SUNY Oswego saluted as ‘green college’

OSWEGO — In time for Earth Day, the Princeton Review recognized SUNY Oswego as one of the 332 most environmentally responsible colleges in North America.


A charter signatory of the American College and University Presidents’ Climate Commitment, Oswego offers an interdisciplinary academic program in sustainability studies and designs all new facilities to meet at least the silver rating of the U.S. Green Building Council standards of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design.

The college’s residential complex of buildings known as the Village achieved LEED Gold certification. The new Richard S. Shineman Center for Science, Engineering and Innovation and Rice Creek Field Station facility are designed to achieve a comparable standard.

Green features at the Shineman Center include the state’s largest geothermal-well installation, which will reduce the building’s energy costs and carbon emissions, as well as green roofs, solar panel arrays, rain gardens to collect storm-water runoff, water bottle filling stations, bike storage, showers and lockers for bicycle commuters, plus systems for monitoring water and energy use.

The guide calls Oswego an “upstate New York green stronghold (that) combines a rich institutional commitment to the environment with a thriving student enthusiasm towards sustainable endeavors.”

It highlights the college’s Rice Creek Field Station for encouraging sustainability-related research and notes that students can join numerous groups such as Students for Global Change and the “Go Green Team.”

It adds that Oswego participates in a car-sharing program, offers free or reduced-price bus passes, bike sharing and a free campus shuttle, and has a formal sustainability committee.
In addition, the college has a fully staffed sustainability office.

The Princeton Review partnered with the Center for Green Schools at the U.S. Green Building Council to compile the guide.

They selected colleges based on a survey conducted in 2013 of administrators at hundreds of four-year colleges to measure the schools' commitment to the environment and to sustainability.

The survey included questions on the schools' course offerings, campus infrastructure, activities and career preparation.

Rob Franek, the Princeton Review's senior vice president and publisher, noted that the survey findings indicate significant interest among college applicants in attending environmentally responsible colleges.

"Among 10,116 college applicants who participated in our 2014 ‘College Hopes & Worries Survey,’ 61 percent said having information about a school's commitment to the environment would influence their decision to apply to or attend the school," he said.

SUNY Chancellor Nancy Zimpher congratulated all 10 SUNY campuses included in the guide to green colleges.

"SUNY campuses across the state are among the most energy-smart in the nation, a leadership role that we continue to build upon through the expanded use of green technologies and sustainability initiatives," she said.

The free guide can be downloaded at www.princetonreview.com/green-guide and www.centerforgreenschools.org/greenguide.

Support from the U.S. Green Building Council and United Technologies Corp. helped make the guide a free resource.