a culture of sorts. The biggest challenge the Southern Miss Green Initiative meets is simply the change
in culture that has to occur in order for sustainable pathways to truly emerge. It's the biggest challenge, but when a pathway emerges its an energizer to myself, the office, and the vision and mission we lead with every day.

Q: Tell me about some of the exciting things your office is currently undergoing to affect positive change at our university.

1. We are working to expand recycling services to include more athletics, public areas, etc.
2. The 3rd annual Project Serve: Canada trip will happen May 11-19. Travel abroad and learn about sustainability. For more information contact the Center for Community and Civic Engagement at 601-266-5074.
3. We are developing a Green Office program. This program will give campus offices the opportunity to show what they do to help the university Southern Miss Green Initiative. More to come soon on this.
4. We are getting ready to begin planning for Earth Week 2013 (4/22-4/26). Possible events include a mock oil spill (hosted by Oceana and the Sustainability Advocates of Southern Miss)
5. The 2nd annual Farmer's Market will begin late March/early April.
**materials wins sustainability grant:**
One of four schools to win prestigious grant.
Dr. Sarah Morgan, an associate professor in the School of Polymers and High Performance Materials at Southern Miss, was recently awarded a grant of $60,000 from the Ray C. Anderson Foundation to further her research in sustainable solar cells.

The $270,000 grant was split among four schools: Southern Miss, Auburn, Arizona State University, and Georgia Tech. The grant will be used by Southern Miss students and faculty to pursue research into organic solar cells, a concept that could help further the university's efforts in its ongoing pursuance of sustainable living.

![Dr. Sarah Morgan](image)

Dr. Sarah Morgan was the recipient of a $60,000 grant for her research into solar cell technology

**The Office of Sustainability presents... RecycleMania.**
Southern Miss to participate in eight week recycling competition
Starting on February 3rd, Southern Miss will be participating in RecycleMania, and eight week event solely dedicated to extending sustainable living concepts into our
This will be the fourth year that Southern has participated in the event. The university will be competing in the event's "Gorilla" and "Per capita" categories. "Recyclemania is a great opportunity for Southern Miss to show our accomplishments and improvements in recycling not only to the campus community, but higher education communities around the country. It’s good to see where we stack up against similar universities to ours." comments Haley McMinn, Assistant Director for the Office of Sustainability. "It’s all in good fun and is simply a way to get campus pumped up about using the recycling services on campus."

The program has done quite well in the past, ranking 142 out of 346 competitors, recycling as much as 7.73 pounds per student at the University.

If you would like to get involved in RecycleMania, or if your group would like to schedule a pickup, please contact Haley McMinn, Assistant Director of Sustainability at haley.mcminn@usm.edu.

Southern Miss to participate in RecycleMania, a national collegiate waste reduction program

**Eco Eagle Go Green! Tip of the Month**
Advice to help you live more sustainably

Consider unplugging appliances while they are not in use. Additionally, consider investing in a "smart" power strip. These devices sense when your appliances are not in use and cut off the power to prevent "phantom" or "vampire" power from being used. Not only will this tip help you live more sustainably, it will also cut down on your power bill each month!

For more information on living sustainably, check out http://www.globalstewards.org