



University of Louisville Sustainability Council FY 2013-2014 Report

Major Milestones in the University of Louisville's Sustainability Initiatives July 2013 – June 2014

Justin Mog, Assistant to the Provost for Sustainability Initiatives

Throughout its sixth year of existence, the Sustainability Council and its associated committees continued to support and develop a great diversity of initiatives across the full spectrum of sustainability. The Council remains committed to finding creative, innovative and durable means of simultaneously enhancing the university's environmental, social and economic stewardship. These efforts involve numerous staff, faculty, and students from a wide variety of units across the university. The percentage and diversity of our UofL community directly engaged in seeking sustainable solutions continues to grow as we strive to integrate sustainability into the core mission, culture, values, policies and practices of the university.

With the Council's stewardship, the University of Louisville has moved well beyond first steps, small pilot projects, and picking the 'low-hanging fruit' of sustainability. We are now tackling deeper, more entrenched issues of sustainability and institutionalizing lasting change throughout UofL and the community we are embedded in. The Council itself has matured into an efficient and effective body for planning, coordination, and education about sustainability initiatives across the university. Though the Council will always provide valuable guidance, recommendations, and support, by its very nature sustainability requires decentralized, diverse solutions that fit the context of particular places and communities.

The Sustainability Council uses university resources sparingly:

Total annual budget = \$183,000 to implement UofL's [Climate Action Plan](#)

+

Dedicated paid staff support:

1. Full-time Assistant to the Provost for Sustainability Initiatives
2. X-Pay for Chair of Sustainability Council

We are, therefore, pleased to report that sustainability initiatives at UofL continue to evolve through a highly collaborative process involving a wide variety of administrators, staff, faculty, students, and members of the broader community. As such, neither the Sustainability Council nor its committees can claim sole credit for the accomplishments summarized below. On the contrary, credit belongs to the many people across our campuses who have been working diligently on these varied initiatives. We extend our sincere thanks to them, and our deep gratitude to the many dedicated individuals volunteering their time and talents to serve on the Council and its committees.

The following list of accomplishments is by no means exhaustive; rather, it is a brief sampling of a few major milestones from FY 2013-2014. With this annual report, we hope to provide a brief overview of sustainability initiatives at UofL and to whet your appetite to learn more and to get more involved. Further details, photos, videos, contextualization, and documentation can be found at the [UofL Sustainability website](#) or by clicking the [links](#) underlined in blue throughout.

Awards & Rankings

- In August 2013, UofL improved its overall score by nearly 11.5% in the [Sierra Club's Cool Schools ranking](#) (from 510.89 in 2012 to 625.74 in 2013, out of a possible 1000). UofL continued to hold the top position in the state, ranking 53rd out of 162 schools nationally.
- UofL achieved [Tree Campus USA](#) designation for 2013 from the Arbor Day Foundation.
- Based on outstanding academic achievement and passion for recycling, UofL Sustainability Council student members, Angie Carlson & Laura Krauser, received the National Recycling Coalition's [Murray J. Fox Scholarship Award](#) (Aug. 2013).
- UofL received the Kentucky Department for Environmental Protection's [Resource Caretaker Award](#) at the Sept. 2013 Governor's Conference on Energy & the Environment in Lexington.
- UofL's Kentucky Pollution Prevention Center (KPPC) won the National Pollution Prevention Roundtable's [2013 Most Valuable Pollution Prevention Award](#) (Sept. 2013) as well as the EPA's [2014 Energy Star Partner of the Year – Sustained Excellence Award](#) (April 2014).
- UofL earned a [Silver-level Bicycle Friendly University \(2013-17\)](#) designation from the League of American Bicyclists, recognizing UofL as the most bike-friendly university in Kentucky (Nov. 2013).
- *Bicycling Magazine* (Dec. 2013) named UofL [one of 9 Great Colleges for Cyclists](#).
- UofL was profiled in the [2014 Edition of The Princeton Review's Guide to 332 Green Colleges](#) (April 2014).
- EcoReps Volunteer Coordinator, Angie Carlson, received an [Outstanding Graduate Student Award](#) (April 2014).

Sierra magazine featured volunteer UofL EcoReps Coordinator, Angie Carlson, in an associated article on how universities are incorporating sustainability into their curricula.



Athletics

- In July 2013, UofL [recycled synthetic turf](#) at the Jim Patterson Baseball Stadium with 65,290 lbs. (96%) of the turf processed for recycling and about 775,000 lbs. (95+%) of rubber and sand infill reclaimed for use on the new field. UofL is a pioneer in synthetic turf recycling – the technology is new to the industry. To date, there have only been a handful of fields in the country that have been recycled and two of them are at UofL.
- Athletics distributed **40,000 reusable water bottles** to fans at an October 2013 home football game.
- In spring 2014, a new [Student Athletes Taking Action](#) (SATA) group formed at UofL and collaborated with Athletics to organize Cards Go Green Weeks (April 4-17, 2014), featuring a shoe donation drive (raising funds for [WaterStep](#)) and sustainability promotions at a series of five free home games. The aim was to raise awareness about sustainability amongst fans, and to encourage people to take action through announcements, demonstrations, and informational booths. SATA also helped improve recycling and brought compost collections to Athletics practice facilities.



Awareness & Behavior Change

- The Council continued publishing weekly [Green Tips](#) (and Monthly Green Scene Columns) in UofL Today along with occasional tips and promotions in the Student News Feed, Campus Health News, Get Health Now Highlights & Happenings, UofL Connection alumni newsletter, and The FRY (Your First Rate

Year). These highlight ways people in the UofL community can get involved in promoting sustainability (especially through choices they make in their daily lives) & stories written by various members of the UofL community about how they're engaging with sustainability.

- In spring 2014, the Office of Study Abroad & International Travel worked with the Council to launch a new voluntary carbon-offsetting program and a **"Going Green While You Study Abroad" contest**.
- UofL hosted the 3rd annual [Conscious College Road Tour](#) March 25-26, 2014. The Tour, organized by Teens Turning Green was intended to inform, inspire, and prompt students and campuses to opt for a more sustainable college lifestyle. Events included a screening of [Bringing it Home](#), a new documentary about industrial hemp, with food samples, and a conversation with filmmaker Linda Booker; a Town Hall Meeting hosted by the Council to discuss key campus sustainability challenges; a Conscious Information Station with free demos, sampling, and sustainability tips; and a dinner with campus sustainability leaders to discuss next steps.
- The Council coordinated UofL's participation in the [Campus Conservation Nationals](#) (Feb. 10 - Mar. 2, 2014), during which UofL residents reduced energy consumption by 2.9% overall. These steps saved 8003 kWh of electricity, cutting carbon emission by 5.5 metric tons, which equates to not driving 13,134 miles or switching 144 incandescent bulbs to CFLs. Prizes were awarded to individual conservation heroes and to Threlkeld Hall which reduced the most (8.7%).
- [Sustainability Events](#) were organized year-round, including: Welcome Week's SOUL sustainability projects, Car-Free Trip to Farmers' Market, and [Pedal with the President](#); [PARK\(ing\) Day](#); Ecologist [Diana Wall](#) lectures; Solar Decathlon Open House; [Dr. Esselstyn: Preventing & Reversing Heart Disease with Plant-based Food](#); [Louisville Solar Tour](#); Let's Talk Lunch: [Sustainability in Prisons Project](#); Fall & Spring Sustainability Weeks; [IdeaFest University: Creating Climate Reality Leadership in Kentucky](#); [Farm-to-Table Dinner](#); Documentary screenings of *Chasing Ice*, *Gasland*, *Wonder: The Lives of Anna & Harlan Hubbard*, and *The Ghosts in Our Machine*; [Public Land for Public Good Workshops](#); [RecycleMania](#); [Campus Conservation Nationals](#); U.S. Rep. John Yarmuth on Climate Politics; [Global Climate Change Panel](#); [Sustainable Business Plan Challenge](#); etc.



Community Engagement & Outreach

- A Campus Sustainability Tour and Conn Center visit was provided for **Indiana University-Bloomington's Office of Sustainability** staff and interns (July 2013).
- UofL's KIESD collaborated with the UK Extension Service to host a day-long **Workshop on Rain Gardens** in Louisville with classroom instruction and hands-on training (July 2013).
- UofL sustainability and energy efficiency initiatives were featured during the **Carbon Disclosure Project webinar** "Achieving Sustainability through High Impact Energy Efficiency" (Sept. 2013).
- Over a dozen UofL students, faculty and staff presented projects, shared posters, and spoke on panels at the [Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education \(AASHE\) 2013 Conference](#) in Nashville. UofL also organized other schools across the state into a [Car-Free Kentucky Caravan](#) to travel to the conference. Eight Kentucky attendees travelled 200 miles from UofL on bicycle, and UofL staff [blogged about the trip](#) on AASHE's website (Oct. 2013).
- UofL staff, Justin Mog & Aaron Boggs, and grad student, Bill Persons, presented on a panel organized by the Arbor Day Foundation "Promoting Sustainable Landscapes: Case Studies from the University of Louisville" at the **Professional Grounds Management Society Conference** (Oct. 2013). Published in *Sustainability: The Journal of Record* [Roundtable: Promoting Sustainable Campus Landscapes](#) (Dec. 2013).
- UofL Sustainability Tour offered to **Centre College Environmental Studies** class (Jan. 2014).
- UofL sent student representatives to the [2nd Annual Spring Summit of the Kentucky Student Environmental Coalition \(KSEC\)](#) in Lexington. They returned to organize UofL student participation in the Jan. 29th state-wide Day of Action to support H.B. 195, The Clean Energy Opportunity Act (Jan. 2014).

- A lecture in sustainability and UofL initiatives was provided to a **Bellarmino University** class on Health Psychology (March 2014).
- UofL was invited to join a pilot group to collaboratively design the new **Kentucky College & University Carbon Consortium**. The consortium will serve as a regularly scheduled gathering of institutional and regional stakeholders to discuss sustainability challenges and opportunities, to share best practices, and to act as a climate clearing house for resource exchanges, campus tours, speakers, and the purchase of local carbon offsets (April 2014).
- UofL students organized a [bus to I Love Mountains Day in Frankfort](#) to rally against mountain-top removal mining (Feb. 2014).
- Campus sustainability tours in Spanish were provided for two classes of **Manual High School** Spanish language students (April 2014).
- On Earth Day 2014, UofL's KIESD, students & faculty dedicated a [solar water treatment facility for Beargrass Creek](#). The project at **Beargrass Falls**, a new environmental park in Butchertown's Karen Lynch Park at Brownsboro Rd & Story Ave, features a waterfall to oxygenate the polluted creek, a rain garden to drain storm water away from sewers, and a pilot water treatment plant that uses no fossil fuels or chemicals. [Video](#). [Photos](#).
- Environmental education was integrated into UofL's [College for a Day program](#) for area youth in May 2014. The day-long event featured UofL faculty and staff leading sessions on topics ranging from dentistry to crime prevention to sustainability (a new Merit Badge for Boy Scouts).
- In June 2014, UofL's Micro/Nano Technology Center hosted a brand new kid's [Summer Camp: Making Solar Cells using Microfabrication](#).
- In June 2014, UofL hosted the [Kentucky Green Building Leadership Summit](#), featuring US Green Building Council President, CEO and Founding Chairman, Rick Fedrizzi, along with a panel of distinguished leaders from Kentucky-based USGBC National Member organizations like UofL that have demonstrated a deep commitment to responsible, innovative, and healthy green building practices at the global, regional and local levels.



Education & Research

- The Council finalized and submitted proposals which were approved to launch two **new interdisciplinary degree programs in Sustainability** beginning fall 2015: a Master's degree housed in the School of Interdisciplinary & Graduate Studies, and a Bachelor's degree housed in Urban & Public Affairs.
- This year the Council launched a new series of [Sustainability Scholars Roundtable Workshops](#) to facilitate cross-disciplinary engagement in sustainability and resilience research. These themed, one-hour workshops featured UofL researchers presenting their research interests, followed by discussion about possible overlapping research interests and the potential for collaboration.
- Sustainability included in *This I Believe* **Book-In-Common** UofL essay project: [You Have The Power To Change Humanity's Course](#).
- In January 2014, UofL's Center for Land Use and Environmental Responsibility was profiled in the **National Council for Science and the Environment's report: [Interdisciplinary Environmental and Sustainability Education and Research: Institutes and Centers at Research Universities](#)** (p. 128-129).

Energy & Buildings

- UofL's Team Kentuckiana competed in the Department of Energy's [Solar Decathlon](#) in Irvine, CA. UofL's student-built modular solar home placed 15th overall (850 out of 1000 points) and tied for 1st in the Affordability & Energy Balance categories. More than 15,000 people toured the team's "Phoenix House" during eight days of public viewing in October 2013.



- UofL opened its new **LEED Gold Student Recreation Center** in October 2013. The facility features geothermal HVAC, solar-heated water, rainwater capture & storage for irrigation, a building dashboard interactive touch-screen in the lobby, ample bike parking, free daily bike check-out, and a new traffic-calming pedestrian crossing on 4th Street.

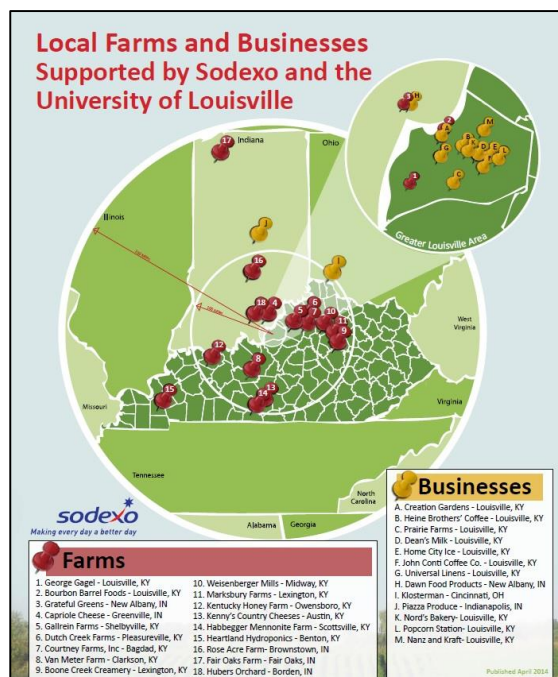


- In Nov. 2013, UofL launched a new [Space Heater Policy](#) that was designed by the Sustainability Council to discourage the use of inefficient personal space heaters in rooms on campus where central heating and air conditioning can be adjusted to fix the problem.
- In Jan. 2014, the Council submitted [UofL's 2006-13 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory](#) to the American College & University Presidents' Climate Commitment, documenting a **27% decrease in emissions**, an amount equal to taking 14,167 cars off the road.
- During the 3-week 2014 [Campus Conservation Nationals](#), UofL residents reduced energy consumption by 2.9% overall, saving 8003 kWh of electricity. Residents in Threlkeld Hall saved the most (8.7%) and earned a **Green Renovation** funded by a \$5000 donation from The Grove. Projects were brainstormed by the residents and upgrades included: replacing lobby carpet with a more durable, easier to clean/replace vinyl tile; replacing common area furniture with products featuring sustainable fabrics and easily-replaced modular parts; replacing leaky showerheads with a more durable, low-flow model; more efficient washing machines; and covered bike parking.
- A **solar pool heating system** was installed at the Natatorium in spring 2014.
- In May 2014, the UofL Foundation's new downtown office building, [Nucleus achieved LEED-certification](#) thanks to features such as a vegetated rooftop terrace, smart HVAC and energy management systems, motion-activated lights and plumbing in all restrooms, bike parking, and a bus shelter.

Food

- **Local food purchases by UofL Dining increased** over the year to 27.5% of dollars spent (up from 24.7% in 2012-13), with more direct-farm impact and most local producers now within 100 miles (in collaboration with Louisville Farm-to-Table).
- In fall 2013, UofL took on the [Real Food Challenge](#), with Sodexo signing onto the Challenge and working closely the students from the class [ANTH 352 Food & Body Politic](#), to audit and reassess the sources and nutrient-density of food served on campus. Students continued the work in spring 2014 through Independent Study.

- The **Cardinal Burger Co.** opened in the SAC Fall 2013 serving local tomatoes and Kentucky-raised beef, free of growth hormones, steroids and antibiotics. Everything CBC serves and everything it is served on is compostable.
- In May 2014, UofL launched a new weekly **Belknap Farmers' Market** (Thursdays 3:30-6pm) to complement the highly-successful **Gray Street Farmers' Market** at HSC (Thursdays 10:30am-2pm) which accepts SNAP benefits and senior vouchers and hosted a series of weekly videotaped **20-minute mini-workshops** throughout 2013 to educate consumers about sustainable food, eating, and farming.
- The Council hosted **Middlebury FoodWorks Interns** during the 2013 and 2014 summers to assist with our Farmers Markets, Dining Services, 2013 CSA Program, and EcoReps Program.
- In Nov. 2013, UofL hosted a presentation by Dr. Sarah Lyon, Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of Kentucky entitled **It's a Movement Not a Market: Creating an Ethical Food System through Fair Trade**.



Grounds

- **Lawn Replacements:** UofL continued to pursue opportunities to replace lawns that require fossil-fueled and chemical maintenance with lower-maintenance, more sustainable landscaping options. UofL's student environmental organization, GRASS₂, organized a fall 2013 wildflower planting at Houchens (as part of the U.S. Green Building Council's national **Green Apple Day of Service**) and a spring 2014 lawn removal at Jouett Hall.
- The new **Urban & Public Affairs Horticulture Zone** was dedicated during a fall 2013 harvest festival. The garden was created by students, staff, and faculty to replace an under-utilized, fossil-fuel maintained lawn with four raised beds for vegetables, 15 fruit trees, herbs, native in-ground plantings, and a no-mow clover zone. It demonstrates permaculture principles and sustainable systems including three rain barrels, two compost bins, organic practices, and wildlife habitat.
- Entire Grounds crew participated in the Oct. 2013 Campus Arbor Day Observance with intensive, hands-on **tree planting workshop** run by certified local arborists.
- UofL's wide array of sustainable grounds management initiatives were **profiled in Turf Magazine** (Dec. 2013): **University of Louisville Commits to Sustainability: Multi-departmental approach greens a vibrant 309-acre urban campus.**
- In Spring 2014, the Grounds Crew began using **local biodiesel** in equipment (B20 made, in part, from UofL waste cooking oil), **biochar** soil amendments in planting beds & lawns, and two **bicycles** to get around (purchased with Climate Action Plan funds).



Orientation & Professional Development

- **Orientations:** The Council has effectively woven sustainability into all UofL Orientation experiences, including the weekly New Employee Orientation, annual New Faculty Orientation, and all ten undergraduate Summer Orientations and Welcome Week activities. New this year: In-person sustainability training was provided during the 2013 CEHD and A&S new faculty orientations, and we initiated preparations for a new presence at the 2014 Graduate Student Orientation.
- **EcoReps (open to all):** The Council's new [Eco-Reps Program](#) for peer-to-peer sustainability education and advocacy expanded its online training resources and service opportunities, established a monthly lunch-and-learn workshop series, and extended its reach, awarding EcoReps certifications to more students and staff.
- **Students:** In Fall 2013, a break-out session on sustainability was added to the mandatory RSO Summit and a one-page RSOs & Sustainability guide was created for distribution by the Student Activities office and added to the RSO Manual and Programming Guide. A Campus Sustainability Tour was given for SGA's Task Force Freshmen mentor program, and student Residential Assistants received training in sustainability and our Housing-based spring sustainability competitions.
- **Staff:** The Council has integrated year-round [Professional Development trainings in sustainability](#) for staff through the HR Training Catalog and provides unit-specific trainings on request. Sustainability training was provided for all 27 Student Orientation Staff (SOSers) and 4 Admissions staff members.
- **Faculty:** On Earth Day 2014, we welcomed our fifth cohort of Faculty into the [Green Threads – Sustainability across the curriculum](#) program, with new participants from Political Science, Health & Sports Sciences, Geography & Geosciences, Fine Arts, and Philosophy. The program was opened up this year to part-time and non-tenure-track faculty. All Green Threads alumni gathered for continued support and networking in fall 2013.

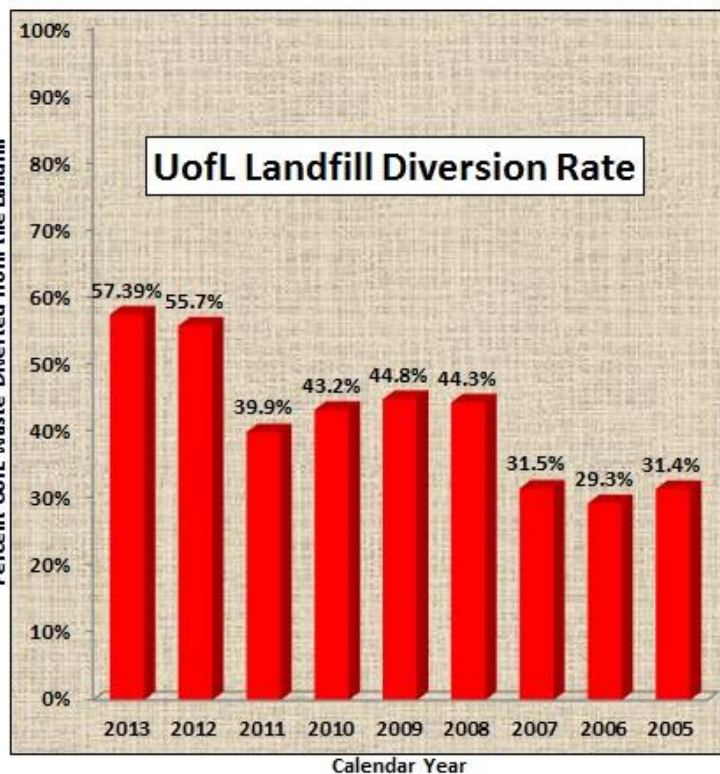
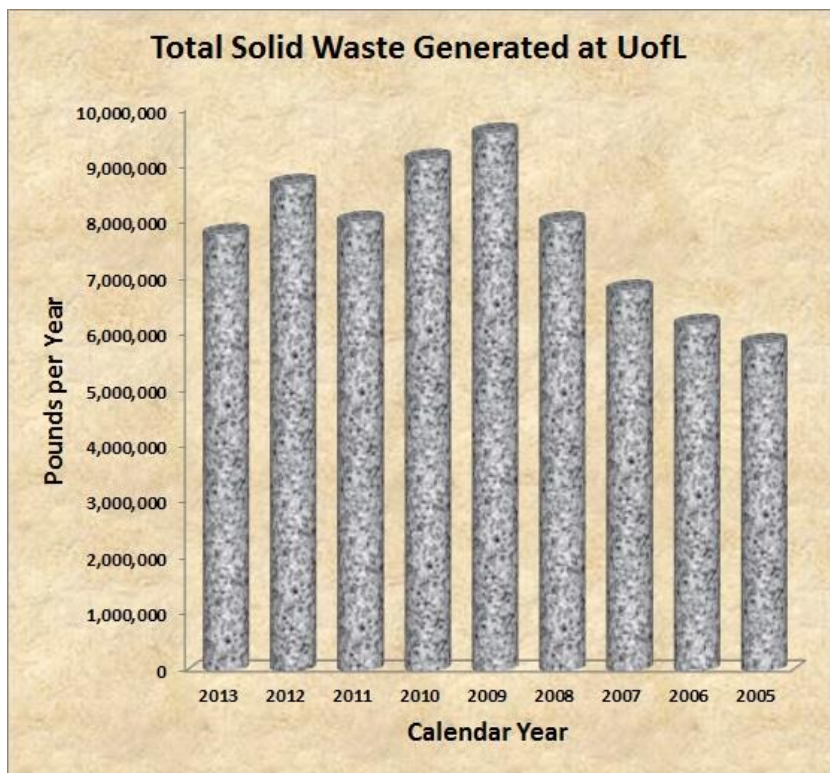
Social Justice

- Following recommendations from the Sustainability Council, UofL becomes the first Kentucky public university to adopt a [Living Wage](#) program, increasing the minimum salary for regular staff employees to \$10 per hour in Nov. 2013. In Feb. 2014, UofL committed to [continue to increase the minimum wage for employees](#) by 25 cents/hour per year for the next four years, bringing the rate to \$11/hour by 2017.
- In spring 2014, students organized an active [Cards United Against Sweatshops](#) group to advocate for sweat-free clothing in the UofL Bookstore.
- In Jan. 2014, the UofL Women's Center and the Women 4 Women Student Board hosted the fourth annual [Human Trafficking Awareness Conference](#), featuring experts from the Ohio Valley speaking about the problem and ongoing efforts to stop the crisis.
- A March 2014 **Justice for Chiapas** event during Spring Sustainability Week on featured a Mexican guest lecturer exploring autonomy and human rights in the indigenous communities of southern Mexico.

Solid Waste

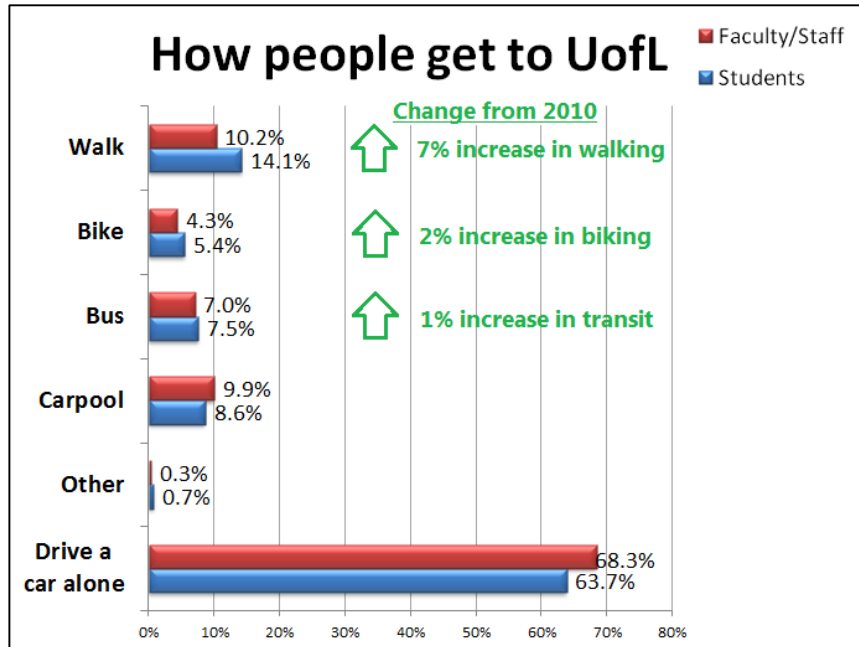
- The Sustainability Council's new Solid Waste Reduction Committee released a Zero Waste Plan and helped UofL **reduce our total 2013 waste generation** by over half-a-million pounds (a 13.6% reduction from 2012), and increase our overall landfill diversion rate to 57.4% (or 46% without coal ash).
- UofL **increased food waste composting by 20%** from 2012 to 2013. We composted over 1.1 million pounds in 2013 and our volunteer-powered community composting program continues to capture more food waste from area sources and provide free organic fertilizer to campus and community projects.

- UofL opened a permanent [Free Store](#) during Welcome Week 2013, for the on-going exchange of clean, durable items like clothing, electronics, school supplies, furniture, and more. The store in the basement of Unitas Hall is run by student volunteers and is open weekly to all UofL students and employees. In spring 2014, the Free Store began hosting UofL's first mini-food bank for those on campus struggling to keep food on the table.
- In spring 2014, **Sodexo hired a Sustainability Intern** to help quantify composting rates, install recycling bins in the SAC food court, and update the local foods map.
- The Council organized UofL's participation in the national [RecycleMania](#) competition (Feb.-Mar. 2014), during which we recycled at total of 101,332 lbs. (taking 1st place in the state for the Gorilla Prize), or 5 lbs. /person. UofL was second in the state in the Grand Champion category, and 116th out of 256 nationally, with an overall recycling rate of 29.7%.
- UofL was profiled in the new Highfields Center for Composting publication [Growing Local Fertility: A Guide to Community Composting](#) (p. 52, April 2014).
- Sodexo organized a special "Bag It" promotion for April 2014 to incentivize the use of **reusable bags** at The Nest convenience store with a 10 percent discount.
- UofL Housing was awarded a [Give and Go! Move-Out Waste Reduction](#) campaign from Keep America Beautiful®, Goodwill Industries, and the College & University Recycling Coalition. Goodwill collection bins and marketing materials were made available in the lobbies of ten residence halls from April 11 - May 13, 2014 and a temporary "Lighten Your Load" free store was set up in Miller Hall.
- At the May 2014 Commencement, SGA and the Sustainability Council launched a new [Gown Recovery Program](#) with the support of Greener Grads. Gowns were saved and stored for future use.



Transportation

- After its 2nd year, the [Earn-A-Bike Program](#) had attracted 1550 UofL students, faculty, and staff willing to give up their right to a parking permit for at least two years. 800 of these received \$400 bike shop vouchers after turning in any current permits and receiving mandatory training in bike safety and transportation cycling, supported by a \$2500 state grant awarded in conjunction with Louisville Metro and Bicycling for Louisville. Applications opened for the third year of the program in April 2014.



The Council documented its positive impact on commuting behaviors through a spring 2013 follow-up transportation survey.

- The Council worked with Enterprise to open up the [UofL Carshare Program](#) to the public, providing Louisville with its first public carshare program and helping sustain our campus fleet through increased usage.
- In spring 2014, the Council hosted UofL's first information sessions with Ticket to Ride in an effort to establish daily [vanpools](#) to campus.
- After two years of advocacy and community meetings organized by the Sustainability Council, Louisville Metro installed **new bike lanes** on Brook and First streets through Old Louisville in August 2013, providing Belknap Campus with its first north-bound bike facility and improved connectivity with HSC.
- UofL worked with Metro Public Works to launch Louisville's first [neighborway](#) in April 2014, providing way finding and safe connectivity for cyclists between Belknap Campus and the Highlands.
- The Council expanded the [UofL Bikeshare Program](#) with free daily bike check-out now available to everyone at UofL from five different campus locations: SRC, Community Park, Kurz Hall, Bettie Johnson Hall, and the GHN Employee Wellness Center. Our interactive [UofL Bike Parking Map](#) has been updated to include the three new bike check-out locations and new bike racks.
- The Council equipped seven more Physical Plant foremen (including the Grounds crew), custodians and the IT Help Desk with [work bikes](#) for getting around campus instead of golf carts or other motorized vehicles.
- Get Healthy Now joined forces with the Sustainability Council to facilitate UofL participation in the May-Sept 2014 [National Bike Challenge](#), including monthly Group Bike Commutes to 11,267.80 points/1000 employees) with 72 registered riders pedaling a total of 38,495 miles (76% of rides were for recreation; 24% for transport). The Council & GHN awarded the top rider with a \$400 shopping spree at a local bike shop.
- The Council installed 23 new signs saying "No Idle Zone – It All Adds Up To Cleaner Air" at prime locations on and around Belknap and HSC to raise the profile of our [No-Idling Policy](#).



Find out more about these and many other UofL sustainability initiatives at our [UofL Sustainability website: louisville.edu/sustainability](http://louisville.edu/sustainability)