

# ENVIRONMENTAL CONNECTIONS

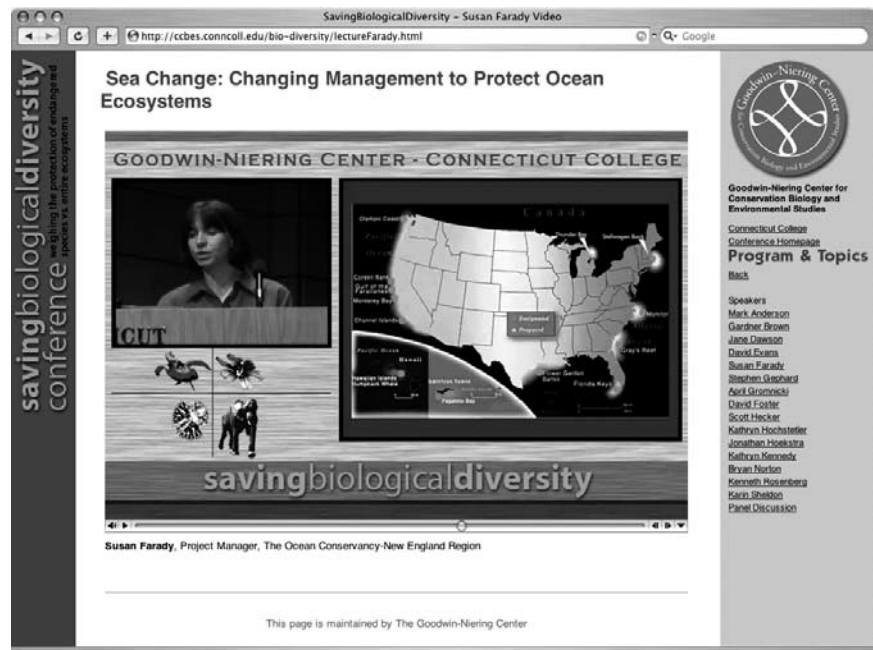
## SAVING BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS AVAILABLE ON WEB SITE

IN APRIL, the center hosted its sixth biennial Elizabeth Babbott Conant Interdisciplinary Conference on the Environment entitled: "Saving Biological Diversity: Weighing the Protection of Endangered Species vs. Entire Ecosystems." The conference offered a broad, multidisciplinary approach to conservation and endangered species protection with presentations from economists, biologists, political scientists and philosophers. The 350 attendees included college students, faculty, concerned citizens and members of various environmental organizations.

In order to greatly expand the audience for the important ideas discussed at this event, the Center invested in recording every speaker and creating a Web site for the resulting videos. Those who wish to view the presentations made by these nationally known conservationists and researchers may go to the Center's Web site and watch on their own schedule. There is a choice of podcasts and streaming video for each of the 14 presentations. Go to <http://www.conncoll.edu>, click on "Interdisciplinary Centers." Select the Goodwin-Niering site and click on "Conferences" and "Biological Diversity 2007." Links to the videos are on each presenter's individual Web page, along with biographical information and summaries of the talks.

As part of their certificate program experience, students wrote papers discussing the speakers' presentations. The excerpts below were selected from some of the student papers to provide a taste of the fare that was served at the conference.

**Evaluation and Species Preservation**  
BRYAN NORTON, *Professor of Philosophy, Georgia Institute of Technology*  
Although there is wide agreement that



A computer screen image showing conference speaker Susan Farady's video Web page. Each conference video shows the person speaking and their visual aids (mostly PowerPoint presentations).

biodiversity is valuable, Bryan Norton felt that there is much less agreement about what that value is, how that value should be described, and how that value should be measured. Given the consensus that biodiversity is valuable and that uncertainty of the perfect valuation of biodiversity is high, the inception of a safe minimum standard of conservation is appropriate whereby we would save the resource (species, sub-species, intact ecosystem, etc.) if the social costs are bearable. — *Jeff Nemeč '09*

**Navigating for Noah:  
Setting Directions for Endangered  
Species Protection in the 21st Century**  
KARIN SHELDON, *Professor of Law, Director Environmental Law Center, Vermont Law School*

Karin Sheldon pointed out that there is no boundary between an organism and its habitat. Therefore, to save the organism, its habitat or ecosystem must also be preserved. She concluded that we should protect rare and common species through the Endangered Species Act (ESA) while also establishing biodiversity conservation that includes all types of ecosystems. — *Bianca Kissel '08*

### **Economics of Protecting Endangered Species**

GARDNER BROWN, *Professor Emeritus of Economics, University of Washington*  
Throughout his speech, Gardner Brown argued that the most logical answer to the question of who gets what, as far as fund-

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GOODWIN-NIERING CENTER  
FOR CONSERVATION BIOLOGY  
& ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

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Established in 1993, the Goodwin-Niering Center for Conservation Biology & Environmental Studies is an interdisciplinary program that draws on the expertise and interests of faculty and students in the liberal arts to address contemporary ecological challenges. The Center strives to integrate all areas of learning to deal with the issues of sustainability and the natural environment. Building on a scientific understanding of the natural world, the Center invites the social sciences, the humanities and the arts to help understand and solve difficult environmental issues.

## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CALL IT WHAT YOU WILL — green living or environmental sustainability are common terms — it appears that trying to do the right thing environmentally is finally becoming popular in the United States. The millionth Prius hybrid automobile was recently sold, and New York City is mandating hybrid taxicabs. The Sundance cable TV channel has a green-living show. Al Gore's global warming documentary was awarded an Oscar. Even President Bush conceded that maybe the planet is getting warmer after all. Hotter days, severe weather and fire events, and higher gasoline prices are probably the most important drivers of the trend. These national changes in environmental attitudes are at work at Connecticut College, as well, making it easier for those who have been pushing the green envelope to get our community on board.

Since at least the late 1960s here at the College, there has always been a group of students, staff and faculty promoting recycling, energy conservation and all the other things that being "green" have come to mean. We have been known for most of that time as the Environmental Model Committee or EMC. The late Bill Niering, who was a botany professor and ecologist, came up with the name because he understood that human systems need to be modeled on the functioning of natural ecosystems in order to approach longterm sustainability. He also had a vision of our campus as a model for the rest of the society, not just in a social sense, but in terms of environmentalism. Get the students used to recycling their cans and turning off lights when they leave a room, and many will do this for the rest of their lives. This will also help change their attitudes about how we should manage resources. When enough individuals change their behavior, it does make a difference.

Until recently it was a fairly small group of environmentalists that worked to influence policy and behavior here on campus, but recently many more people are getting involved. A big step was convincing the College to shift from a part-time intern to a full-time professional Campus Environmental Coordinator two years ago. Finally there is someone — Amy Cabaniss — who's job is to promote green programs at the College. One of Amy's important roles is to support the EMC, which with her help started grappling with larger issues and progressing in ways that are noted in each of our newsletters. Thanks in part to greater environmental awareness, more people than ever are attending EMC meetings and supporting our initiatives. With a faculty member as chair and regular briefings for President Higdon, awareness of recycling, energy conservation and green house gas emissions is at an all time high. We even managed to get strong language about our environmental commitment into the latest College strategic planning document and are about to initiate the College's first, campus-wide, comprehensive energy and sustainability audit.

As usual, many innovative ideas are coming from students. One small group of students decided we needed to begin composting dining hall vegetable waste and developed a proposal that was funded this summer by an alumnus. Another group came up with an incentive plan for students to conserve electricity in the dorms. They made a deal with the administration that if they could demonstrate a drop in electrical demand in dorms during spring semester, a part of the savings would go to fund a special musical act at Floralia. Compared to the 10-year average, their efforts reduced dorm power usage by 12 percent. Another group started a small organic garden on campus and is now struggling to find a way to maintain it during the summers.

Having been involved with this effort for the last 25 years, it is really satisfying to see the blossoming of so many projects and programs that germinated long ago. Bill Niering planted many of the seeds, and I know he would be very proud.

Glenn Dreyer, *Executive Director*

## SENATOR LINCOLN CHAFEE: SHIFTING ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS ON CAPITAL HILL

IN FEBRUARY, the Goodwin-Niering Center sponsored a public lecture by former Rhode Island Senator Lincoln Chafee, which served as an introduction to the upcoming Saving Biological Diversity conference.

Addressing about 80 students and members of the public, the moderate Republican began by discussing his work on some key environmental issues including drilling in Alaska and raising mileage standards for cars. He asked, "Before we go drilling, shouldn't we conserve?" According to Chafee, 67 percent of petroleum consumption goes toward transportation. "We can't continue consuming oil like we do. The foreign companies are eating our lunch." He went on to discuss President Bush's Energy Task Force. He said no environmental groups were present and no one was allowed to find out who was there. The result was a pro-oil, pro-gas proposal. Chafee summed up saying, "We are not doing the right things for energy in our country."

Chafee recalled that many Republicans used to support environmental stewardship, but this has changed. He spoke about the very conservative Republican South currently dominating the political scene in Washington. This is a significant

shift from 30 years ago, when the Endangered Species Act became law, and 12 conservative Democrats from the South were in office. Pressure on the Republican Party from corporate interests, including the mining, timber and ranching industries, have made protection of the environment a partisan issue. "It's a shame it's become so polarized" said Chafee. "Now environmental groups are seen as Democratic."

Senator Chafee revealed that he deliberately chose a course of inaction when he led a Senate sub-committee that was considering how to amend the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Authorized under President Richard M. Nixon in 1970, the ESA was one of three major pieces of environmental legislation that included the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act. According to Chafee, during the last congress members of his own party in the House of Representatives were leading an effort to severely weaken the act. So his strategy was to stall and prevent others from damaging it. Chafee added that, "The votes were there to rip the act to shreds. Property rights advocates have made it difficult for the ESA, and sometimes the environmentalists have gone overboard as well."

Before Chafee chose to prevent



*Former Rhode Island Senator Lincoln Chafee*

changes to the act, he determined that the law was working fairly well. "Protections are strong enough under the existing ESA, which hasn't been reauthorized since 1992. The funding comes through the normal process and it won't expire." Plants and animals threatened with extinction due to habitat loss and other causes are being protected because property owners, state governments, and environmental groups are working together in many cases.

## TRANSITIONS AT THE CENTER

Associate Director of the Goodwin Niering Center **Gerald Visgilio** has decided to step down from his post to pursue other interests. A professor of economics, Gerald has served the Center as our chief academic administrator since 1999 and was instrumental in developing and coordinating our very successful undergraduate certificate in environmental studies. He also led the admissions process for students entering the certificate program, and often took the lead in planning the Center's biennial conferences. With his fellow Associate Director, Diana Whitelaw, he edited the books published as a result of our last three conferences, with themes as diverse as environmental justice, coastal zone



protection and acid deposition. Gerald will remain a key member of the Center's faculty Steering Committee and is already working with other Center colleagues on a publication based on the April conference on biological diversity.

Professor of Environmental Studies and Geophysics **Douglas Thompson** will replace Gerald Visgilio as Associate Director. Doug began teaching at the college 10 years ago, and has added a much needed earth sciences component to our environmental studies offerings. A geologist whose specialty is the physics of how stream and river channels are formed, he has served on the Center Steering Committee since its inception. Thompson and Professor Siver are credited with designing



the innovative format of the seminar that all certificate students participate in over four semesters.

Professor **R. Scott Warren**, a botanist and member of the Center since its inception, is retiring this year. A faculty member since 1970, Scott was trained as a plant physiologist, and immediately joined the late Professor William Niering in tidal marsh research projects. He is a nationally acknowledged marsh eco-physiologist who has successfully championed the protection and restoration of tidal marshes during his 37-year career. During much of that time he served as Chairman of the Botany Department, and was a strong supporter of the College's environmental programs.



## DIVERSITY CONFERENCE *continued from page 1*

ing for protection, should be determined by calculating the greatest savings (of species) for the least cost. One method that he helped to pioneer involves assigning monetary values to species. These values represent the commercial, recreational, and social values associated with the species and help to prioritize the importance of saving it. — *Tyler Dunham '09*

### **America's Vanishing Flora — The Center for Plant Conservation Call to Action**

KATHRYN KENNEDY, *President, Center for Plant Conservation*

Dr. Kennedy explained that the best place to preserve plants is in the wild in

**“Imperiled plants are less than half as likely to be listed in the Endangered Species Act, as are imperiled animals, and plant species are in worse conditions before they are listed.” — Kathryn Kennedy, Center for Plant Conservation**

multiple, robust populations. This method, contrary to a number of other conservation methods, is cost-effective, low-maintenance and insures against major disturbances or catastrophes. Preservation of plants in wild populations significantly reduces the amount of human intervention needed and also ensures that they are integrated into their respective ecosystems, which is important because they are depended upon in many ways by other organisms in their habitat. — *Rick Hederstrom '09*

### **The Piping Plover as an Umbrella Species for Barrier Beach Ecosystems**

SCOTT HECKER, *Director, Coastal Bird Conservation, National Audubon Society*

The entire barrier beach system, and other species living in that habitat, can accrue many benefits because of the piping plover's widespread range. The large range and charisma of the piping plover makes it an ideal umbrella species. Lesser nighthawks, American avocets, and many other rare, threatened and endangered species can benefit from habitat protection focused on the piping plover because they have similar habitat requirements. The large range in both the breeding and wintering habitats of the plover means that if this one species is protected, many

other species and thousands of miles of coastline will fall under that protection as well. — *Christina Comfort '08*

### **Restoring Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*) to New England**

STEPHEN GEPHARD, *Supervising Fisheries Biologist, CT Department of Environmental Protection*

Stephen Gephard explained that although the Connecticut River Atlantic Salmon Commission had put in a great deal of time and effort, there were still years with unexplained decline in numbers. It has not been enough to only protect and monitor the salmon while they are in the rivers. Because they are a diadromous fish, they spend their life in two separate habitats, and both need to be

protected. It is an effort that needs to be considered from an ecosystem conservation point of view in order to be successful. — *Sarah Ayres '09*

### **Saving an Ecosystem Through Endangered Species Recovery: Conservation of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker**

KENNETH ROSENBERG, *Director, Conservation Science Program, Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology*

People are conserving the southern U.S. bottomland hardwood forests at an unprecedented rate, as if the future of the ivory-billed woodpecker really does depend on their conservation efforts. The mentality driving this effort is the perceived opportunity for a second chance, a rare occasion to right past wrongs. Since the famed rediscovery, more than 20,000 additional acres have been purchased from landowners and subsequently preserved to buffer total habitat area, which now exceeds 550,000 acres. Many threatened species in the area, including the southern black bear, are recovering as a result of the protection of crucial habitat. Whether or not the ivory-billed woodpecker really exists seems irrelevant, for as long as hope remains, the public will continue to support the preservation of the bottomland hardwood forest ecosystem as a whole. — *Andrew Watts '09*



*Conference speaker Karin Sheldon, Director of the Environmental Law Center, Vermont Law School.*

*Connecticut College Biology Professor Anne Bernhard was a member of the Conference Planning Committee and hosted one of the three conference sessions.*



### **Challenges in Preserving Biodiversity in Marine Ecosystems**

SUSAN FARADY, *New England Governance & Ecosystems Project Manager, The Ocean Conservancy*

Ocean environments/resources have long been perceived as vast and limitless. This concept of unlimited resources is a popular one, which is why we have so many degradation problems. This had led to problems such as over-fishing and depletion of resources. — *Maya Jacobs '09*

The emphasis on compatible use of resources makes sanctuaries very different from other ecosystem protection areas, like reserves or refuges. In a sanctuary, for instance, fishing is allowed unless there is notice that it is to be restricted. In a refuge, fishing is restricted unless there is a notice that it is allowed. This slight difference causes huge differences in how the site is protected. In a sanctuary there is more opportunity to over-fish and deplete resources creating a collapse in the ecosystem, whereas a refuge is developed primarily to protect species and their habitats. — *Lindsay Michel '08*

### **Valuation of Natural Resource Improvements in the Adirondacks**

DAVID EVANS *Research Associate, Resources for the Future*

The new legislation of the Clean Air Interstate Rule required a reduction in acid deposition as well as in other pollutants. David Evans and his colleagues created a survey to determine the public's willingness to pay for environmental quality and examined the general trade-offs a New York resident would consider in order to make environmental improvements in the Adirondacks through further reductions of air pollution. The survey showed that people were willing to pay for ecological improvements. —*Samantha Wright '09*

#### Minimum Dynamic Areas for Matrix Forests

MARK ANDERSON, *Director, Conservation Science, Eastern US Conservation Region, The Nature Conservancy*  
The desired future for New England forests is one of restored legacy features. In time, a protected reserve may be able to restore factors that once held the ecosystem together, prior to the mass deforestation by early settlers. These factors include multiple decaying layers of forest floor, overturned trees and snags, and even very large debris which supports entire microecosystems, a component that receives little attention from current conservation practices. A healthy New England ecosystem requires a network of thriving reserve areas that act together as sources and sinks of all local species. These reserves would be highly resilient and provide replication across natural rather than artificial gradients. —*Jamey Smith '09*

#### Restoring America's Everglades

APRIL GROMNICKI, *Assistant Director Government Relations, Public Policy Division, National Audubon Society*  
Over the years, the Everglades have been ditched and diked to form approximately 2,000 miles of canals. Hundreds of water control structures have straightened over 21 miles of the Kissimmee River. These structures have effectively drained southern Florida's wetlands. South Florida receives approximately 60 inches of rain a year that is pumped away to prevent flooding of urban and agricultural areas. This water is wasted by moving it to western and eastern Florida, virtually starving the south. Water flowing to the southern Everglades has been reduced by 70 percent. Unbelievably, one trillion gallons of water is wasted annually. This amount would satisfy the needs of 15 million people for an entire year. —*Katherine Serafin '08*

#### Implications of Local Conservation and Land Protection for the Global Environment

DAVID FOSTER, *Director, Harvard Forest, Harvard University*  
The benefit of harvesting wood from Massachusetts forests is that the state has very stringent environmental regulations, ensuring that the forest is managed and harvested sustainably and re-



Georgia Institute of Technology Philosophy Professor Bryan Norton chats with Derek Turner, Philosophy Department, Connecticut College.

**“Brazilians have fights about the internationalization of the Amazon. Countries resist outside interference for sovereignty reasons, even if they might not object to preserving the Amazon.”** —*Kathryn Hochstetler*

sponsibly. Most of the states and countries that currently supply Massachusetts with wood do not operate with such strict regulations. David Foster hypothesizes that if Massachusetts residents understood how the resources they use were harvested, often by unsustainable methods, they would be more likely to alter their consumption habits. Foster also explained that if people get their resources locally, it cuts down on transportation costs and encourages them to be more careful about their consumption. —*Katherine Sacca '09*

#### Creative Approaches to Preserving Biodiversity in Brazil and the Amazon

KATHRYN HOCHSTETLER, *Professor of Political Science, University of New Mexico*  
Brazil's unique demographics and geography call for a different approach to conservation. Hochstetler spoke about the Brazilian's ability to find international allies for preservation. Citing Margaret Keck's work on this topic, the boomerang strategy can be defined as “where domestic NGOs bypass their state and directly search out international allies to try to bring pressure on their states from outside. If Brazilians cannot influence governments directly, they reach out to environmentalists and NGOs outside of Brazil to assist them.” —*Cara Donovan '08*

#### Advancing Conservation in a Globalized World

JONATHAN HOEKSTRA, *Senior Scientist, Global Conservation Approach Team, The Nature Conservancy*  
To Jonathan Hoekstra, conserving endangered land is a more effective way to ease the growing threat to biodiversity than looking at the issue on a species by species basis. Hoekstra poses the question, “What is the point of saving individual plants and animals if they will soon have no place to live?” How do we go about mending the holes that our globalized footprint leaves on the world? How should an individual attempt to counteract the effects of such a large and decentralized entity as the globalized economy? Instead of only trying to conserve ecological hotspots or specific plots of land that have been deemed necessary for a single endangered species' survival, his group has focused on local efforts to conserve categories of land that are threatened by globalization and development. —*Mike Seager '09*

# CAMPUS ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY GAINS MOMENTUM

ENVIRONMENTAL sustainability is in the forefront of campus considerations these days. According to Cara Donovan '08 "We've become much more environmentally-focused on campus than we were even two years ago." This is reflected in the many substantial programs and initiatives underway at the College, including:

## **Environmental Model Committee (EMC)**

This committee is integral to each of the activities mentioned below. The EMC is comprised of appointed staff, faculty and students who identify and shepherd environmental initiatives on campus. This spring, the committee structure was modified to reflect its increased role on campus. Among the changes was the appointment of Professor of Economics and Goodwin-Niering Center Associate Director Gerald Visgilio as chair.

Among other activities, the EMC drafted language for a Campus Energy Conservation and Efficiency Policy, and is working with Physical Plant to define and plan for a campus-wide Environmental Sustainability Audit.

## **American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment**

President Higdon became a charter signatory in January 2007. This commits the College to join other U.S. higher education institutions in working toward the reduction of campus-emitted greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming. An ad-hoc subcommittee of the Environmental Model Committee is charged with

identifying goals, benchmarks and steps to work toward "climate neutrality." EMC goals include the establishment of an energy conservation and efficiency policy and reduction of campus GHG emissions by 20 percent by 2010.

## **Renewable Energy Certificates**

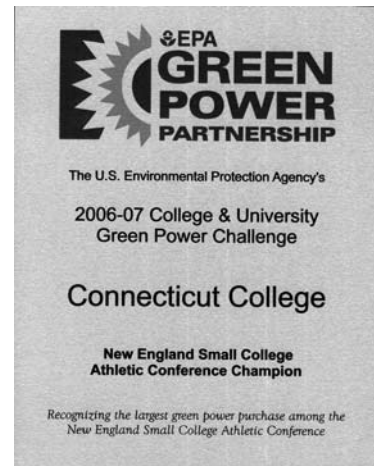
CC purchased wind Renewable Energy Certificates this year to offset 100 percent of our annual electricity purchase of 15,000 MWh. The increase from 50 percent in 2005-2006 to 100 percent offset in 2006-2007 was prompted by the Environmental Model Committee and supported with the student Renewable Energy comprehensive fee surcharge. This resulted in a U.S. EPA Green Power Partnership Program Award.

## **A Campus Strategic Priority**

Language was included in the College's strategic priority document to reflect this community's commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainability. The Environmental Stewardship Priority states the the College will enhance its "historical commitment to the environment through scholarly research, management of the arboretum campus, green building techniques, increased energy efficiency, and creative solutions to contemporary ecological challenges."

## **RecycleMania**

From January 28 – April 7, the College participated for a second year in the intercollegiate, 10-week competi-



tion to increase campus recycling and reduce waste. Of the 201 U.S. colleges and universities enrolled in RecycleMania, CC ranked 24th. The cumulative weight of recyclables collected per person at the College was 39.5 lbs. The total amount of recyclables reported by the competing schools was 41.3 million pounds. This program boosted waste reduction on campuses! — Amy Cabaniss, *Campus Environmental Coordinator*

## **Center Recognizes Budding Environmentalist Lauren A. Madaffari**

Each year the Goodwin-Niering Center offers an "Excellence in Environmental Conservation Studies Award" to a student who participates in the statewide Connecticut Science Fair. This year's recipient, Lauren A. Madaffari, of Norwalk, Conn., attends Brian McMahon High School and was chosen to receive the \$100 award by Center Associate Director Diana Whitelaw. In providing this award each year, the Center seeks to encourage environmental scientists among the ranks of junior high and high school students.

Lauren, whose project "Pesticide Absorption in Aquatic Plants" also won the Pfizer Life Sciences Award and the Audubon Connecticut/Arch Chemicals Environmental Award, hopes to work in a science-related field when she gets older. Congratulations to Lauren!

## **BORRELLI JOINS STEERING COMMITTEE**

Associate Professor of Government Mary Anne Borrelli is the most recent member of our faculty to join the Center Steering Committee. Professor Borelli completed her undergraduate work at Wellesley College and earned her M.A. and Ph.D. degrees at Harvard University. Her expertise is in the political system of the U.S., and her primary work is with presidential politics. Her special interests include the role of women in politics and U.S. environment policy and politics.

Professor Borelli's specific environmental interests focus on natural and cultural resource management policy in the southwestern U.S. She has examined the management of National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management properties, including site-based studies of tourism, multiple-use decision making and recreation policy. "I am examining the effects of environmental perception — judgments that encompass aesthetic, political and ethical standards — upon environmental policy in the Southwest."

She is past Director of the College's Holleran Center for Community Action and Public Policy, author of *The President's Cabinet: Gender, Power and Representation*, and editor of the book *The Other Elites: Women, Politics, and Power in the Executive Branch*.

## CENTER AWARDS CERTIFICATES TO CLASS OF 2007

ON SATURDAY, MAY 19, the Goodwin-Niering Center held its sixth Recognition Ceremony to honor seven graduating seniors. Parents, families, advisors and friends turned out to watch the seniors receive their certificates and speak briefly about their internships, projects and plans for the future. Their plans varied widely, and included teaching English to high school students in Germany, working for Urban Ecology in New York City, working for Harvard Forest, conducting research on the effects of deer browse



*Environmental Historian Dr. Linda Lear '62 addresses graduating seniors at the Center's Recognition Ceremony.*

on invasive species, teaching Spanish to special education students in New York City, monitoring snail and fish for the California Bureau of Land Management, working for an energy consulting firm, and teaching sustainable land management in Sierra Leone.

After a special greeting by President Higdon, Robert Askins, Harrison Director of the Goodwin-Niering Center, spoke about the history of environmental studies at Connecticut College. Associate Director Gerald Visgilio spoke about the Center's academic mission, and reviewed some of the subjects discussed in the Center seminar course this year. "The distinction between students and faculty in the seminar becomes blurred at the margins. There are times when the students become the teachers and teachers become the students" he said at the close of the ceremony. Diana Whitelaw, Associate Director of the Center, introduced the seniors with her warm and insightful com-

ments. She also announced that Christine Monahan and Jennifer Vasquez were this year's recipients of the Helen F. Mathieson '52 Award for Excellence in the Goodwin-Niering Center's Certificate Program. Finally, Executive Director Glenn Dreyer presented the well-deserved Environmental Studies Certificates to each student.

Dreyer then introduced the distinguished guest speaker, Linda Lear '62, environmental historian, biographer, and member of the College's Board of Trustees. Dr. Lear has written a number of books including *Rachel Carson: Witness for Nature*, and most recently, *Beatrix Potter: A Life in Nature*, about

the famous children's book author.

Lear told the students they were about to embark on a wild and dangerous adventure. "The world is much more likely to take you seriously today." She said there is wide recognition of the failure of the U.S. to preserve the environment. According to Dr. Lear, "Legislation has not done much to change attitudes." She quoted Rachel Carson "Humans need protection from their own acts ... there is a necessity to instill in future generations a sense of wonder." She advised the audience to read a book by Rachel Carson entitled *A Fable for Tomorrow*.

## MARTA BENAVIDES, FIRST CENTER VISITING FELLOW

MARTA BENAVIDES, a social and environmental activist from El Salvador, was on campus during spring 2007 as the first Goodwin-Niering Center Visiting Fellow. This program is funded by a grant to the Center by the A.W. Mellon Foundation, and is part of an initiative to bring new perspectives to the College's environmental studies programs. Benavides began her activism in El Salvador in her adolescence, and she brought to the College four decades of commitment to issues of social and economic justice and environmental sustainability — from work in the U.S. with migrant labor and work in El Salvador against a brutal military dictatorship to setting up global networks of solidarity for refugees of El Salvador's civil war. Benavides returned to El Salvador after the peace accords in 1992. She attended many of the UN conferences in the last decades of the century, including the Earth Summit in Rio and the Women's Conference in Beijing. She continues to work in El Salvador and through women's transnational NGOs on issues of peace, justice and sustainability.

Benavides was hosted by Professor Mab Segrest of the College's Gender and Women's Studies (GWS) Department, and

the two team-taught the second half of "Transnational Women's Movements." In addition to inviting two guest speakers to the class to discuss international environmental activities, she arranged for four



*Center Visiting Fellow Marta Benavides of El Salvador*

students with keen interest in the environment to attend a Grassroots Academy in New York in preparation for the UN Commission on Sustainable Development. Benavides took Joanna McClintick '07, Rachel Chase, Sarah Trapido '08 and Lakshmi Kannan '10 to the two-day workshop in March. She also arranged a day-long trip to the UN with six students to attend the proceedings of the Commission

on Sustainable Development. Benavides scheduled meetings with delegates from the Youth Caucus and with various NGO representatives and brought the students to the Commission's general sessions where issues such as climate change were debated.

Although mainly based in the GWS department, Benavides gave a guest lecture in the Center's Certificate Program seminar class, met with two Latin American history classes, and participated in a seminar on Hurricane Katrina. By semester's end there were discussions about bringing Benavides back for a return visit next year.

## CLASS OF 2009 PLANS TO TACKLE MANY ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

**Sarah Ayres** Major: History; Environmental Focus: The history of natural resource policies that have shaped fishing communities in coastal New England

**Rebecca Beachell** Major: Government; Minor: Philosophy; Environmental Focus: Environmental policy in China

**Tyler Dunham** Major: Environmental Studies; Minor: Economics; Environmental Focus: Practical applications and economics of renewable energy technologies

**Hans Eysenbach** Major: International Relations; Minor: Hispanic Studies; Environmental Focus: The environmental effects of very large development projects on indigenous people in Latin America

**Rick Hederstrom** Major: Ethnobotany; Environmental Focus: Use of plants by people in South American rainforests

**Maya Jacobs** Major: Environmental Studies; Minor: Hispanic Studies; Environmental Focus: Sustainable development in South America

**Jeff Nemec** Major: Philosophy; Environmental Focus: Philosophical aspects of greening athletic competitions



*Class of 2009 Back Row (l-r): Mike Seager, Hans Eysenbach, Maya Jacobs, Rebecca Beachell, Samantha Wright, Sarah Ayres, Katherine Sacca, Jeff Nemec. Front Row (l-r): Jamey Smith, Andrew Watts, Rick Hederstrom, Tyler Dunham*

**Katherine Sacca** Major: Environmental Studies; Minor: Anthropology; Environmental Focus: Effects of ecotourism in the Bahamas

**Mike Seager** Major: International Relations; Environmental Focus: Brazil as a case study for a country changing major energy sources

**Jamey Smith** Majors: Biology/Environmental Studies; Environmental Focus: Biodiesel as an alternative fuel for fishing fleets

**Andrew Watts** Major: Government; Environmental Focus: Interaction between government and environmental advocacy groups

**Samantha Wright** Major: Environmental Studies; Environmental Focus: Effect of water quality on Long Island Sound lobster populations

## INTERNSHIPS AROUND THE CORNER AND AROUND THE WORLD

THE MEMBERS of the Certificate Class of 2008 are pursuing internships near and far this summer. We always look forward to the first session of the Certificate Program Seminar in the fall because it is so exciting to hear the seniors report on their accomplishments and adventures. They are a diverse group this year, with majors in biology, Hispanic studies, English, international relations, history and environmental studies (ES). Here are their internship plans:

Biology major **Christina Comfort** will be interning for Save Our Seas in Hanalei, Hawaii. **Cara Donovan**, a Hispanic studies and ES major, will be working at the Manu Learning Center in Cusco, Peru, on a variety of projects including the Biogarden and Reforestation Project. Cara will be involved in sustainable agricultural practices in the tropical rainforest as well as the development of reforestation management strategies. English major **Eliza Greenman** will be the assistant for educational programs and development at The Norman Bird Sanctuary in Middletown, RI. **Kathryn Gutleber**, an English and ES major seeking to gain experience in environmental journalism, will be working for *E Magazine* in Norwalk, CT. ES major **Kelsey Jacobsen** will be working with Operation Wallacea in Indonesia on a variety of

terrestrial and marine research projects. **Bianca Kissel**, also an ES major, will be interning in a clinic with Cross Cultural Solutions in Ayacucho, Peru. Bianca plans to investigate water contamination issues as they relate to health problems in the local village. **Jessica LeClair**, an international relations and ES major, will be serving with the Snowchange Cooperative in Varangerbotn, Norway, to work with indigenous communities documenting their perspective on climate change. **Michel Lindsay**, as anthropology and ES major, will be interning at the nearby Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center, where she will be assessing and documenting cultural and ecological resources that are located on the Mashantucket Reservation. Also an ES major, **Katherine Serafin** will work as a research assistant for the USGS Science Center for Coastal and Marine Geology's Hurricane and Extreme Storm Impact Group in St. Petersburg, FL. For her summer project she will be analyzing pre-storm and post-storm data from the Nor'easter that hit New England in April 2007. History and ES major **Gabe Sidman** will be doing ecological restoration in an historical setting, working in the Natural Resources Division of the Gettysburg National Military Park in Gettysburg PA.



## 2007 SENIOR INTEGRATIVE PROJECTS

ON APRIL 26TH and May 3rd, the seven members of the class of 2007 completed their certificate requirements with the final presentations of their Senior Integrative Projects. Each student delivered a 15-minute talk based on their work during the past year. The topics were varied, and the presentations reflected the students' keen involvement with their individual environmental concerns.

**Noah Fralich** delivered his presentation on the "Renewable Energy Sources Act and its Effect on the German Wind Energy Industry: Lessons for the U.S." Working with Jane Dawson, Weinmann '51 Professor of Government, Noah explored Germany's advanced renewable energy industry and its landmark energy law that prioritizes renewable energy.

**David Hecht** shed new light on nuclear energy with his presentation entitled "Returning to Nuclear Power: A Historical Look at the U.S. Experience and Analysis of the Current Obstacles to New Plant Development." Working with Government Professor William Frasure, David examined two of the current obstacles to new plant development: financial uncertainty and the lack of permanent nuclear waste disposition.

**Sara Jayanthi** presented her work entitled "A Paleolimnological Examination of the Acidity Trends in Two Kettle Ponds along the Eastern Seaboard." She worked with Peter Siver, Charles and Sarah P. Becker '27 Professor of Botany, in this study of chrysophytes, microscopic algae covered with siliceous scales, to evaluate acidity trends in ponds.

**Rebecca Mason** delivered her presentation entitled "Local Food as an Educational Tool: A Deeper Look into Student Run Gardens." Working with visiting Botany Instructor Bryan Connolly, Rebecca prepared this study to learn about destructive practices involved in large-scale food industrialization, to promote the unique and beneficial role of student run gardens in academia, and to promote means for a sustainable future.

**Christine Monahan's** topic was "Mining, AIDS, and Development: Could 'Sustainable Mining' Bring More Harm than Good to Madagascar," in which she examined the causal link between mining and the spread of HIV/AIDS throughout



*Class of 2007, l-r, Christine Monahan, Sara Jayanthi, Jesse Taylor-Waldman, Noah Fralich, Rebecca Mason, David Hecht, Jennifer Vasquez*

Sub-Saharan Africa and its implications for sustainable development in Madagascar. Christine worked on her honors thesis under the guidance of Professor Dawson.

**Jesse Taylor-Waldman** discussed "The Role of Land Trusts and Conservation Easements in Environmental Protection in Vermont: A Case Study of the Vermont Nature Conservancy and the Vermont Land Trust." He explored how conservation easements function in land acquisition strategies, as well as the extent to

which they are used to protect biodiversity. Professor Dawson was his advisor.

**Jennifer Vasquez** presented her honors thesis on the "Use of Magnesium to Prevent Lead Poisoning in Zebra Fish: A Model for Prevention in Humans." Working with Professor Stephen Loomis, Jean C. Tempel '65 Professor of Biology, she studied the effects of lead and magnesium on fecundity and hatchability of zebra fish eggs and the implications for prevention of lead poisoning in humans.



*In February Jennifer Vasquez '07 represented the Center at an event highlighting the college's five academic centers. She spoke about her senior thesis project "Use of Magnesium to Prevent Lead Poisoning in Zebra Fish: A Model for Prevention in Humans." Jennifer was one of two students this year who received the Center's Helen F. Mathieson Award for Excellence.*

# EARTH DAY-COMMUNITY DAY 07 A SUCCESS

The planning for Earth Day-Community Day 2007 began in October. College staff members Will Harper, Natasja Eerens, Amy Cabaniss and Kathy Dame led the charge along with interested students, staff and off-campus representatives of the Sierra Club, New London Earth Day and Three Rivers United Environmentalists (TRUE) from Three Rivers Community College. The early planning and teamwork paid off — the result was a successful event on the Knowlton Green that featured over 40 displays and vendors plus performers, arboretum tours, various events and an estimated 600 participants. The sunny April 21 event included:

- Arboretum-sponsored children's activities (games, crafts, tours and storytelling);
- "Reuse-A-Shoe Van," hosted by Pine Point School to collect old athletic shoes to be made into Nike Grind, a material used for track and playground surfaces;
- *Songs of the Earth* by Folk singer, Geoff Kaufman;
- Mystic Paper Beasts;
- New London Public School poetry

- contest winners;
- Circle dance and drumming hosted by the Dance Department;
- Earth salsa dancing;
- Displays by CC student clubs, The Arboretum, The U.S. Coast Guard Academy Sustainability Club, Ammanah, Barefoot Books, The Body Shop at Home, Connecticut Fund for the Environment, Flavours of Life, Fiddleheads Food Co-op, FRESH New London, Mystic Aquarium, Norwich Area Global Warming Action Group, New London Earth Day, the Pampered Chef, Project Oceanology, Reforest the Tropics, Regional Multicultural Magnet School, Shaklee, Sierra Club, TRUE, Turcotte candles, Smith Barney, Solar Wrights, Southeastern Connecticut Resource Recovery & Recycling Authority,



*A representative of the Mystic Aquarium shows starfish to children at Earth Day/Community Day 2007.*

Susan Stone Above Elite Studios, Urban Eden Soap Company and Wild Ones;

- Food and beverages;
- An evening concert for students and ...
- Fun, sharing and learning!

This year's event was broadened from past Earth Day celebrations to increase campus involvement and outreach to New London County. Plans are being made for an even bigger and better Earth Day-Community Day in 2008.

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