



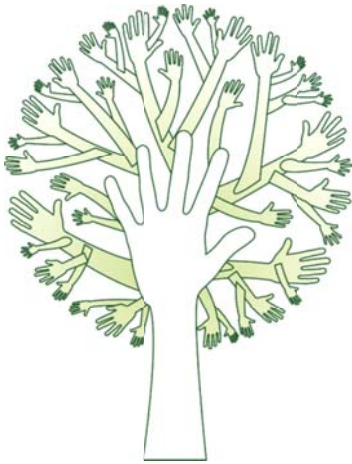
Environmental Consortium  
of Hudson Valley Colleges & Universities

*presents its 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Student Summit*

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# Become an Agent for Change: Green Your Career from the Inside Out

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**Monday, April 25, 2011**  
**Columbia University**  
**New York, NY**

*Co-sponsors*



On April 25<sup>th</sup> 2011, students gathered at Columbia University's Lerner Hall for the Environmental Consortium's 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Student Summit.

A roundtable discussion kicked off the event. "The Individual and Beyond – Transforming Your Ideas and Ideals into Action", was moderated by Nilda Mesa, Columbia University's Assistant Vice President of Environmental Stewardship. The discussion focused on how individuals could "be that starting person" for sustainability in a career situation. With input from a variety of sources, including Barnard student and EcoRep Naomi Wasserman and Tim Rairdon, Executive



Director of the Graduation Pledge Alliance, the panel addressed questions that ranged from "What is 'Sustainability'" to "What are the most valuable skill sets that will be needed for future employees who incorporate sustainability into the work place". Panelist Michael Sater, Director of Decker Design, Inc., had this to say about communicating with organizations on the topic of Environmental sustainability: "Change can take time. Often the first step is operational. If you can show a company that they can save money and that this [environmental policy or practice] can pay for its self in three years, it can be successful." He also discussed the importance of the making the "reputational case" when advocating for a green policy. In other words, that this environmental policy or practice one may be advocating could attract new clients or customers to the product or business by changing the reputation of the company or organization.

After the panel discussion, students broke out into groups to discuss aspects of successful environmental campaigns they had participated in, and worked in groups to brainstorm how to handle an environmentally hostile work environment – one where no environmental initiatives are in place... yet. Several great ideas were discussed and the consensus among the students



was to be persistent, find ways environmental policies can save money, and use the marketable and competitive aspects of environmental sustainability to convince such policies to be implemented in a business.

Students attended the summit from schools throughout the New York City area as well as the Hudson River Valley. There was an air of enjoyment and enlightenment throughout the summit and when reflecting on a positive direction for the future of environmental sustainability moderator Nilda Mesa said this "(There are) More people with traditional sounding degrees that are not applying them in traditional ways".

## EVENT AGENDA

2:00pm Registration

2:30pm Welcome

[Michelle D. Land](#)

Director

*Environmental Consortium of Hudson Valley Colleges & Universities*

2:45pm Roundtable

The Individual and Beyond – Transforming Your Ideas and Ideals into Action

[Nilda Mesa](#) (Moderator)

Assistant Vice President of Environmental Stewardship

*Columbia University*

[Tim Rairdon](#)

Executive Director, Graduation Pledge Alliance

Bentley Alliance for Ethics and Social Responsibility

*Bentley University*

[Michael Sater](#)

Director

*Decker Design, Inc.*

[Naomi Wasserman](#)

Environmental Science '13

EcoRep

*Barnard College*

3:45pm Break

4:00pm Breakout Group Discussions

5:00pm Report Out and Closing Remarks

5:30pm Networking Dinner

6:30pm Adjourn

## **BIOGRAPHIES**

### **NILDA MESA | Columbia University**

Nilda Mesa is Assistant Vice President of Environmental Stewardship at Columbia University. In this role, she works with students, faculty, and staff at all three campuses to lessen the environmental footprint of the University. Ms. Mesa came to Columbia with a variety of professional experience focused on the environment. After graduating from Harvard Law School, she worked for the California Attorney General on enforcement of toxic management and natural resources laws. As an appointee in the Clinton-Gore administration, she held several positions, including as a member of the U.S. delegation and lead legal negotiator on the environmental side agreements subsequent to the ratification of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). As Assistant Deputy for Environment at the US Air Force, she worked with various stakeholders to reconcile training and airspace environmental issues.

### **TIM RAIRDON | Graduation Pledge Alliance**

Tim Rairdon serves as the Executive Director of the Graduation Pledge Alliance (GPA), an alliance of educational institutions offering graduates a pledge toward social and environmental responsibility. In addition, Tim works for a global dental instrument manufacturer, encouraging involvement in the longest-running dental instrument recycling program in the industry. He graduated from Knox College in 2009.

### **MICHAEL SATER | Decker Design, Inc.**

Michael Sater brings over 20 years' experience to Decker Design, working with clients on global brand management strategies. His expertise in corporate responsibility, communications and sustainability enables Michael to help clients enhance their brands and how people perceive them. Before joining Decker Design, he founded Sater Creative, where he developed award-winning branded initiatives for organizations such as Coca-Cola Enterprises, Delta Air Lines and Lockheed. Michael currently serves on the board of EarthShare NY and was previously on the board of the Atlanta Chapter of the American Institute of Graphic Arts. He holds a B.A. from Washington University of St. Louis, Missouri.

### **NAOMI WASSERMAN | Barnard College**

Naomi Wasserman is a sophomore at Barnard College where she is majoring in Environmental Science. She hopes that someday she can incorporate her undergraduate experience into working as a city planner. She was born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area, but also enjoys New York City! Naomi is a member of the Barnard EcoReps, a student group that connects with students to build an environmentally responsible community at Barnard through peer-to-peer education and on-campus programming.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Environmental Consortium acknowledges the generous support from our host institution, Columbia University, with special thanks to Nilda Mesa, of Columbia University Environmental Stewardship and Natalie Unwin-Kuruner of The Earth Institute.

## SUMMIT PLANNING COMMITTEE

Anne Marie Hirschberger, Energy and Climate Center, Pace Law School  
Clara Holmes, Pace University Academy for Applied Environmental Studies  
Donna Kowal, Pace University Academy for Applied Environmental Studies  
Michelle Land, Pace University Academy for Applied Environmental Studies  
Madeline Mignone, Biology Department, Dominican College  
Natalie Narotzky, Environmental and Urban Studies Major, Bard College  
Fredrica Rudell, Hagan School of Business, Iona College

## ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSORTIUM

The Environmental Consortium of Hudson Valley Colleges & Universities was established in 2004 to advance our understanding of the cultural, social, political, economic and natural factors affecting the Hudson River Watershed. By promoting collaboration among its members, the Consortium works to provide ecosystem-based curricular and co-curricular programming aimed at improving the health of the regional ecosystem.

The mission of the Environmental Consortium of Hudson Valley Colleges & Universities is *to harness higher education's intellectual and physical resources to advance regional, ecosystem-based environmental research, teaching, and learning through interdisciplinary, collaborative programs and information sharing.*

Spearheaded and hosted by Pace University, the Consortium's headquarters is situated within the Pace Academy for Applied Environmental Studies in White Plains, New York.

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