

Green Champion Award Winners from the NIH for FY18

The HHS Green Champion awards annually recognize advancement towards integrating sustainability principles into the HHS mission and its daily operations. Through the 12 years of Green Champion awards, the NIH has had many individuals and groups recognized for their accomplishments. The awards for FY2018 continue this trend, with 14 individuals and groups being recognized as Green Champions. Their achievements are described below. Please join me in congratulating these individuals on being honored for their hard work!

Change Agents – Small Group

NIH NIGMS Green Team

Paula Flicker, Lisa Hechtman, Stefan Maas, Connie Murphy, Lan Nguyen, Erica West, Julie Chang, Angela Urdaneta, Dina Wilson

The NIH National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) Green Team aims to promote environmentally responsible practices by educating staff on methods to reduce waste, promote reusable products, and increase awareness of recycling options. Their efforts in encouraging the Institute to "go green" raised awareness on environmental issues and empowered staff to responsibly reduce waste and increase well-being in the workplace. During the past couple of years, the team has hosted several Institute-wide events, encouraging employees to clean-up their office areas and dispose of items in accordance with sustainability standards.

Change Agents – Project/Program

NIH Clinical Center's Electronic Health Record Transition Team

The NIH Clinical Center has successfully moved the entire medical record management process to a comprehensive electronic medical record system. In 2018, the Health Information Management Department (HIMD) and Department of Clinical Research Informatics (DCRI), led the Clinical Center in reducing a massive carbon footprint due to generating and maintaining paper records. Electronic medical record systems can lead to better data analytics and allow decision makers at the Clinical Center to efficiently access data for improved processes which can have positive environmental impacts. Additionally, the HIMD and DCRI converted all paper-based forms to electronic versions, meaning extensive physical space for paper-based records was no longer required and the HIMD was able to relocate to a smaller space in the Clinical Center.

Electronic Stewardship – Project/Program

NIH CIT/ORF Lighting System Green Initiative Project

The NIH Center for Information Technology (CIT) Facility Infrastructure Services (FIS) worked with the Office of Research Facilities (ORF) to implement a lighting system upgrade at the NIH Building 12 Data Center. The new light emitting diode (LED) system featured predefined quadrants within the data center

where motion activation regulated and optimized energy use. Additionally, brighter, more energy efficient and ubiquitous LED lighting provided greater visibility, enhancing both safety and work productivity. The system is very reliable, luminous and provides lighting in the data center only when and where it is needed. These changes provide an energy savings of 185,000 kWh and \$25,000 annually.

Energy & Fleet Management – Small Group

NIH Fleet Management Section

Enrique Flores, Mark Minnick, John Cheatham, Michael Jones, Terrance Coates, James Lewis, Matthew Fortier, Woodrow Harrison

Management at the NIH Fleet Management Services (FMS) section took an "All-In" approach in order to plan and sustain executive order requirements. This required a total team commitment in several sections within the FMS. First, they had to lessen the existing fleet of 365 vehicles by surplusizing eight vehicles and identifying others for future surplus. Furthermore, a group of 44 sedans was identified that could be replaced with electric vehicles. The current fleet is being upgraded to include more energy efficient models. The team also installed a new "official use" Electric Vehicle Charging Station on campus supported by solar power. In addition, the FMS has installed GPS devices in all fleet assets to optimize trips and reduce miles traveled. FMS has surpassed the executive mandate of 4% fleet reduction and achieved a 10% total reduction.

Environmental Stewardship – Individual

Harley James

To facilitate and encourage recycling amongst employees, Harley James started a composting program with the lessor at the NIH Shady Grove location. This program has increased the trash diversion from 35% trash recycled to 51% recycled. There is now composting signage in the cafeteria and in each of the kitchens that shows what can and cannot be trashed, recycled and composted. The signage is also color coordinated with the bin below making the decisions even simpler. In collecting and recycling the solid waste materials at the facility, Mr. James has contributed to effective Environmental Stewardship.

Environmental Stewardship – Individual

James G. Pitt, Jr.

James Pitt is the go-to person on the NIH Bayview campus in Baltimore, Maryland for any recycling not covered by the building management or NIH Surplus. He is personally available to collect smaller items and arranges for pickup of larger items. Mr. Pitt's attitude is his most impressive quality. He will spontaneously stop by to collect recyclables, and is always responsive to a call. His love for his job and cheerfulness is impressive, and he makes it an easy and pleasant experience to recycle, thus encouraging others to participate in this program.

Environmental Stewardship – Small Group

NIH Property Reutilization and Disposal Section

Ben Meyers, Michael Joseph Kessler, Javier Arce-Colon, Renee Richardson, Hayes Robinson, Keimar Clarke, Michael Turner

The NIH Property Reutilization and Disposal Section (PRDS), Property Management Branch (PMB), Division of Logistics Services partners with the NIH community, other government agencies, and eligible state and local organizations to reutilize surplus serviceable property assets. Through this collaborative effort, the PRDS facilitated the reutilization of over 1,600 property items, resulting in a cost-avoidance of over \$5.3 million dollars by the U.S. Government. By promoting eco-consciousness throughout NIH, the PRDS successfully reclaimed and recycled 30,143 pieces of equipment. This recycling effort included over 249 tons of waste and produced revenues for NIH of more than \$709,411 from GSA-approved recycling partners. The PRDS recycled over 130 tons of freezers and refrigerators which contributed to the proper disposal of Freon, a refrigerant that negatively affects the ozone layer and environment. This recycling netted the NIH a savings of \$86,600 dollars. The PRDS advocated efficient business processes and procedures to avoid unnecessary scrapping and disposing of excess computer and scientific equipment by effectively managing the reutilization of surplus property such as the Direct Donation Program of computer and laboratory equipment to local schools, universities and non-profit organizations. Program participants received over 6,000 property items valued over \$12 million dollars.

Environmental Stewardship – Project/Program

NIH NHLBI AMB Extramural Clean Up Day Project

The NIH National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI) Administration Management Branch (AMB) initiated a Clean Up Day Project that was developed in FY2017 and implemented in FY2018 to focus on a need to transition to a paperless environment. The project was introduced as preparation for a large office move and was used to introduce a proposed business practice of disposing of excess paper, documents, office equipment and furniture. The project initially engaged a small group and steadily increased participation by spreading across all scientific extramural and management divisions within NHLBI. The project efforts aided in educating and preparing staff to review existing file management plans, identify documents that could be electronically stored and provided tools to aid in converting to a paperless environment. In addition, staff was educated to identify office supplies and office furniture that could be branded for recycling and/or surplus. From this, hosted events were held to provide staff time and space to participate in user friendly and efficient "clean up" tasks. In FY 2018, the NHLBI Office of Management (OM) collected and shredded 26,548 pounds of mixed office paper, which converted to 53,097 kW of energy and 92,920 gallons of water.

Green Hero Video – Small Group

NIH The NIEHS Environmental Management System (EMS) Awareness Training Project *Bill Steinmetz, Paul Johnson, Bill Fitzgerald, Ann Thompson, Joe Poccia, Tony Hall, David Christie, John Maruca, Paul Cacioppo*

The NIH National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) developed a unique web-based

interactive training program to support efforts to reduce environmental impacts, increase awareness of sustainable practices, and promote our campus Environmental Management System (EMS). The training program was produced through a team effort that combined skill sets from the NIEHS EMS Work Group, our on-site arts and photography contractors, along with creative graphics design personnel.

Green Hero Video – Small Group

NIH Recycle Right Video

Lucy Aistis, Melissa Corbitt, Tammie Edwards, Crispin Hernandez, Brad Moss, Annette Price, Tierra Robinson, Jaroslav Sebek, Virgil Thornton, Thomas Wildoner

The NIH Office of Research Facilities (ORF) and Office of Research Services (ORS) Green Team started the Recycle Right campaign to increase recycling rates in the cafeterias at the NIH Bethesda Campus. When the team began this initiative, only 10% of materials put in the cafeteria recycling bins at the NIH Bethesda Campus were able to be recycled. Recycling bins were contaminated with plastic bags, food, compostable silverware, paper and other materials that belonged in the trash. This meant even recyclables correctly placed in the bin were often disposed of, since too much contamination in a recycling bin means the entire bin's contents get placed in the trash. Through participating in outreach events and talking with the recycling contractor, the team found that most of the contamination was caused by a few items: compostable utensils, soft plastics, paper, napkins, tissue and unwashed food containers. The team created the Recycle Right video to help explain how to properly recycle at the cafeterias on the NIH Bethesda Campus.

Green Labs – Small Group

NIH Green Labs Program

Minoo Shakoury-Elizeh, Barbara Zwiesler, Daman Kumari, Susan Hinton, John Prom, David Mohammadi, Tierra Robinson, Jaroslav Sebek, Bani Bhattacharya, Trisha Castranio

The NIH developed the 2018 NIH Green Labs Program (GLP) to provide a central repository of information about sustainable laboratory policies, programs, and practices, to be used by laboratory personnel who are interested in protecting human health and the environment through their participation. The program was an initiative of the Sustainability Management Team to inform, encourage, and award NIH laboratories for following sustainable lab practices. Laboratory personnel used a self-assessment tool to identify their participation in initiatives ranging from energy and water conservation, freezer management, chemical waste, medical pathological waste, radioactive waste, waste reduction, recycling, green chemistry, inventory management, and outreach. Laboratories that met or exceeded the minimum criteria were recognized with a Green Lab Certificate. In addition, a few Green Lab certificate winners were acknowledged with a travel award to a conference on laboratory sustainability. In the first year of the program (2018), 46 laboratories under the direction of 17 Principal Investigators met the GLP criteria.

Green Labs – Project/Program

NIH Expanded Polystyrene (Styrofoam) Return Program

The NIH Styrofoam Cooler Return Program was initiated on the Bethesda main campus in 2010 as a free take-back program offered by one of NIH's vendors. The program has gradually been implemented NIH-wide in research buildings with dedicated researchers and collection areas. Currently, the program is available at four buildings on campus as well as NIH local offsite facilities. The quantity of NIH recycled Styrofoam coolers diverted from landfill disposal has increased from 513 pounds in 2010 to 3,671 pounds in 2018. In addition, there is a cost avoidance achieved from savings in landfill space and transportation cost.

Water Use Efficiency – Small Group

NIH NIEHS Vivarium Water Reduction Project

Neil Grove, Debbie Gaffney, Don Jackowski, Lee Howell, Gordon Caviness, Bill Blair, Kathy E. Laber

The NIH NIEHS Comparative Medicine Branch (CMB) team took measures to reduce water use associated with vivarium cage wash operations. Following study and analysis, CMB purchased and installed a new high-efficiency cage and rack washer to support a portion of its cage processing operations. Additionally, CMB has adopted the use of high-efficiency, high-performance cage and husbandry equipment and optimized cage management practices, further reducing water demands. The cage processing operations that are being supported by this new equipment and improved practices are projected to reduce water use by over 80%, saving an estimated 167,000 gallons of water annually.

Wellness – Small Group

NIH Clinical Center Stairwell Beautification

Martha Blalock, Brian Czarnecki, Tammie Edwards, Chris Gaines, Shuntrice Holloman, Jessica Jackson, Dr. Peter H. Kilmarx

U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps (USPHS), Office of Research Facilities (ORF), NIH Health and Wellness Council, the Office of Research Services (ORS) Medical Arts Branch and the Division of Occupational Health and Safety (DOHS) partnered together to complete a stairwell transformation of Clinical Center Stairwell 7 on the NIH Bethesda Campus. The team installed graphics that include NIH facts, health facts and inspiring phrases to create an engaging stairwell to increase motivation to take the stairs. The designs span 15 floors from B2 to 13. The colors and messages change from floor to floor to entice those who take the stairs to see what's next. CDC studies have shown that regular physical activity is important to health. However, only half of adults are getting enough exercise. Taking the stairs helps people maintain regular physical activity. Another benefit of taking the stairs is that it reduces energy consumption from elevators. The Clinical Center Stairwell 7 transformation increases motivation to take the stairs, improving both human health and the environment.

For information on Green Champion Award Winners in other HHS Operating Divisions, please click [here](#).