Mint, asparagus, jade, lime, moss, forest and jungle … the many shades of green come in a plethora of offerings. There are hundreds of variations of the color green, and not surprisingly, most carry the name of organic treasures that bring beauty and essential elements to our life.

Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College is striving to reduce its carbon footprint and make salient and efficient changes to the way it approaches the day-to-day tasks that affect our environment. As you will see, the college-wide efforts are as diverse and wide-ranging as the myriad of hues devoted to the color green.

Online and Off Paper

WITC recently created a new student orientation available completely online. The purpose was not to replace location-based orientations, but to provide equal access to online students and students who were unable to attend in person. This new online orientation venue has helped in WITC’s green efforts as well. Debra R. King, dean of students was part of the team who helped design the online orientation option.

“Because of the availability of the online new student orientation, we are able to eliminate the folder and handouts that previously were distributed in person and now direct students to view these materials online,” King says. “This reduction of paper is a complement to the electronic storage of records Student Services converted to in 2008. WITC continues to strive to provide excellent services to students, while creating as small a carbon footprint as possible.”

Software Makes Strong Statement

Shane Evenson, WITC registrar, has been leading the charge in moving WITC in a “paperless” direction. The acquisition of the ImageNow software is helping turn a mountain of paper records into a safe and user-friendly digital format.

“Our goal is to make WITC as paperless as possible; eliminating the need of manual filing and improving document access,” Shane Evenson, WITC registrar

“ImageNow is the college’s imaging and document management software that allows users to scan or capture documents in their native format and link them automatically at scan time or manually in a single-click process,” Evenson explains. “Based upon the needs and business processes established by each department, documents can be routed (college-wide) automatically or manually through a process called workflow. To date, ImageNow has been implemented in Human Resources, Financial Aid, student records and credit for prior learning.”

Additional benefits of ImageNow include instant and secure document access, improved customer service and increased physical storage space. This software has proven to be so effective, that additional departments that collect large amounts of data on hard copy will soon have the software implemented into their storage and retrieval process.

“Our goal is to make WITC as paperless as possible; eliminating the need of manual filing and improving document access,” Evenson says.

 medals for more green on next page
In July 2008, WITC established a district-wide Renewable Energy and Sustainability (RE&S) Committee. From that committee, Green Teams on all four campuses and the Shell Lake administrative offices were created. Members from the district RE&S Committee successfully worked to establish these Green Teams with a broad range of support at each campus. In 2009-10, the district provided further support to the Green Teams by making available up to $10,000 in “Green Mini-Grant” funds to be awarded to campus Green Teams to enable these teams to carry out campus Green Team initiatives. The first proposal for these funds has recently been received.

May sees the Green Team as an opportunity to empower staff to champion a green movement.

“The main role of the Green Teams is to develop and implement campus initiatives that advance sustainability in campus operations,” says May. “These projects tackle ideas like working with the building and grounds department to support measures to reduce energy consumption at the campus, encourage practices that result in less office waste and recycling, increase healthy foods and reduce waste in the food service area, support carpooling, bicycling and other means of transportation that reduce fossil fuel consumption and much more.”

John Will, vice president of administrative services and co-chair of the RE&S, sees internal and college-wide teamwork as the key to success in these efforts.

“The Green Team concept allows each campus to develop a plan based on its needs and opportunities,” Will says. “Each Green Team has representation on the college-wide RE&S Committee, which will allow us to share best practices and use the best ideas at all of our campuses.”

Cleaning with ionized water is one way the Superior campus has reduced their carbon footprint. Ionized water is created by utilizing water that is first infused with oxygen. The oxygenated water then flows through a cell where an electric current is applied.

“By using ionized water to scrub and clean floors we eliminate the need for chemicals,” explains Pete Gamache, WITC-Superior facility maintenance supervisor. “It’s just water in and water out, with no chemicals going down the drains. I’m very impressed with the results.”

Just like ripples in a pond, embracing the green life as a way of life and doing so within the confines of a college campus can have a significant impact. WITC is striving to integrate sustainability into our every day operations, and we are just getting started. Our campus Green Team is leading the way toward these goals.”

WITC is a district with a true sense of community, and embracing the green life as a way of life is no different. If you want to learn more about WITC’s green initiatives, please visit our website at witc.edu.

Programs and Certificates

WITC has added seven new green programs and certificates to its long list of offerings. From programs like Energy Efficiency Technician to a Biofuels Process Technician certificate, WITC continues to provide cutting-edge training. Below you’ll find brief descriptions of our new programs and certificates.

For more information visit witc.edu/programs or witc.edu/certificate.

Energy Efficiency Technician

Offered at WITC-Supior

Associate degree program prepares specialists to evaluate the energy demands of residential or commercial facilities and make recommendations to minimize energy losses, while maximizing financial benefits from these investments. This will prepare graduates to evaluate building energy systems, monitor energy consumption, identify energy loss problems, evaluate indoor air quality impacts and complete energy efficiency plans.

Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning/Refrigeration (HVAC/R) is one of the fastest-growing trades in the country and WITC offers a program like none other in Wisconsin. Learn how to design, install, service, maintain and operate systems and equipment in a variety of settings. This technical diploma program introduces students to basic concepts of geothermal heating and cooling; including using geothermal pumps, ground source heat exchangers, indoor heat exchangers, connecting devices and circulating fluid configurations and fusions.

Also New

Human Services

Offered at WITC-Superior

Associate trains individuals to provide information, support, care and advocacy in a human services agency. Students in this program will acquire the knowledge and skills to assist professionals in areas such as psychology, rehabilitation or social work to provide client services, as well as support for families. They may assist social workers with developing, organizing, and conducting programs to prevent and resolve problems relevant to substance abuse, human relationships, rehabilitation or adult daycare.

Biofuels Process Technician

Offered at WITC-New Richmond

A certificate designed to offer students with process industry or an industrial controls background an opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to plan, install and maintain wind and solar (photovoltaic) renewable electrical energy systems. Both Renewable Electricity-Photovoltaic and Renewable Electricity-Wind (planned for 2011) are ideal for individuals who have experience working as an electrical contractor/electrician and desire training with renewable energy systems; have a background in environmental issues and desire to supplement or update their renewable energy skills; or would like to begin work installing or maintaining in the growing fields of wind or solar photovoltaic energy systems.

Sustainable Design

Offered Online

A certificate designed to offer students with a wealth of education in sustainable building design. Whether the student is interested in building design, building construction, or just wanting to gain a working knowledge about the topic, this course provides the first step. Students will learn about sustainable structures, renewable energy sources, types of energy systems, methods of construction and alternative energy uses for both residential and commercial buildings. They’ll also discover how to reduce personal carbon footprint, conserve natural resources, calculate energy loads for buildings and design smart, high-performance buildings from an ecological standpoint.