



Hollins, Emory & Henry Team Up For Energy Conservation Project

A grant from the Jessie Ball duPont Fund will support the joint initiative, which will be led by an energy manager with the expertise to advance both institutions in reducing energy use

Roanoke, Va. – Hollins University and Emory & Henry College will receive \$200,000 over the next three years from the Jessie Ball duPont Fund to collaborate on an energy conservation project that will foster a culture of sustainability on both campuses.

“Our mutual goal is to encourage students, faculty, administrators and staff at each institution to become more conscious of the choices they make regarding energy use and the consequences of those choices,” said Hollins University President Nancy Gray. “We anticipate that members of each campus community will benefit from changes in attitude and behavior and will continue to support energy conservation as a way of life.”

“This is an opportunity for both institutions to significantly strengthen our energy conservation and environmental efforts,” said Emory & Henry President Rosalind Reichard. “This collaboration will aid in reducing our institutions’ carbon footprints and help us move forward in meeting the objectives set forth in the American Colleges and University Presidents’ Climate Commitment – an initiative of which both Hollins and Emory & Henry are members.”

A key component of the project will be the hiring of a shared energy manager by July 1, 2011. The manager, who ideally will have a background in mechanical engineering, will conduct a comprehensive assessment of energy consumption on each campus, identify strategies to further decrease energy use, develop and implement energy policies for each institution, and enhance educational activities to promote energy conservation by members of each campus community.

“We anticipate that our smaller infrastructures, in comparison with larger institutions, will make it viable for one energy manager to serve each campus effectively,” Gray explained. “An energy manager serving both campuses will allow us to progress together more rapidly, benefiting from shared experience with similar issues and developing an energy conservation model that will potentially be useful to other small liberal arts colleges.”

Both Hollins and Emory & Henry have taken numerous measures already to reduce energy use. Hollins’ initiatives include the installation of a new boiler and cold water chilling tower to lower natural gas consumption; campus-wide energy guidelines; a self-imposed student Green Fee devoted to environmental projects to reduce energy use on campus; and installation of energy meters on several buildings with support from a duPont Fund Technical Assistance Grant, the Patterson Charitable Foundation Trust, and Hollins alumnae.

Last fall, Hollins received a \$30,000 grant from The Dominion Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Dominion Resources, to support the construction of a photovoltaic (PV) system that directly converts the sun’s energy into electricity. The PV system will be completed this March and the data collected from it will be available to the campus community as well as to individuals and educators in the region. The information will be used to monitor and model the efficiency and economics of, and seasonal/weather impacts on, PV systems.

Hollins has also renovated one of the historic structures on its campus, the Robbie Hunt Burton Alumnae Cottage, with the hope of earning certification by the U.S. Green Building Council under its Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program. If successful, the cottage, built in 1905, will become the university’s first LEED certified building. The cottage features the first geothermal heating and cooling system on campus, low-

maintenance building materials containing recycled content, and high-energy efficient appliances.

Emory & Henry has attained LEED certification in the renovation of two buildings and in the construction of a new residence hall, Elm Hall. All buildings, which were constructed with local products and recycled materials, are equipped with a variety of energy-saving features. In addition, water use reduction and storm water management were built into the design.

The college also has converted all indoor and outdoor lighting to energy efficient bulbs and installed a solar hot water system in one residence hall. As of 2007, Emory & Henry began installing “Energy Star” appliances in all buildings and regularly encourages students as well as members of the faculty and staff to adhere to energy efficient practices.

Administrators and faculty members from Hollins and Emory & Henry began discussing a partnership after they attended a duPont-sponsored energy conference held in Richmond in April 2009. “We recognized that small colleges, especially those with historic campuses whose buildings were constructed when energy conservation was not a priority, experience similar challenges yet have limited resources with which to make major reductions in energy use,” Gray recalled. “We learned that Amherst, Mount Holyoke, and Smith colleges successfully implemented the concept of a shared energy manager, and that precedent encouraged us to proceed. Our joint initiative involves a smaller investment than would be required for two separate projects.”

Gray emphasized the long-term benefits of the Hollins/Emory & Henry collaboration. “We will continue to sustain the energy conservation initiative well beyond the three-year project, building on prior efforts as well as lessons learned from this work.”

The Jessie Ball duPont Fund is a national foundation based in Jacksonville, Florida, that has provided vital assistance to Hollins for decades. Mrs. duPont served on Hollins' Board of Trustees for 26 years. When she died in 1970, the charitable fund was formed from her estate, restricting grants to organizations she funded between January 1, 1960, and December 31, 1964. Hollins is one of 327 institutions Mrs. duPont supported. More than \$1,000,000 in duPont Fund grants has been awarded to Hollins, supporting projects ranging from a minority scholars program, to naming the chapel, to diversity initiatives.

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March 2, 2011