

Melissa A. Nergard

University of Wisconsin - Madison

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Education

PhD, Higher Education Administration

Illinois State University, Normal IL

Dissertation: "Optimizing University Campuses for Learning, Wellbeing and Equity: An Applied Study of Higher Education Facilities Organizational Systems."

MA, History

Illinois State University, Normal, IL

Thesis title: "Utilizing Illinois State University's Environmental Legacy and Historical Collections to Sustain a Global Future."

BA, Broadfield Social Sciences

University of Wisconsin Stevens Point, Stevens Point, WI

Professional Experience

University of Wisconsin - Madison

Director of Sustainability

2018 - Present

- Develop, implement, and administer institutional and community sustainability programs with a focus on resiliency, public reporting and transparency, and campus culture

Illinois State University, Normal, IL

Director of Sustainability

2011 - 2018

- Develop, implement and administer campus and community programs related to sustainability utilizing civically engaged solutions that integrate economic, social and environmental systems

Lecturer, Honors Program

2017 - 2018

- Innovation and Inquiry

Assistant Director of Sustainability

2009 - 2011

- Design and implement sustainability programs for campus and the community

Administrative Manager, Facilities Management

1996 - 2009

Institutional Committees and Service

AASHE (Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education) Advisory Council

American College Health Association's Healthy Campus 2020

Carnegie Community Engagement Task Force

Center for a Sustainable Water Future Steering Team

Emergency Call Center Volunteer

La Follette School Climate Policy Forum Advisory Committee

Library Mall Redevelopment Planning Study-Core Advisory Team

MidWest Climate Collaboration, Institutional Partner & Steering Team

One Voice, Community Lobbying Initiative- higher education representative, serving on Mental Health, Entrepreneurial and STEM Initiatives

Renewable Energy Program Advisory Board

Revenue Innovation Working Group

Second Nature Resilience Commitment, Institutional Implementation Liaison

U.S. Department of Energy, Integrated Lighting Campaign Higher Education Partner

Wisconsin Union Advisory Board

Yahara CLEAN Compact, Executive Committee & Steering Team

Institutional Awards & Grants Received

U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools Award (2021)
EPA Green Power Partner Top 30 Schools (2021)
Second Nature's Acceleration Fund (2021)
Sierra Club Cool Schools (Inaugural listing 2021)
Princeton Review Guide to Green Schools (Inaugural listing 2021)
DOE, Subcontract with MREA on Solar Pathways, a Sunshot Initiative (2014-2017)
DCEO, Community Food Waste Composting (2009-2011)

Selected Programs and Projects

Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses – Designation achieved for Illinois State University's Golf Course.
Center for Innovation – A transdisciplinary center solving client issues through student and faculty led design thinking and innovation solutions.
Outdoor Classroom at the Horticulture Center – Faculty and student design-build of an external classroom
Renewable Adoption – 10 MW of solar through a Renewable Energy Rider Tariff (UW-Madison), and Solar Pathways, a Department of Energy research project for developing solar projects in higher education (ISU)
Water Conservation in Laboratories – Development and implementation of pilot programs in Chemistry laboratories for preventive maintenance of fixtures and use of vacuum pumps in place of running water for research
Zero Waste Institution – University initiative to reduce resource waste through procurement, behavior change, and operational consistency

Selected Presentations and Publications

"Everything I Learned in a Kindergarten Classroom" Global Conference on Sustainability in Higher Education, October: 2020
"Achieving APPA's Mission Thru Academic and Community Partnerships" Illinois APPA: March 2018, University of Chicago
"Greening Sports Beyond Football and Basketball" Collegiate Sports Sustainability Summit: June 2016, Purdue University
"Corporate Social Responsibility Panel" Com Week 2016: April 2016, Illinois State University
"Waste Minimization and Student Involvement" – Illinois Counties Solid Waste Management Planning Commissioners
"Corporate Social Responsibility Panel" Business Week, College of Business: March 2015, Illinois State University
"Energy Dashboards: Cross-Disciplinary Opportunities for Coursework and Research" Association of Sustainability in Higher Education Annual Conference: October 2013, Nashville TN

Community Involvement

Emergency Management Agency, K9 Handler (2012 – present)
University of Illinois Extension, Expansion and Review Committee (2014 – 2018)
McLean County Solid Waste Planning Committee (2015 - 2018)
Ecology Action Center – Board Member (2014 – 2018)
Association of Professional Energy Consultants – Chapter President (2017 – 2018)
Association of Professional Energy Consultants – Chapter Board Secretary (2014 – 2017)
Emergency Management Agency Foundation Board, Secretary (2014 - 2015)
Illinois Search Dogs (2003-2012)