

The U.S. Partnership continues to convene national leaders, help catalyze their sustainability initiatives and communicate across societal sectors and to the public about sustainability efforts, trends and successes.

The U.S. Partnership (www.uspartnership.org) is a non-partisan and multi-sector partnership of over 300 organizations in the United States formed to foster education and action for sustainable development throughout the nation. The U.S. Partnership is catalyzing U.S. participation in sustainable development activities nationally and internationally. The U.S. Partnership was originally formed in 2005 in response to the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development declared by the UN General Assembly in 2003.

The vision of sustainable human society resides in the common ground of economic growth and equity, conservation of natural resources and the natural environment, and worldwide social development. Sustainability oriented daily behaviors and policies will create more of the triple bottom line: healthier ecosystems, social systems and economies.

When education for a sustainable future becomes the norm, the public will be “literate” about the sustainability challenges, and have both the skills and the attitudes to participate in solutions.

The U.S. Partnership has Sector Teams for the following areas of society: communities, K-12, higher education, youth, business and faith. Within these sectors we convene mainstream leaders, educate them about national and global sustainability challenges and help them start their national initiatives in education for a sustainable future. We continue to strengthen and expand our alliances with dedicated organizations throughout the nation and internationally.

Updates from several of our sector teams are highlighted below.

Higher Ed Sector

- The U.S. Partnership Higher Education Sector Team helped engage over 17 national higher education associations in formal partnerships, programming, project collaborations and national initiatives about education for sustainable development. Many of these associations have already developed special programming, professional development, web resources, policies and publications for their members in ESD. Thirteen of these associations created the Higher Education Associations for Sustainability Consortium (www.heasc.net) which works by supporting each others' sustainability programming, meeting monthly to share information and exchange ideas, and engaging in joint projects that will help move the higher education system toward education for a sustainable future as appropriate to each organization's mission. The President of the U.S. Partnership is co-coordinator of HEASC. The other coordinator, Anthony Cortese, is also the founder of Second Nature, which is one of the sponsoring organizations of the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment (www.presidentsclimatecommitment.org). The commitment has been signed by over 550 college and university presidents from higher education institutions in all 50 states that represent 25% of the higher education student population. Presidents pledge by signing this commitment to eliminate polluting greenhouse gas emissions as quickly as possible and produce graduates that can contribute to the solutions for our sustainability challenges. HEASC and the U.S. Partnership are supporting the work of these presidents and their institutions. The U.S. Partnership also catalyzed twenty national academic disciplinary associations (including the associations for psychologists, engineers, political scientists, the natural sciences and many more disciplines) to form the Disciplinary Associations Network for Sustainability (www.aashe.org/dans). This network is working on the inclusion of education for a sustainable future in all disciplines in higher education and on initiatives for educating the public as well. Resources have been developed regarding job descriptions, curricula, professional and promoted standards, and interdisciplinary models.
- A coalition of thirty student organizations continues their work on the Campus Climate Challenge (www.energyaction.net), a program utilizing students and a multi-stakeholder process to help campuses measure and reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. Over 400 campuses have signed onto this challenge. The U.S. Partnership helped form a coalition of national higher education associations to support the student efforts on campuses to measure and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The U.S. Partnership has also collaborated with Focus the Nation to bring climate change education from our campuses to help inform legislation.

Youth Action Team

- The Youth Action Team is responsible for the development of “Sustaining Leaders”, an intergenerational mentoring project. This program aims to increase intergenerational learning between young leaders in the climate change movement and experienced professionals.
- A delegate from the Youth Action Team attended the UN Commission on Sustainable Development in May.
- January 16-18, 2008, delegates of the Youth Action Team spoke at Climate Change: Science & Solutions, the 8th National Conference on Science, Policy and the Environment presented by the National Council for Science and the Environment (NCSE). For more information and to view a video of the conference, visit <http://ncseonline.org/2008conference/>.

EVERYONE'S CLICKING:

www.uspartnership.org

www.heasc.net

www.presidentsclimatecommitment.org

www.aashe.org/dans

www.energyaction.net

USP Website

- The new and improved U.S. Partnership website was launched in May. The new site allows for easy editing and accessibility in addition to creating new ways for partners to interact with each other. The new editing capabilities of the website will help ensure that the site will stay more current with the most up-to-date information.
- Thank you Jaime Chao! Jamie, a grad student in the University of Michigan Flint's Technology in Education Global Program, designed and built the new site.
- Our greatest thanks go to Professor Jeff Kupperman, the Director of U of M Flint's Technology in Education Global Program, for his amazing support and patience.

K-12 Sector

Upcoming Events:

- **K-12 Summit**
The Education for Sustainability National Professional Organizations Summit is scheduled for October 6th, in Washington, D.C. This one day summit will bring together executive staff from a select group of key professional organizations whose members are directly involved with K-12 education and/or the professional preparation of K-12 teachers and administrators. The purpose of the summit is to support the development of a sector-wide strategy for integrating education for sustainability into the teaching and operations of U.S. K-12 schools.

Updates:

- National Sustainability Standards
To incorporate sustainability into the core content areas of education, the K-12 sector has created sustainability standards as a model for educators. To view the first draft of standards please visit the U.S. Partnership website (http://www.uspartnership.org/main/show_passage/48). Ongoing revisions are being made to these standards as more precedents are set around the country regarding sustainability education and K-12. If you are interested in reviewing the standards and offering feedback for our continuous process, please visit the K-12 Sector Team webpage for contact information.
- Currently, the K-12 sector is planning to set up a social networking site to catalyze connections, communications and collaborations between K-12 professional associations and their members regarding sustainability in education.

Community Sector

- June 11th-14th, several members presented on community sustainability partnerships at the ACPA Sustainability Institute at Harvard.
- June 5th-7th, BALLE held a conference titled, "Grow Deep-Business Leaders Growing Strong Communities" in Boston. For more information, visit www.livingeconomies.org.
- May 19th- May 22nd, the EPA held a National Environmental Partnership Summit in Baltimore which focused on community sustainability partnership programs and activities. Norman Christopher, Director of Sustainability and Co-Chair of the Communities Sector Team of the U.S. Partnership, was involved in a panel discussion on college and community sustainability programs.
- Local First networks are continuing to grow in the Midwest. These organizations help to build local, strong economies. Visit Capital First Network at www.localfirst.info/ and Local First Wheaton at www.localfirstwheaton.org for more information.
- Most states now have climate action councils with community team members usually being appointed by the respective governors. Michigan has a Climate Action Council for 2008 with key representation from the MDEQ, cities, colleges and other community stakeholders. Benchmarking of EPA region 5 efforts are also taking place.
- Regional sustainability efforts in West Michigan continue to grow, including the following:
 - Muskegon Sustainability Coalition
 - Holland/Zeeland 3 E's initiatives
 - Lakeshore/Grand Haven, Ottawa
 - Kalamazoo

Other examples of community sustainability efforts.

- The city of Grand Rapids has received inquiries from other communities including Green Bay, Richmond and Vancouver regarding sustainable community development activities.
- Doug Farr, a leading architect and building designer, has written a book on "Sustainable Urbanism".
- Kent Portney, author of Taking Sustainable Cities Seriously, has an updated ranking and list of the top cities in the U.S. with sustainability.

Our alliances continue to inspire us in our work. We are excited to continue our mission to help catalyze sustainability education with colleges, universities, K-12 educators, urban planners, faith leaders and many more. We will continue in our efforts to convene and educate students and mainstream leaders about our sustainability challenges, catalyze discussion and action for Education for Sustainable Development at regional, national and international levels, and disseminate the success stories to help shift U.S. practices and policies towards a sustainable future.

Updates from the faith and business sectors will be provided in the next newsletter! If you have updates to provide for our next newsletter, please contact Alessandra Cairo at allessandra_cairo@antiochne.edu.