Postsecondary Sustainability Award Nominee Presentation Form

ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATIONS

College or University Certifications

The signature of college or university President (or equivalent) on the next page certifies that each of the statements below concerning the institution's eligibility and compliance with the following requirements is true and correct to the best of their knowledge.

1. The college or university has been evaluated and selected from among institutions within the Nominating Authority's jurisdiction, based on high achievement in the three ED-GRS Pillars: 1) reduced environmental impact and costs; 2) improved health and wellness; and 3) effective environmental and sustainability education.
2. The college or university is providing the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a compliance review.
3. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the college or university concluding that the nominated college or university has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan to remedy the violation.
4. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the college or university has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
5. There are no findings by Federal Student Aid of violations in respect to the administration of Title IV student aid funds.
6. The college or university is in good standing with its regional or national accreditor.
7. The college or university meets all applicable federal, state, local and tribal health, environmental and safety requirements in law, regulations and policy and is willing to undergo EPA on-site verification.
8. The college or university has in place is willing to provide a link to or copy of a non-discrimination policy. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a nomination and/or rescind an award if unlawful discrimination is later discovered.

U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools Postsecondary Sustainability Award

Name of President/Chancellor: Dr. David P. Nelson
(Specify: Ms., Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official College or University Name: Catawba College
(As it should appear on an award)

I have reviewed the information in this application and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

Dr. David P. Nelson Date: 1/29/2024
(President's/Chancellor's Signature)

Nominating Authority's Certifications

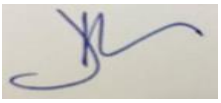
The signature by the Nominating Authority on this page certifies that each of the statements below concerning the college or university's eligibility and compliance with the following requirements is true and correct to the best of the Authority's knowledge.

1. The college or university has been evaluated and selected from among institutions within the Nominating Authority's jurisdiction, based on high achievement in the three ED-GRS Pillars: 1) reduced environmental impact and costs; 2) improved health and wellness; and 3) effective environmental and sustainability education.
2. The college or university meets all applicable federal, state, local and tribal health, environmental and safety requirements in law, regulations and policy and is willing to undergo EPA on-site verification.

Name of Nominating Agency: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

Name of Nominating Authority: Mr. Jon Long
(Specify: Ms., Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application and certify to the best of my knowledge that the school meets the provisions above.



Mr. Jon Long Date: 2/9/2024
(Nominating Authority's Signature)

SUBMISSION

The nomination package, including the signed certifications, narrative summary, documentation of evaluation in the three Pillars, and photos should be submitted online according to the instructions in the Nominee Submission Procedure.

OMB Control Number: 1860-0509
Expiration Date: October 31, 2026

Public Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1860-0509. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 37 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit P.L. 107-110, Sec. 501, Innovative Programs and Parental Choice Provisions. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20202-4536 or email ICDocketMgr@ed.gov and reference the OMB Control Number 1860-0509. Note: Please do not return the completed ED-Green Ribbon Schools application to this address.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
GreenRibbonSchools

2024 Green Ribbon Postsecondary Sustainability Application

Nominee Information:

Institution Name: Catawba College

Category of Nomination: Green Ribbon Postsecondary Sustainability Application

Address: 2300 West Innes Street

City: Salisbury

State: North Carolina

Zip: 28144

School Website: https://www.catawba.edu/

Facebook:

Top official: Dr. David Nelson, President of Catawba College

Office: (704) 637-4414

Email: president@catawba.edu

Lead Applicant: Dr. Lee Ball

Email: lball@catawba.edu

Office: (704) 637-4791

School Information:

School Type: Four-Year College

Current Enrollment AY 23-24: 1,241

Pell-Eligible: 37%

Minority (all ethnicities except White and unknown): 46%

6-Year Graduation Rate: 53%

Campuses: 1

Number of Schools: 8

Number of Buildings: 30 Buildings on 276 Acres

Highlights Report

Located in historic Salisbury, North Carolina, Catawba College (est. 1851) has been ranked among the Top 10 Best Colleges in the South by U.S. News & World Report for 7 straight years and has established a strong reputation for environmentalism and sustainability. The 189-acre Fred Stanback Jr. Ecological Preserve, Catawba College Center for the Environment, and solar and geothermal energy projects are powerful physical symbols of environmental commitment. The Catawba College Sustainability Strategic Plan is the roadmap to the future for the college. Catawba College's Strategic Goal for Sustainability is to be the leading environmental small college in the southeast, as a model, and national center of distinction for sustainability.

In 2023, Catawba College joined a list of elite environmental colleges as the 13th nationwide and *first certified institution in the Southeast* to achieve full carbon neutrality seven years ahead of its 2030 climate commitment. Catawba College's success in meeting and surpassing the timeline reflects the longstanding commitment to sustainability and the environment in the classroom and in operations.

Catawba College has advanced the cause of planetary stewardship and action from the initial design of the Catawba College Center for the Environment, twenty-eight years ago, and has continued to incorporate advanced materials and technologies on campus. In 2022-2023, the Center for the Environment was renovated with installations of NASA-developed aerogel insulation, bird-strike film, and sustainable furnishings that are good for the planet and improve productivity, and well-being in students, faculty and staff. Study pods and solar shelters support student learning, collaboration and wellness. Catawba College serves as a model for living, and learning sustainably.

Catawba College not only advocates for lessening our impact on the earth; it adheres to that commitment in everything it does as an innovative living-learning laboratory where sustainability and environmental stewardship are infused throughout operations, culture, in curriculum across campus, and outreach. Catawba College students are an integral part of sustainability in action, working together as environmental stewards in collaborative projects that are immersive and regenerative. Catawba students are using applied approaches to sustainability, including projects focused on waste reduction (especially on game days), improved energy efficiency in dormitories, increased biodiversity on campus, management of invasive species in the preserve and across the region, sustainable forestry through a tree improvement project, bee keeping, pollinator gardens, and other initiatives linked to important professional skills and careers in environment and sustainability.

Catawba College is responding innovatively in developing effective, impactful ways to strengthen student health and well-being, and to teach skills that will help students remain resilient in their future careers. A wide range of programs aim to promote physical, mental, emotional and intellectual health and engagement, and to strengthen relationships with the natural environment. Programs engage students in experiential learning and reflection that helps them discover their hidden potential and through active involvement, achieve more than they thought possible. Programs provided by WEB (Wellness, Equity & Belonging), Environmental Stewards Program, Lilly Center for Vocation and Values Programs, Wellness Center, Center for the Environment Game Night Out, Environmental Leadership and Networking opportunities, contribute to this important effort.

Catawba College Sustainability Specialists work with each department on campus, including maintenance, purchasing, housekeeping, cafeteria, campus grounds, etc. to ensure safety, sustainability, and preservation across the campus landscape, to maintain air and water quality, as our campus continues to be valued and used as a living-learning laboratory.

Catawba College's focus on education, innovation and research is nurturing the next generation of environmental advocates and change leaders now. For example, a recent trip to Rwanda provided Catawba students with an opportunity to put their research into action and learn life-changing skills. The students' research evaluated the effectiveness of adding flashing LED lights, a.k.a. 'Lion Lights,' to livestock corrals to deter carnivores from attacking livestock in a small community in southwestern Kenya. Catawba is connected with partners, both local to global, to foster communication and collective action for positive environmental change.

Catawba College has been recognized for its wide range of sustainability efforts in the 2023 Sustainable Campus Index. A publication from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE), the Sustainable Campus Index recognizes top performing sustainable colleges and universities overall and in 17 impact areas, evaluated through the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS). Catawba earned a STARS Silver rating in recognition of its sustainability work and is committed to building to LEED Gold or Platinum certifications and net-zero standards in the next five years.

PILLAR 1: Reduce Environmental Impact and Costs.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions & Energy Efficiency

Since the 1990s, Catawba College has implemented significant upgrades to reduce environmental impact and costs. In 2015, Catawba College began a landmark solar project with photovoltaic panels totaling 836 kilowatts (kW), of which 170 kW supply power to the campus microgrid. These panels produce 137,111 kWh subject to a net-metering arrangement with Duke Energy that transfers the associated renewable energy credits to Duke Energy. The remaining 666 kW are subject to a sell-all power purchase agreement and currently do not supply power or renewable energy credits to the College. Campus buildings included in the project were the Abernethy Physical Education Center, Barger-Zartman Residence Hall, the Corriher-Linn-Black Library, Hayes Field House, the Robertson College-Community Center, Shuford Science Building, Woodson Residence Hall and the parking lot between Newman (baseball) Park and Shuford Stadium. This was just the beginning of a public commitment by Catawba College to reach its published 2030 goal of carbon neutrality.

By April 27, 2023, Catawba College announced that the school had successfully achieved full carbon neutrality *seven years ahead* of its 2030 carbon commitment. Second Nature, a non-profit organization working to accelerate climate action in and through higher education, confirmed Catawba College became the 13th college nationwide and first institute of higher learning in the Southeast to meet the group's high standards for determining carbon neutrality.

Catawba College continues to lead its higher education peers on embracing clean energy innovations and environmental stewardship. A Sustainability Advisory Committee consisting of students, faculty,

staff and trustees provide guidance, generate ideas, network with partners outside the academic community, and improve buy-in from all groups. In April, 2023 Catawba became the first campus in the United States to add Haven Solar Shelters from Research Triangle Park, NC based Spotlight Solar. The five shelters, which incorporate U.S. based components and materials, use bifacial solar panels that allow for power generation on both sides to create clean energy that is stored in batteries under the tabletop – with built-in charging ports for students and faculty. Each one has sixteen different power options providing up to 605 watts of electricity, including four wireless charging pads, four 120V outlets, four USB A outlets, and four USB C outlets. In addition, the campus is also home to a solar-powered trash compactor bin from CleanCUBE, which holds up to five times more waste compared to traditional bins and reduce collection frequency by up to 80%. By installing these and additional sustainable innovations on campus, Catawba College is continuing to demonstrate its bold commitment to enabling a thriving, sustainable future.

Solar water heating systems have been installed in numerous buildings, including Abernathy Gymnasium, the Hayes Field House, the Center for the Environment, and Woodson, Stanback, and Barger-Zartman residence halls. These solar water heating systems reduce on-site natural gas usage. The College also benefits from 16 geothermal wells that assist in heating and cooling many campus buildings. The College is currently installing an additional closed-loop ground-source geothermal system for heating and cooling the campus library and other high-volume buildings. Geothermal wells eliminate the need for natural-gas-fired water heaters and HVAC units powered by electricity generated off campus. Catawba College received the Sustainable Salisbury Award for the LEED Certification of five residence halls, projected to save the campus nearly $5 million over 20 years.

The Catawba College Center for the Environment is a 20,500-square foot passive solar facility. It is a three-dimensional model of the Center's sustainable curriculum- and an exciting teaching tool of innovation for sustainability. In the heart of Catawba's central campus, this facility sits adjacent to the campus' 189-acre nature preserve. In a recent renovation (2021-2023) of the Catawba College Center for the Environment, the scope included fixing the existing stormwater system and renewing building systems with a geothermal HVAC system and new lighting. The building was upfitted with a new building envelope and insulation, weather barrier, and roof while reusing the existing cedar siding. Soraya Saffouri, Project Manager, emphasized that the renovation of the Center for the Environment at Catawba College mirrors the shared dedication of both the college and DLR Group to environmental stewardship. "This endeavor goes beyond mere renovation," Saffouri said, "it stands as a pledge to nurture, protect, and learn from our natural surroundings."

Innovative, sustainable materials were used throughout the building. For example, Aerogel, a NASA-developed product was used as a super-insulator in walls and ceilings. Aerogel is light, durable and extremely effective product at insulating and preventing heat transfer, and is among the lightest solid materials known to man. These high-performance materials extend the life of the building, reduce carbon emissions and costs to the college.

The building interior is a dramatic landscape of steel beams composed of recycled car parts and massive engineered wooden trusses made from laminated wood waste. The Center uses daylighting, outdoor learning and collaborative spaces, LED lighting with dimmers and motion sensors to reduce

energy use. Sound absorbing LED light fixtures utilize lichens to filter the air. Outdoor porches and work spaces overlook the 189-acre ecological preserve.

The sustainable and healthy design principles implemented at the Catawba College Center for the Environment led to the establishment of Catawba College's Interior Standards, created to include red list free, sustainable, responsibly sourced, and durable materials and furniture to be implemented across campus in upcoming renovations.

Catawba College has undergone several lighting conversion projects to change most lighting to LEDs. These projects have occurred over a number of years and affect nearly all buildings on campus. The College will be undergoing an assessment of remaining non-LED fixtures with the goal of converting all remaining incandescent and fluorescent fixtures to LEDs.

The college's dining hall has upgraded its facilities to reduce energy use. This includes "trayless" dining, a hydroponic farm shelf, and energy efficient walk-in freezers with LED lighting and multiple layers of sealing on door panel seams, resulting in key energy efficiency.

To further reduce its environmental impact, the College has purchased renewable energy credits (RECs) from North Carolina solar farms to match its electricity demand. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has recognized Catawba College as a Green Power Partner. By using green power, Catawba is reducing its carbon footprint and supporting the transition to a clean energy future.

Water Conservation and Pollution Mitigation

Catawba College has installed a 20,000-gallon geothermal runoff recovery tank, which helps to irrigate nearly 30 acres of campus' athletic fields. The College also has a 5,000-gallon rainwater recovery and storage system at the Center for the Environment building. Water collected from the geothermal heating system is used to refill the 210,000-gallon swimming pool in the Abernethy Physical Education Center.

Rain barrels are used as a water source for pollinator gardens recently installed near the student center by the Environmental Stewards student group. Environmental stewards focus on the design and implementation of campus-wide sustainability projects. Low-flush toilets are installed in all residence halls and many campus bathrooms have low-flow and automatic faucets. The College also has worked to detect and repair leaks, which were a major source of potable water loss.

The College has green infrastructure projects located across campus. In Abernathy Village and beside the Cannon Student Center, the College has stone sluices that reduce the speed of rainwater flows while directing it to catchment areas. The Center for the Environment Building has a rainwater recapture system and river-rock bed design that filters water into a 5,000-gallon cistern. The cistern collects water from the front and back of the building. This recaptured water is used to irrigate the plants in the Elizabeth Stanback Wildlife Garden and to fill ponds that provide additional habitat in the riparian buffer between the Center for the Environment and the Ecological Preserve. These habitats are used as additional teaching tools just outside classroom spaces, creating an environment of connection with the outdoors.

The College is committed to the responsible management of rainwater on campus and beyond. Although there is no formal written policy for rainwater management, Catawba College has taken a number of important steps to restore the hydrology of the 189-acre Fred Stanback Jr. Ecological Preserve so that it benefits the campus as well as the surrounding residential areas and schools. The Ecological Preserve is a bottomland hardwood wetland. It serves a critical role in the watershed by reducing the risk and severity of flooding to downstream communities by providing areas to store floodwater and recharge ground water. In addition, these wetlands improve water quality by filtering and flushing nutrients, processing organic wastes, and reducing sediment before it reaches the nearby creeks that lead to the Yadkin-Pee Dee River Basin that is a primary source of drinking water for this region. More than 1.7 million people use the waters of the Yadkin-Pee Dee River Basin every day, for drinking water, industry, growing crops, generating power, and for recreation. Twenty-five public utilities draw water from the river. Catawba College manages, monitors and protects this magnificent bottomland forest, one of the most productive and unique ecosystems worldwide. Students benefit from the preserve in significant ways; through applied coursework, research, field experience, and a learning laboratory for environmental protection and biodiversity.

Behavior-change campaigns have been implemented this year to encourage shorter showers in the dormitories. Student-designed video shorts utilize research-based behavior-change strategies to endorse sustainable behaviors through the Green Guide network and social media.

Waste Reduction and Diversion

Catawba College Dining Services employs Filta Environmental Kitchen Solutions for filtering and converting used cooking oil into biodiesel. Filta technicians come to Catawba's campus to micro-filter used oil, which increases its lifespan. This process reduces the original oil disposal rate by approximately 50%. Once micro-filtered oil has been used to its fullest extent, Filta technicians return to campus and take the remaining oil for conversion into biodiesel at Filta's facilities.

Catawba College recycles, composts, donates, and/or re-sells materials including: Paper, plastics, glass, metals, and other recyclable containers, food, cooking oil, plant materials, white goods (i.e. appliances), electronics, laboratory equipment, furniture, residence hall move-in/move-out waste, scrap metal, pallets, tires, clothing/shoes, batteries, lightbulbs, and paint.

Between 2017 and 2022, the College diverted 211.655 tons of food waste through industrial composting. The campus has seen a stark decline in food waste, reducing overall waste from 65.43 tons in 2019 to 19.355 tons in 2022. Catawba College has recently re-added exterior recycling receptacles since their removal during the Covid-19 pandemic and upgraded signage to adopt Recycle Across America Labels, which is part of a nationwide standardization campaign for better labeling regarding waste management.

In the last two years, faculty and staff have been given Yeti mugs and reusable water bottles to help reduce drink cup and plastic water bottle use on campus. All student-athletes receive reusable water bottles. As of Fall 2023, the College has started a program to provide reusable water bottles to all students. The College has replaced most campus water fountains with combination water bottle filling

stations and fountains as part of a larger project to eliminate the use of plastic bottled water and its associated waste. As of September 2023, water bottle refill stations across campus have prevented the need for over 440,000 single-use plastic water bottles.

Catawba College purchases cleaning supplies in bulk to reduce the amount of associated packaging and number of deliveries. Plant-based plates and cutlery are used in catering services. Reusable containers for to-go meals are available in the dining hall to help with the goal of minimizing the waste coming out of dining and their operations.

The College also uses biodegradable caps and gowns for graduation ceremonies.

Catawba College has an informal program for exchanging office supplies and furniture. If faculty or staff have unneeded office furniture or supplies, they send an email notifying all employees. Unneeded items typically are claimed quickly, which helps reduce waste with opportunities to lower expenditures.

Almost all student forms are available online and printed copies are only provided upon request. Student schedules, faculty/staff directories, course catalogs, campus maps, campus updates, and newsletters are available in a digital format. The Student and Employee Handbooks are also digitally available. IT Help Tickets and Facilities Service Requests are submitted online rather than on paper.

During the move-out process, Catawba College's Office of Student Affairs partner with Goodwill Industries to provide donation bins for any unwanted clothing items, shoes, small appliances, etc. that students may want to donate before leaving campus for the summer. Not only does this help to prevent more unnecessary items from entering the landfill, but it also helps to give back to the community. Recycling containers are available near residence halls for cardboard and other recyclables generated during move-in or move-out as well as normal recycling needs during the year.

Non-recyclable drink cups are being replaced with aluminum cups at the campus restaurant as well as at informal catering events on campus. Students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to either keep and reuse their cups for personal use, return them to a bin where they can be washed and reused for upcoming events, or recycle them when they reach the end of life.

Students in the College's Environmental Stewards program, as well as other campus and community volunteers, participate in Zero-Waste Gameday efforts for each home football game. Before, during, and after each game, Environmental Stewards work with volunteers to sort through all waste produced in and around the football stadium. After sorting waste as either landfill waste or recycling, bags are weighed and brought to the appropriate disposal site. The percentage of waste diverted from the landfill is calculated in weight.

Throughout each Zero-Waste Gameday, Environmental Stewards and volunteers also educate the College community about recycling, consumption, waste diversion efforts, and other sustainability-related topics.

Alternative Transportation

The College's Student Affairs Office maintains an active bicycle share program through the Campus' Wellness Center. The bike share program was created through assistance from the Green Revolving Fund resulting from financial savings from a water reduction campaign on campus. Students check out bikes through the Wellness Center and can use the bikes for transportation around campus and the local area. Bicycles can be used by students, faculty and staff for free. Parking lots and roads have been developed around the perimeter of campus with bike racks at key locations near academic buildings. Cemented sidewalks and paths make walking or biking easier and faster than driving around campus.

The College has also installed a level 2 electric vehicle charger with easy access from West Innes Street, a primary artery into the City of Salisbury. The charger will be accessible to staff, students, campus visitors, and the public.

Catawba College recently hosted the 12th Annual BikeWalk North Carolina Transportation Summit. This Summit is a multi-day conference that focuses on transportation and planning, and specifically examines how those topics relate to safety, health, community design, and equity dimensions of active mobility. Featuring several presenters, activities, and tools, the Summit provides the opportunity for a valuable educational and networking experience. The focus of the 12th Annual Transportation Summit was "Sustainable Transportation."

In October 2023, Catawba College Center for the Environment hosted an Eco-Lunch and evening speaker event for the region. Dennis Markatos-Soriano, Executive Director of The East Coast Greenway provided workshops and presentations for campus and community. The East Coast Greenway is a collaborative effort that has attracted more than $2 billion in public investment since 1991. The Salisbury Greenway circumvents the Catawba Campus, connecting students to larger trail systems, such as the Carolina Thread Trail and East Coast Greenway. Catawba College faculty have been active members of the Greenway Task Force and Salisbury Greenway Committee since its inception in 1996. Catawba College shares portions of the ecological preserve with the Salisbury Greenway system. Catawba College has been instrumental in the implementation, maintenance and protection of biking and walking trails, and has been committed to public health, environmental sustainability, and civic engagement for many years. Catawba College connects people to alternative sources of transportation and recreation through educational programs along these trail systems.

PILLAR 2: Improve the Health and Wellness of Students and Staff.

Health and Wellness

Catawba College is rare in its unique access to spaces and resources available for improved health and wellness. The 189-acre ecological preserve adjacent to the Catawba College Center for the Environment provides easy access to the natural environment. The Preserve is an extensive system of trails, ponds and waterfowl impoundments, created by Catawba College with the assistance of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Natural Resource Conservation Service. The combination of natural wetlands, a lake and managed impoundments provides habitat for a great diversity of birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians. The preserve is a designated North Carolina Natural Heritage Area. Catawba

College was the first college in North Carolina, and one of the first in the nation, to place 130 acres of the preserve under a permanent conservation easement to ensure that the land will always be held in its natural state. Catawba College students are nurtured by nature as they explore, hike and learn in this wetland ecosystem. Exposure to nature has been linked to a host of benefits, including improved attention, lower stress, better mood, reduced risk of psychiatric disorders, and improved levels of cooperation and empathy. Joshua Cool, the Preserve Keeper, works with students in the preserve to share his knowledge and experience in the field of conservation and protection of natural resources. Josh Cool shared: "My primary wish is to have the Preserve be as beneficial to wildlife as possible. I also hope that by walking through the Preserve students and visitors will gain more appreciation for the natural world and all its denizens. Time spent in nature helps people break through the false separation we have imposed upon our lives, with "Nature" being some outside force to our humanity, a thing to be visited and left behind. We are blessed to have an area in city limits devoted to a living space for our relatives with wings, scales and fur. I hope those that visit push for similar spaces in their own communities. I'd like the Fred Stanback Jr. Ecological Preserve to serve as inspiration and example for the creation of similar spaces alongside humans across the world."

The Lilly Center for Vocation and Values grew out of an awareness that college students often feel unsure about having a real sense of purpose in life, a sense of their unique gifts and how those gifts might be used to make a positive difference in the world around them. A variety of thoughtful and thought-provoking programs, as well as vocational retreats and mini-retreats are offered each year. The Freshman Retreat is especially helpful to first year and transfer students before the academic year begins. The Freshman Retreat is free for all students. Students have opportunities to connect to future classmates and friends, learn more about college life, meet faculty, and reflect on future career choices. The Lilly Center Coffee House is open on campus each day to provide coffee, tea, and cookies at no cost. Additional snacks with minimal cost, space for collaboration, study space, games and books are also available. The Lilly Center Coffee House is student managed and staffed.

Catawba College hosts special events for students throughout the year. Its Day of Culture in November 2023, was a vibrant and immersive day designed to celebrate the rich diversity and heritage of the college's student body. It was a day dedicated to fostering cultural understanding, promoting inclusivity, and embracing global perspectives that contribute to the dynamic community at Catawba. The program emphasized the college's commitment to fostering cultural awareness and global citizenship among its student body and throughout campus. Students, faculty and staff came together to celebrate together to celebrate diversity and inclusivity and reflect Catawba's dedication to preparing students for success in an interconnected world. As part of the event, students took part in Catawba's new Passport to Success program, providing eligible students with the opportunity to obtain their first passports. Generous donors of the college provided students with the opportunity to obtain their first passport. This program will return in 2024.

In February, 2024 Catawba College will host its Day of Character for students, faculty and staff. Participants will visit 12 community parks to complete an assessment that focuses on removing barriers to access, including mobility, vision and hearing challenges, or health concerns.

In 2023, a Low Ropes Challenge Course was installed by Experiential Systems, Inc. adjacent to the Catawba College Center for the Environment. The course is used in numerous programs to inspire exceptional opportunities for recreation, education, and therapeutic goals. The low ropes program provides students with an emotionally and physically supportive environment where they can grow beyond their own expectations. The experiential challenge elements help students develop a higher level of self-worth, confidence, and decision-making. Ten Catawba College faculty members were trained to facilitate the course through guided discovery, creating a supportive environment that focuses on both emotional and physical well-being. The Experiential Learning Cycle (Kolb) is used for processing student thoughts and emotions. Whether it is fear, excitement, anxiety, anger, frustration, alienation, or happiness, processing helps students understand their feelings, communicate about them in a healthy way, and draw parallels in their own lives and to their future.

Students at Catawba College also have access to formal wellness programs for counseling, referral, and well-being services. The College's four staff members in Counseling Services, all trained mental health professionals, offer free and confidential appointments for students. Services offered include psychological testing, personal counseling, educational programming for organized groups of students, and a set of self-help and referential guides entitled the "help-yourself library". Faculty of the College have access to mental health services through the employee benefits guide, which provides the ability for Faculty to seek and obtain services through the College's health insurance plan. The Catawba Health Center offers a wide range of on-site care, including treatment for routine illnesses and injuries, sexual health, drug and alcohol education, and nutritional education.

The WEB (Well-being, Equity & Belonging) initiative on campus promotes these concepts that together help boost morale, engagement, productivity and success. The program provided Safe Space Training for 33 personnel across all departments on campus.

The Center for the Environment hosted Heather White, the author of One Green Thing. Students served as panelists for the educational sustainability and wellness event and were able to use their on-campus experiences to shape their input. Student listeners and participants learned and contributed to a community understanding of how to deal with the overwhelming reality of climate change. She will return to Catawba in July 2024 to host additional sessions for students participating in the National Environmental Summit.

The Mort Lerner Wellness Center, with easy access from the Cannon Student Center is open to faculty, staff and students. The Wellness Center houses state-of-the-art strength and conditioning equipment. Intramural sports and outdoor adventures (COA: Catawba Outdoor Adventures) inspire students to live a sustainable, healthy and active lifestyle through campus and community engagement.

The nursing program provides a Wellness Fair that provides screenings and education to empower students to be proactive and confident in caring for themselves and others. Students also conduct a Community Windshield Survey where the students are required to assess local air and water quality, recent community-wide disasters, and to record other symbolic indicators of the local physical environment, which includes Catawba College's campus. Students evaluate the adequacy of local health care and social services, looking for food deserts, spacing between social service centers, and

wellness shelters. Students also evaluate the transportation methods of individuals living in their select local community.

Catawba College is a certified Higher Education Tree Campus. Green spaces with easy access on campus provide critical mental health benefits to students and staff. Involving students in tree planning, planting and maintenance experiences encourages physical activity and encourages their understanding of ecosystem services and their commitment to creating a more sustainable future for all citizens.

Catawba College is proud of a strong tradition of competitive athletics and recreation from baseball and lacrosse to disc golf. Roughly 40% of all undergraduate students play on a varsity sport competing on 24 NCAA Division II intercollegiate teams. These teams involve a family of over 500 students as players, cheerleaders, coaching assistants, team managers, and student trainers. The College currently supports 117 full athletic scholarships for the men and women participating on sports teams.

The College complies with all state and federal occupational health and safety measures, namely OSHA 300, 300A, and 301. The College has contracted with Accident Fund to manage our OSHA compliance and worker's compensation insurance.

On Mondays throughout the academic year, both students and staff across the College are encouraged to walk a mile or more around campus. This provides the campus community with valuable time spent exercising outdoors, as well as a regular social experience to encourage a collaborative, supportive environment on campus.

Environmental Health

Catawba College has transitioned from a Large Quantity Generator to a Small Quantity Generator within the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality's regulatory framework. The status change occurred after a review and removal of hazardous substances identified during a renovation of the Shuford Science Building in 2019. Since then, the College has significantly reduced the amount of hazardous waste that is maintained on-site. The College accomplished this reduction by adopting a disposal cycle of no more than 2 years for any given chemical, installing fire-proof hazardous waste cabinets, and working with a contractor to limit chemical waste maintained on campus. As a result, the College now disposes of waste yearly rather than waiting to accumulate a specified volume. Disposing of chemicals and chemical waste on a regular basis has improved the accuracy of inventory and allows Catawba College to maintain the Small Quantity Generator status.

Catawba College safely disposes of hazardous and chemical waste by working with a contractor that has the proper licenses to transport and dispose of hazardous waste. Chemicals that are ready to be disposed of are kept in a separate storage locker for safety prior to removal of the waste from campus. The college is reviewed by the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality to ensure that we are following safe practices and protocols.

Green spaces on Catawba's campus are beneficial to environmental health. The college is embedded in the 189-acre preserve, with pollinator gardens (Catawba Bee and Tree Campus), native terrestrial and

aquatic plant species that encourage students into green spaces to collaborate, study, and relax. Outdoor picnic tables, external decks with hammock and cocoon chairs invite students into the outdoor environment that is filled with plants that mitigate pollutants and constantly clean the air. Catawba College provides opportunities for students to spend time outdoors through outdoor learning experiences and field labs, and supports student clubs that encourage hiking, camping and service learning experiences to improve the outdoor environment for others. Catawba College switched its use of cleaning chemicals to green cleaning products across campus for better air quality, fewer environmental toxins, and safe use for students and faculty that suffer from asthma, allergies and other sensitivities. Recent installation of F Sorb sound absorbing ceiling panels is further commitment to improved air quality on the Catawba College campus. F Sorb products are eco-friendly because they do not contain VOCs. Volatile organic compounds have been one of the causes of airway diseases due to poor indoor air quality. Natural ventilation systems have been installed to circulate fresh air from outside, into buildings to improve air quality and to control humidity against potential mold, mildew or other environmental health issues. The switch has been made to Tork, a sustainable toilet paper that is made from recycled fibers. Recycled toilet paper production takes 50% less water from the environment, uses 64% less energy, and makes 74% less air pollution than other brands. The Tork toilet paper is made from 100% recycled fiber with no core, no wrap and no waste.

PILLAR 3: Provide Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education.

Interdisciplinary Learning

Catawba College has degree programs that require an understanding of the broad concepts associated with sustainability. The Department of Environment and Sustainability and Department of Biology have programs with sustainability-focused coursework, including: Water & Land: Conservation and Ecology; Air, Energy, Development and Climate Change; Sustainability Science and Environmental Policy; Environmental Leadership Seminar; Environmental Education and Communication; Environmental Health and Toxicology, Ecology and Evolution. The Masters Degree in Sports Management requires a course called Sports and Sustainability.

The Environment & Sustainability degree contains both a core curriculum of 20 hours and a set of five concentrations ranging from 33-36 hours. The core prepares students across the natural sciences and liberal arts through classes that span topics such as climate change, water and air quality evaluation, ecology, environmental policy, and environmental education. All students apply their knowledge accrued over the course of the major in a capstone course. The program emphasizes engagement outside of the traditional classroom through a required experiential education course. Overall, the degree combines a strong core foundation of knowledge in environmental science and policy and sustainability science needed to develop specialization and prepare students to solve the socio-ecological challenges of their lifetimes.

The Department of Environment and Sustainability collaborates with faculty across campus to integrate sustainability across content areas. For example, students in the Environmental and Outdoor Education Concentration work with students in the School of Education to identify effective strategies and activities for teaching the new 2023 NC Science Standards using the outdoors to “engage K-12

students in science to encourage curiosity, interests, and prepare them for the broadest range of postsecondary opportunities, be it college, career, or military service. The 2023 K-12 Science Standards are designed to allow students to become *active participants* in science - building their understanding of the natural world through observations and investigations." In January 2024, Catawba College is providing opportunities for faculty in all disciplines to participate in a workshop that provides additional strategies to adapt "Sustainability Across the Curriculum."

Catawba College endeavors to use its campus infrastructure as a living-learning laboratory in a variety of applications. Catawba offers a course on Green Energy Technology that uses the campus photovoltaic and solar thermal installations as teaching tools, while also helping students understand how our campus benefits from generating energy on site. Students are encouraged to expand their interests and experience through STEM Research. One student, as part of an independent research project within the Chemistry department, researched the viability of biomass and hydropower as alternative energy sources for the College. The research included a quantitative overview of the capabilities of each technology, data collection from local and on-site hydrologic resources, and a comparative analysis of the benefits and drawbacks of each type of energy production in relation to the College's current electricity mix. Comparative elements spanned hourly production cost, maintenance costs, energy intensity, emissions reduction potential, and potential externalities. A professional poster from this project is displayed on the third floor of the Shuford Science Building and was featured at the 2022 Catawba Research and Creativity Showcase.

In the Intermediate Geographic Information Systems, students apply geographic information systems skills to create local air quality maps. Students identified areas of potential environmental justice concern in the local community and discussed potential factors influencing air quality. Skills training for this program occurs on our campus and used the campus infrastructure. The College and its students are currently engaged in a partnership with the North Carolina Environmental Justice Network on local air quality. The project places innovative air quality monitors, called Spidey Sensors, in areas across the State of North Carolina that have been identified as sites of environmental justice concern. The College and its students are assisting in launching sites in Salisbury. In addition, Directors of the North Carolina Environmental Justice Network are visiting campus as guest speakers in the speaker series.

Students in "Socio-Ecological Systems Thinking", take a learning excursion to the Catawba First Nation Reservation to participate in and learn about the connection between the College and the Nation. Students serving as preserve assistants have furthered this connection into utilizing and connecting with wildlife ecologists from the Nation to help maintain the Fred Stanback, Jr. Ecological Preserve with indigenous techniques for rewilding and resource management. Such projects include native plant seed flourishing projects and management of targeted endemic species, such as giant river cane.

Students in a Biology class sustainably harvests maple sap and produces maple syrup as a way of learning about sap and the interconnectivity of the ecosystem through insects and sapsuckers. The class also examines the sugaring industry and discusses the carbon impact of boiling 30-40 gallons of water to make one gallon of maple syrup.

One student, as part of an independent research project with our campus Botanist, researched the decline of green ash swamp forest in the Fred Stanback, Jr. Ecological Preserve due to the invasive Emerald Ash Borer. The research project established six 200-square-meter plots within the Preserve by using a nested plot design to measure changes in the canopy, saplings, and herbaceous vegetation. This project worked to showcase the need for conservation efforts and mitigation of a dangerous invasive species within the Campus' Ecological Preserve. This research was featured at the 2022 Catawba Research and Creativity Showcase.

In the Environmental Education and Communication, students are utilizing video production technology to produce short-films to foster sustainable behavior on campus and beyond. Students used Dr. Doug McKenzie-Mohr's, Fostering Sustainable Behavior to guide the development of social marketing campaigns to foster sustainable behaviors and to increase knowledge, understanding and motivation for environmental advocacy.

Students in the Master of Science in Sports Performance graduate program are required to draft a Catawba College Athletics Climate Action Plan in Sport and Sustainability. The Athletics Climate Action Plan is a 25-page document that begins with a descriptive element about the current state of sustainability within Catawba's athletics operations. Students are instructed to critically reflect on the current state of affairs. Reports then are instructed to outline the best use of related campus environmental and sustainability committees, administrative actions that could advance sustainability, plans for Earth Day and Green Sports Day, and argue for the implementation and identification of best practices in sustainable design and management of the College's athletics facilities. Plans are expected to include a detailed marketing strategy and cost-benefit analysis.

A number of the College's Bioscience courses use water features in the Fred Stanback, Jr. Ecological Preserve for field and skills labs. Students measure turbidity, conductivity, salinity and other physical-chemical parameters. This field work integrates water features and what happens to biological components (biotic index) and how these findings reflect the health of the ecosystem. Courses include Topics in Ecology, Ecology, and Invertebrate Ecology.

Additionally, as part of independent research projects with faculty in the Department of Environment and Sustainability, students have researched environmental mercury concentrations in Grant's Creek which runs through the College's Fred Stanback, Jr. Ecological Preserve and into the primary drinking source for the region. Research into mercury levels in the sediment was originally recorded within the Fred Stanback, Jr. Ecological Preserve. These student projects have continued throughout the local Yadkin River Valley and into nearby High Rock Lake. Students looked at the potential impact of point sources on mercury concentrations in various parts of local water bodies.

Sustainability and STEM

The Catawba College Research and Creativity Program provides grant funding for undergraduate students and enables them to work with expert researchers to develop technical skills and find solutions to current environmental challenges. Students present their research at the Catawba College

Research and Creativity Showcase on campus prior to their presentations at the State of North Carolina Undergraduate Research and Creativity Symposium (SNCURCS).

Catawba College fosters active STEM partnerships with organizations across the country to create opportunities for student internships that lead to green career pathways. The Internship in Environment & Sustainability course requires students in Environment & Sustainability to complete a Summer internship related to the discipline. Students contribute to advancing sustainability throughout communities across the state and nation.

Catawba College has developed formal professional partnerships and associated internship opportunities with the following organizations:

- US Forest Service
- North Carolina Watershed Alliance
- Piedmont Research Station
- NC Wildlife Resources Commission
- Three Rivers LandTrust
- Yadkin River Park
- Horizons Unlimited Science Center
- Genome Lab at the Kannapolis Research Station
- University of Kentucky White Oak Genetics Tree Improvement Project

Catawba College also partners with the Rocky Mountain Institute in Colorado to host the National Environmental Summit for high school students to work on innovative solutions to environmental challenges. The Summit is a summer residential experience on campus that engages students, ages

14-17, with faculty members from many disciplines on campus, scientists and other experts in sustainability, creating a climate of possibility for active learning and environmental action. Sample sessions include: “Biomimicry for Sustainability”, “Climate Change and Oceans”, “Field Guide to the Politics and Poetics of Environmental Writing”, “Invasive Alien Plants and Animals”, and “Explorations in Environmental Art.” Students are engaged in sessions focused on whole-systems thinking, land-use planning, applied GIS, and piloting drones for data collection and research.

Catawba College manages and supports the EnviroSmart Schools Program for PK-12 Schools. The program supports PK-12 students in mastering academic standards and developing partnerships that support sustainability. The program provides opportunities for PK-12 educators and green school advocates to connect to sustainability resources and green school projects through an online resource hub, a recognition program, and learning network. The Center for the Environment recognizes schools that achieve levels of Commitment, Achievement, and Excellence in Sustainability through active participation, applied research, and innovation. The program has a successful record of reducing school energy burdens, collaborating with diverse partners, and getting teachers and students excited about going green. The Program Coordinator is funded by the Center for the Environment, as are all website and program materials. The program has provided hands-on internship opportunities for Catawba College students. The EnviroSmart Schools Program is designed to 1) Promote a school

philosophy and culture that embraces sustainability, encourages ongoing professional development and participation that lead to awareness and sensitivity to the environment and environmental challenges. 2) Guide schools in creating habitats/study plots on their school grounds to enhance learning across content areas and improve environmental quality. 3) Advance school-wide sustainability practices that focus on air and water quality, energy conservation and waste reduction for a healthier, sustainable learning environment. 4) Transform learning to real-world; Connect students to collaborative partners that foster relevance in learning and build skills and abilities to identify and resolve environmental challenges. 5) Administer the EnviroSmart Research Collaborative (ERC) to promote applied participatory research, science and engineering practices (SEP), peer-to-peer learning and communication for collective action among schools, with students working together for sustainability, and 6) Provide curriculum support for sustainability education. The EnviroSmart Program reaches both public and private schools in North Carolina. The program also provides professional development for teachers to guide the integration of sustainable practices into their state curriculum.

The UN Sustainable Development Goals are being integrated across campus throughout the curriculum, promoting projects between departments that are interdisciplinary, collaborative and real-world. For example, a professor of GIS and Conservation in the Department of Environment and Sustainability partnered with a professor of Management in the Ketner School of Business. The vision was to form interdisciplinary groups to combine the technical expertise that students develop in the Drone Pilot Training course with the business knowledge and entrepreneurial thinking of students in the creativity and innovation course. Together, students researched applications of drone technology and pitched their business ideas to a group of professional "Sharks." The winning team focused on an agricultural application that will support areas in need that are dealing with food scarcity due to climate change. The program has become a favorite for students, staff, and the community at large.

Catawba College Center for the Environment is working with University of Kentucky, North Carolina State University, Rowan County Cooperative Extension and the Piedmont Research Station to carry out progeny tests to promote sustainability of white oak throughout the geographic range of the species. The site will be part of a large network of progeny tests, and is the *first* site in NC represented in the network. Superior tree seedlings will be used for reforestation and enhancement plantings in National Forests, community parks, and in private woodlands.

Students participating in the Center for the Environment's EnviroSmart Schools Program are extending the impact of the program by collecting and archiving genetic material and creating study plots at their school sites. Progeny test sites provide a 'living outdoor classroom' to teach future generations about tree improvement and how forest genetics can help the sustainability of white oak, and other tree species that provide a wide range of ecosystem services. The program also provides workforce training in an area where there is a critical shortage of trained personnel.

Superior white oak trees mitigate the impacts of climate change, improving our ability to conserve and restore white oak in forests to achieve a variety of ecological, conservation and economic goals at regional and national levels. White Oaks provide unique habitat for invertebrates and birds, and

produce acorns as a food source to more than 100 other species. The food, shelter, and nutrient cycling the white oak provides makes it a keystone species in ecosystems they inhabit.

The Center for the Environment was recognized by the Boy Scouts of America for its work in the co-development of the BSA's Energize NC Curriculum. The program provides STEM education centered on renewable energy and sustainability, focusing particularly on at-risk students, ages 11-14.

Girls on Outdoor Adventures for Leadership & Science (GALS) is a not-for-profit educational organization that seeks to increase the ability of non-male identifying youth, students of color, students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, and other underrepresented groups within STEM fields to gain outdoor experience while engaging in scientific activities. GALS aims to mitigate the lack of hands-on, place-based science programs for these students by providing free opportunities to selected students to participate in science learning opportunities outdoors. Since 2017, GALS has provided two-week-long sessions for participants across North Carolina and has expanded to host more sessions and provide experience in other states. Students pursue a research question while working through lessons aimed at exploring sustainability, social justice, and environmentalism. Two Sisters Adventure Company and Catawba College partner in support of GALS. In addition to financial support, the students of the College serve as mentors prior to, and during the GALS summer program.

Muddy Sneakers is a not-for-profit outdoor science education program serving North Carolina's fifth-grade public school students. Muddy Sneakers provides opportunities for students to connect with nature in order to create a more sustainable world. Catawba College provides operating space for Muddy Sneakers on an annual basis at no charge. In addition, Muddy Sneakers and the students that participate in the outdoor programming are able to utilize the 189-acre Fred Stanback, Jr. Ecological Preserve on the Catawba College Campus. Catawba faculty serve on the advisory board and collaborate on projects and events. The College also provides funding and fundraising support for Muddy Sneakers' annual MountainFilm Festival, which presents films with environmental and sustainability themes. Muddy Sneakers provides opportunities for students in the Environmental and Outdoor Education Program to shadow their programs, provide internships and expertise in the field of environmental and sustainability education.

The College routinely hosts school groups and local youth organizations (e.g., scouts) in the Fred Stanback Jr. Ecological Preserve to learn about native plants and animals, and how the Preserve has been restored and is maintained as a certified North Carolina Natural Heritage area. These visits cover topics such as Urban Forestry, Wetland Delineation, Ecosystem Services, etc. with opportunities to observe effective strategies and technologies used to manage healthy ecosystems and wildlife populations. Activities often support merit badge requirements associated with the outdoors.

The College is proud of the living-learning laboratory connection that coursework, laboratory and research, and public engagement share with the Fred Stanback, Jr. Ecological Preserve. Numerous courses, local educational organizations, and student research projects are conducted in the Preserve. Projects range from capturing and banding of birds, wildlife inventories and observations, pollinator

studies, and field and skills labs courses that develop research projects, or contribute to existing research projects important to our future (Audubon Climate Watch, White Oak Tree Improvement).

Catawba College supports a series of winning programs, including a Lecture Series and Conferences featuring national experts and partners. Examples of past presenters include:

- David Orr, Author of Dangerous Years: Climate Change and the Long Emergency
- Corban Addison, Author of Wastelands: The True Story of Farm Country on Trial
- John E. P. Morrison, Executive Director, NC Green Future: Clean Energy Initiatives
- Amory Lovins, Chief Scientist, Rocky Mountain Institute: Transforming the Energy System
- Lester Brown, Founder of Worldwatch and Earth Policy Institutes
- Dr. Matthew Sleeth, Author of Serve God, Save the Planet
- Phoebe Gooding, Toxic Free, NC

Catawba College has hosted numerous conferences since 1996, with the most recent being the Bike Walk NC Summit, the "Intersections of EDJI-Cation" Conference highlighting leadership opportunities where equity, diversity, justice, inclusion, and sustainability meet, and in the Spring of 2024, The Faith and Environment Conference will be held again on the Catawba College campus.

Civic Engagement

The College's Center for the Environment has a long track record of involvement in local sustainability and environmental issues. The Center for the Environment receives strong financial and administrative support from the College. One-third of the endowment gift is devoted to sustainability measures, enhancing environmental content in courses across campus, upgrading campus buildings and operations to reduce the school's carbon footprint, and funding programs of the Center for the Environment.

In particular, the Center has met with numerous local decision-makers to advance sustainability in local public policy through conversations with Rowan County Commissioners, the Town Manager of the City of Salisbury, and the Mayor of Spencer. These conversations with local legislators have spanned a number of topics, including developing interconnected public transportation to reduce dependence on single-opponency vehicle driving, advocating for a more robust litter removal and prevention system within the City of Salisbury, providing improved biking infrastructure for citizens of the City, and expanding the existing greenway system.

To enhance our advocacy for more comprehensive litter reduction and recycling programs in the City of Salisbury, The Center for the Environment has obtained a commitment from the Morehead-Cain Foundation for a three-day session on Catawba College's campus that will convene fifteen community leaders and sixty-eight Morehead-Cain Scholars from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in a session to design plans for the reduction of litter and increased recycling in Salisbury.

Members of the College have also worked to encourage the City to apply for the Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Discretionary Grant Program's Community Grant program to develop public-access electric vehicle charging infrastructure around the City. These activities are representative of the types of advocacy the Center has spearheaded since its founding in 1996. We see local advocacy as an

important part of the Center's mission. We often meet with local officials and seek to make our community a more sustainable place for all residents.

The Center for the Environment also engages in a variety of advocacy issues at the state and regional level. The Center is a member of the North Carolina Sustainable Energy Association, which works to advocate, protect, and ensure a prosperous future for sustainable energy in the State of North Carolina. The Center's regional advocacy work is supported by senior administration at the College through the financial resources described above.

The Center launched NC Clean Future as a joint venture with the Center for Sustainability and Environment at Wake Forest University, with a mission to accelerate the transition to a clean economy for the benefit of all, enabling North Carolina to be at the forefront of states making the transition to a cleaner future, maximizing the economic, environmental, and societal benefits of that change. The initial initiatives of NC Clean Future are.

- Partnering with Catawba's Office of the Chaplain to work with 120+ clergy helping their communities make use of the resources now available under the Inflation Reduction Act.
- In conjunction with the association of NC Independent Colleges and Universities (NCICU), establishing a group for sustainability champions at the 36 NCICU schools, serving as a peer network and providing resources to help the schools develop and implement sustainability objectives.
- Creating a statewide network for corporate executives, especially at small and medium enterprises, to foster success for their companies in the green transition.

The Center for the Environment also has a history of working on air quality, water quality and land conservation and stewardship issues at the state and regional level. The Center works with CleanAIRE NC, the WaterKeeper Alliance, and a number of regional land trusts to advocate for improvements in state laws and regulations. The Center for the Environment serves as a convener for groups working on state-wide environmental issues while also advising on policy proposals and providing interns to leading NGOs.

The College has created a Clean Water Advocacy Field Internship Program with the Waterkeeper Alliance. This program pairs a cohort of Catawba College students with Waterkeeper Alliance staff and faculty of the College, takes students to active pollution areas and areas of environmental justice concern in the State of North Carolina, and then teaches water quality sampling and state advocacy techniques. The Center's policy development and advocacy work are important priorities for the College.

We are inspired by students, faculty, staff and collaborative partners who are dedicated to advancing the cause of sustainability. Our numbers are growing. Through our work and theirs, we will continue forward with a shared purpose in preserving the planet's livability and protecting the current and future quality of life for all people on the planet.