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## Time helps UWSP go green

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Given the presence of the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point's prestigious College of Natural Resources, it only makes sense that the university is working to lessen its environmental impact.

In 2007, Chancellor Linda Bunnell created the Sustainability Task Force, a group of students, staff, faculty and administrators charged to research and develop recommendations to make UWSP green.

"I believe this organization will provide the taskforce with a specific direction in which to move forward with our campus' plan for sustainability. I anticipate that the taskforce will find additional avenues to explore in regard to campus sustainability issues," Bunnell said.

Gov. Jim Doyle has mandated that the university, along with three other UW System campuses, be "off the grid" and dependent exclusively on renewable energy by 2012. While it's a challenge, UWSP is on its way.

Currently, the university's residence halls use 57 percent green energy through the work of Wisconsin Public Service.

"UWSP has a history of leading on conservation issues, and our commitment to be part of an environmental and energy solution for Wisconsin is shared campus-wide," Bunnell said. "In many ways, our students have led this charge."

UWSP uses the most renewable energy within the UW System.

"I feel like we are making a real difference and setting an excellent example of how important renewable energy is for the future," said student Kelly Krumsee.

UWSP faculty members Don Guay, paper science and engineering, and Eric Singsaas, biology and forestry, are researching renewable energy opportunities, including biofuels and even bacteria.

Given the College of Natural Resources, many students, particularly within that college, have taken a strong interest in ensuring the campus goes green.

"We need to get everyone, all students, on board with this. It can't just be a few dissident voices," said Student Government Association Vice President Erika Wardle, one of the more outspoken pro-sustainability students on campus.

UWSP continues to increase its focus on sustainability, both in the classroom and around campus. Student residence Knutzen Hall has solar water heating systems as does Pray-Sims Hall and the Health Enhancement Pool.

The remodeled Noel Fine Arts Center features photovoltaic windows and low-energy lighting.

Rain gardens, which support native landscape plants by absorbing water run-off from roof tops, are scattered across campus.

The University Library has a green roof in which five different drought-tolerant plants insulate the building and help keep it cool in the summer, reducing energy use and rain run-off as well as improving air quality.

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