FROM THE DEAN

Sustainability is a journey, and with the support of the Board of Trustees, administration, students, faculty, and staff we have made great progress at Kankakee Community College. Our Mission is “enhancing quality of life through learning,” and as Wim Wiewel, President, Portland State University, said, “My role is to provide the very best educational opportunities and ensure our graduates are ready for the 21st century workforce. That means exposing students to the key ideas, problems and solutions they will face after they graduate...I believe, as do nearly 700 of my colleagues who have signed the American College & University Presidents’ Climate Commitment, that a focus on sustainability is critical to that preparation....What we have found ... is that our students learn to analyze problems from multiple points of view — economic, social, technological, environmental. They become better thinkers and ultimately better global, and local, citizens... I am a firm believer... that a focus on sustainability drives our students to learn and innovate in ways that will help meet the challenges of the 21st century”.

A trans-disciplinary area of study, sustainability stretches beyond environmental awareness to include issues of economic viability and social justice. This co-mingling of subject areas offers limitless opportunities for collaboration and cross-pollination. An institution of higher education that integrates the social, ecological, and economic aspects of life in the 21st Century by incorporating sustainability in the curriculum, on the campus, and in the community it serves, KCC is helping students meet those challenges.

With over two million freshman students entering colleges every single year in the United States, higher education is a great leverage point for addressing sustainable approaches to the complex issues that affect us all. “The core message is that higher education has a special and unique opportunity and role in meeting the challenges of the [globe], offering sustainable solutions, and developing educational approaches that prepare a new generation of students, faculty, and staff”. (The 2014 ACUPCC Climate Leadership Summit: “Why It Matters,” Mitchell Thomashow, PhD).

We have come a long way in the seven years since we have embraced sustainability as a way to prepare students to successfully negotiate inevitable challenges and to live happy and constructive lives. And I want to thank the many faculty, staff, and students for the invaluable work they are doing and for helping to create a culture of sustainability. I am confident that 2016 will bring new opportunities for our campus and the communities we serve.

"The relationship of mankind with nature must not be conducted with greed, manipulation and exploitation, but it must conserve the divine harmony that exists between creatures and Creation" (Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter LAUDATO SI’ on care for our common home, May, 2015)

Sustainably,

Bert Jacobson, Ph.D., Dean for Environmental and Institutional Sustainability

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sustainability has been a priority of Kankakee Community College for the last seven years. Our Sustainability Vision is to be “a model of sustainability for District 520, for Illinois higher education, and for Community Colleges nationwide. KCC will also be a leader in sustainability education, preparing students to successfully negotiate inevitable challenges and to live happy and constructive lives that serve the betterment of humanity and future generations”.

To support this Vision, KCC has addressed four goals:

1. Achieve carbon neutrality for the KCC campus by involving faculty, staff, and students in creating and maintaining a campus culture that embodies the ideals of sustainability.
2. Expand KCC’s curriculum to support sustainability and the growing renewable energy industry.
3. Create models that illustrate sustainability and share these models and expanded curriculum with the local community as well as with educational institutions across Illinois.
4. Create partnerships between KCC and other community organizations to promote and nurture sustainability beyond the confines of the KCC campus.

This Sustainability Annual Report addresses progress made in achieving these goals in five areas: Campus, Community, Regional, State-Wide and National Initiatives.
CAMPUS INITIATIVES

• Campus Sustainability Interested Faculty (CSI-F)
  The members of the Campus Sustainability Interested Faculty team (CSI-F) are the go-to faculty champions for sustainability at KCC. The purpose of CSI-F is to advance sustainability on the Kankakee Community College campus and to provide input on initiatives designed to accomplish our sustainability goals. While the team is comprised of ten faculty and three staff members, there are currently more than two dozen faculty members who incorporate sustainability into their curricula. How KCC Identifies Sustainability Courses and Programs can be found at: http://www.kcc.edu/Community/sustainability/Documents/Identifying_Sustainability_in_KCC_Courses_2012.pdf. A list of courses can be found at: http://www.kcc.edu/Community/sustainability/Documents/KCC%20SustainabilityCourses%205-22-13.pdf

• Greening Your Curriculum: The College is supporting faculty as they continue to incorporate sustainability-related content into their curricula. In 2015, 67 of KCC’s 631 credit courses (or 10.1%) have sustainability-related material. Currently, more of the faculty I have been talking to are finding more ways to introduce sustainability topics into their curricula and are finding that it increases student engagement. Our goal continues to be 100% of curricula involving to some degree sustainability and we are increasing our percentage each year.

• Waste Reduction Plan: The College is continuing its commitment to waste reduction by increasing diversion of materials from the waste stream by recycling and reuse. We continue to divert materials at or above the 1987 base-line, and in 2015, we submitted our state-mandated five-year Waste Reduction Plan Update. The report, dated March 27, 2015, asserted an overall recycling rate of 69.1%. The Illinois Solid Waste Management Act requires a 40% reduction from the 1987 disposal rate per FTE which was .03008 tons (75.11 tons/2497 FTEs); the expected 40% reduction would need to be less than .01805. The 2015 disposal rate was .01416 tons per FTE (29.6 tons/2090 FTEs) or a 52.93% reduction from 1987. Some reported volumes include: paper (11.5 tons), cardboard, (5.82 tons), plastics (6.6 tons), pallets (27.45 tons), books (7.79 tons recycled and repurposed through Better World Books), aluminum cans (0.55tons), scrap metal (1.15 tons), batteries (0.36 tons.), fluorescent bulbs (.11 tons), lamp ballasts (.47 tons), cell phones (37 collected and turned over to Harbor House), electronic waste (2.62 tons) and glass (1.8 tons). As social justice is one of the tenets of Sustainability, KCC has translated the electronic waste recycling into one of social benefit by donating 2 tons (76% of the e-waste total) to World
Computer Exchange for repurposing (see below). Beginning in 2015, KCC also began donating non-useable electronics to SouthStar Services, [http://www.southstarservices.org/](http://www.southstarservices.org/), an organization dedicated to challenging the limits and changing the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. They currently serve more than 500 children and adults per day throughout the Chicagoland area and Northwest Indiana.

- **World Computer Exchange**, [http://www.worldcomputerexchange.org/](http://www.worldcomputerexchange.org/), is a global education and environment organization founded to connect more youth in developing countries to opportunities, skills, and understanding the Internet—while keeping working computers out of landfills. KCC is one of twenty-eight organizations named on the World Computer Exchange Honor Roll of Donors. The largest non-profit provider reused computers in the US, its Volunteers provide online support to 530 partner organizations in 68 countries with support in planning, fund raising, technology, educational content and appropriate disposal of e-waste. KCC computers have found their way to Piedras Negras, Mexico, Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, Senegal, and Nigeria. Since April of 2015, KCC’s equipment donations to World Computer Exchange’s Chicago Chapter made it possible for them to ship 280 computers to schools in the Dominican Republic, 175 computers to schools in Honduras and 56 computers to schools in Haiti.

- **Sustainability Week** is held every year during Earth Week. The highlights of this year’s 8th Annual Sustainability Week (April 20-24, 2015) were the presentations by students and faculty and film showings, all with a focus on Sustainability issues. The week ended with the 4th Annual SMHEC Student Sustainability Summit, at Moraine Valley Community College. This was a free summit for students and by students with a focus, this year, on “opportunities.”

  Student presentations included: “Genetically Modified Foods: The Pros and Cons,” a discussion presented by Students for Eco-Quality and the Miner Memorial Library, with the assistance of Karen Becker (the club’s advisor); “Aquaponics and a Greenhouse Tour,” presented by Student Linda Nitz-Mercaeant and Professor Katelynn Ohrt.

  Faculty presentations included: “Organic Gardening,” by
Professor Kristen Larson; “Biking for Beginners,” by Professor Deborah Renville, League of American Bicyclists Certified Instructor; “The Psychology of Sustainability,” by Professor Debbie Podwika; “From the Animals’ Point of View,” by Professor Dawn Wrobel; “Greening Your Skin Care and the Story of Cosmetics,” by Professor Dawn Wrobel; “Bike 101: Basic Bicycle Maintenance,” by Professor Deborah Renville and Terry McGuire, from Tern of the Wheel; and “How to Make a Rain Barrel,” by Jennifer Martin, Project Coordinator for the Electrical Technology Program.

The Students for Eco-Quality held a Reusable Cup Sale -- a way for us to pay less for fountain drinks in the Cafeteria and to help us reduce the amount of Styrofoam cups used.

- **Student Sustainability Literacy** is assessed by an annual 36 question survey is sent to all students during Sustainability Week. The purpose of the survey is to measure the sustainability learning that occurs at KCC from year to year. The base-line was established in April 2013 at 57.2% and in April 2015 we have increased slightly to 59.3%. With more and more classes incorporating sustainability-related content, we expect that percentage to continually increase. The goal is to work toward a general learning outcome for all graduates at KCC, and graduating students with an adequate sustainability literacy to be successful in our “greening” world.

- **The Students for Eco-Quality** club was initiated by students in the fall of 2012 and they have been active in many sustainability initiatives including selling re-usable mugs, participating in community clean-up activities (seen here), and attending conferences.

- **The KCC Men’s Basketball Team** helped with river cleanup near the Aroma Park Boat Launch station on September 19.

- **The Horticulture and Agriculture Club** is going strong with their Farmers Market for faculty, staff and students. The proceeds from the Farmers Market help fund Horticulture and Agriculture student activities. Students in the Horticulture and Agriculture programs work in the Greenhouse, raise crops hydroponically, and, recently began aquaponically raising tilapia.
• Spring 2015 Environmental Biology Class, taught by Professor Kristen, Larsen took a Field Trip to Kankakee State Park.

• The KCC Student Nurses Association collected donations for Harbor House. Shown here are members of the club and faculty advisers.

• The 50kW Endurance Wind Turbine continues to save KCC energy costs, and has produced 237,947 kW to date (as of June 2015), saving the college about $18,251 in electricity costs. The wind turbine was originally installed to provide renewable energy for the ATEC building and, when Illinois releases funds in 2016, will finally complete that plan.
• **The Solar Array** on the North Extension Center roof is performing well and produces about 15 MWh/year of renewable energy, lowering our electric bill, and reducing our carbon footprint by more than 22,000 lbs. of CO2 which is an offset equivalent of over 260 trees.

• **“Hydration Stations”** or water bottle filling stations have been very popular with students, faculty, and staff. With filtered water bottle filling stations located around the KCC Riverfront, west Campus, and North Extension Center, students, staff, and visitors have easy access to free filtered water for their reusable water bottles and mugs. Since 2012, The Sustainability Center has partnered with the Students for Eco-Quality club to provide reusable water bottles at a reasonable cost. The water bottles can also be purchased in the cafeteria.

  o There are currently 7 hydration stations and additional stations are planned. Locations are at: Riverfront Campus
     --1st Floor (by the restrooms near Iroquois Room)
     --1st Floor Technology Building
     --3rd Floor (where L&R Building meet)
     --3rd Floor (WDC by the restrooms)
     --West Campus (by the AG/Hort classrooms)
     --North Extension Center (1st and 2nd Floor)

  o Since the installation of its first bottle filling station in July 2012 until last count in June 2015, students, staff, and visitors have procured 12,552 gallons of filtered water from them. If they had purchased bottled water instead that would have been more than 47,544 disposable plastic bottles at a cost of $75,594.96. (Of course, they would have been recycled)

  o Using a refillable bottle saves both money and natural resources:
     --The energy conserved from recycling a single plastic bottle can light a 60-watt light bulb for 6 hours.
     --120 grams of greenhouse gases are generated by the creation of single disposable plastic bottle of water
     --Bottled water from hundreds or thousands of miles away is expensive and perpetuates our reliance on fossil fuels.
### METRICS

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<tr>
<th>FY Year</th>
<th>Natural Gas Therms</th>
<th>Electricity KWh</th>
<th>Total MBTU</th>
<th>Total CO2e</th>
<th>Change MBTU</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Change In Cost</th>
<th>Total Square ft. Operated as of 12/31/15</th>
<th>MB TU per sq. ft.</th>
<th>Total Cost per square ft.</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>$  1.85</td>
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<td>2014</td>
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<td>49,980.84</td>
<td>5,576</td>
<td>17.36%</td>
<td>$629,747.34</td>
<td>22.59%</td>
<td>414,605</td>
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<td>6,246,462</td>
<td>53,503.70</td>
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<td>16.39%</td>
<td>414,605</td>
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<td>$  1.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **An Energy Scorecard** (above) continues to help is track Energy Consumption trends month by month to measure reductions in consumption. All energy saving initiatives were supported in part by grants. The measures are targeted to Operations (the alignment of KCC operations with the goal of sustainability), Education and Research (the enhancement of a culture of sustainability...
through education and research), and Planning, Administration & Engagement (providing administrative and financial support for sustainability initiatives). Note: in 2014 we added two new buildings (NEC, 18,294 sq.ft. and MITC, 52,614 sq.ft.), so 2015 will be a new baseline for energy reductions, as it will be the first full year with the new buildings fully operational. Even with the addition of new buildings, we have achieved 0.13 MBTU/square Foot and only increased our total energy cost by twenty-eight cents per square foot (from $1.49 to $1.77), mainly due to the operation of the Manufacturing and Industrial Training programs. A goal is to begin to increase the energy efficiency in the MITC.

- **STARS.** KCC is a Charter member of STARS (Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System), a program of AASHE (Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education), of which we are also a member.

The STARS measurement system helps us to document KCC’s sustainability initiatives and benchmark them on a national level. KCC is currently recognized at the Gold Level, see link at: [https://stars.aashe.org/institutions/kankakee-community-college-il/report/2015-02-03/](https://stars.aashe.org/institutions/kankakee-community-college-il/report/2015-02-03/).

- **ACUPCC.** KCC signed The American College and University President’s Climate Commitment (ACUPCC) in 2007. The Commitment recognizes the unique responsibility that institutions of higher education have as role models for their communities and in training the people who will develop the social, economic and technological solutions to reverse global warming. Presidents signing the Commitment pledged to eliminate their campuses’ greenhouse gas emissions over time. This involves: Completing an emissions inventory, within two years, setting a target date and interim milestones for becoming climate neutral, taking immediate steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by choosing from a list of short-term actions, integrating sustainability into the curriculum and making it part of the educational experience, and making the action plan, inventory and progress reports publicly available. The reports are publicly available on our KCC website: [http://www.kcc.edu/Community/sustainability/Pages/goals.aspx](http://www.kcc.edu/Community/sustainability/Pages/goals.aspx) and on the ACUPCC website: [http://rs.acupcc.org/search/?abs=&q=Kankakee%20Community%20College](http://rs.acupcc.org/search/?abs=&q=Kankakee%20Community%20College)

“The ACUPCC has fundamentally shifted higher education's attention on sustainability from a
series of excellent but distinct programs to a strategic imperative of presidents, academic officers, business officers and trustees - becoming a key lens for measuring success. It represents a cultural shift to focus on all aspects of social, economic and ecological sustainability” (ACUPCC Report, 216-12).

GRANT SUPPORT

In 2015 KCC used 7 sustainability related grants totaling $1,516,866 to support the HVAC program, renewable energy curriculum development, the construction of a LEED Gold North Extension Center, and the construction of a LEED Gold Advanced Technology Education Center. There is also $4,850,000 in pending funds for the Advanced Technology Education Center (held up while Illinois creates a state budget). The energy efficiency improvements are saving the college in energy costs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Organization</th>
<th>Grant Purpose</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity</td>
<td>New Construction North Extension Center</td>
<td>$17,249</td>
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<tr>
<td>Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation</td>
<td>Green Building North Extension Center</td>
<td>$252,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation</td>
<td>ATEC</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Through IGEN</td>
<td>HVAC Equipment Loaner Program</td>
<td>$11,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Science Foundation</td>
<td>C4: Community Colleges Confronting the Conundrum Renewable Energy Market Development</td>
<td>$900,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois Emergency Management Agency</td>
<td>School and Campus Grant for classroom security</td>
<td>$58,988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$1,516,866</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

- **Council for Community Sustainability** (CCS) was formed to advance sustainability into our community with a structured approach. The goals of the Council are to:
  1. Coordinate sustainability sectors, across a broad spectrum, affecting community development and quality of life. The Council has addressed housing, sustainable agriculture and local foods, sustainable education, facilities managers from the largest employers in Kankakee County, community and business groups, and green job development.
  2. Be a driving force for sustainability in the Kankakee area, the quad-counties, and the South Chicago Region.
  3. Share resources and knowledge in order to accelerate change.
  4. Provide opportunities for and assistance with obtaining additional resources, such as grants and funding.
Green Drinks. KCC’s Council for Community Sustainability Green Drinks, Kankakee (see: http://www.greendrinks.org/IL/Kankakee and http://www.kcc.edu/Community/sustainability/resources/Pages/greendrinks.aspx) is an opportunity for “green-minded” people to meet informally in a relaxed setting to exchange ideas and network. Green Drinks is happening in more than 84 countries and 806 cities, including all 50 US states. Topics presented in 2015 were:

- Illinois Native Plants (Janine Catchpole, President), Recycling in Kankakee County (Ernie Lopez, Republic Services), Solarizing the Greater Kankakee Area (Tim Wilhelm, Jennifer Martin), Feeding the Community (Pastor Larry Garcia), The Pilot Hill Wind Farm (Jon Baker, EDF), The Kankakee River - Past, Present and Future (Kevin Culver, Aqua, and JR Black), Ask a Master Gardener (Holy Froning, IL Extension Service, and Master Gardeners), All About Bees (Julie Larsen), Starting Your Garden (Dr. James Theuri and Holly Froning), The Illiana Toll Road (Erica Dodt, Sierra Club).

Currently there are over 150 interested parties on our mailing list for Green Drinks.

REGIONAL INITIATIVES

- SMHEC Sustainability Task Force. KCC continues to be an active member with the South Metropolitan Higher Education Consortium (SMHEC) and the Sustainability Task Force. SMHEC consisting of 12 colleges and universities in the Chicago South suburbs (6 community colleges, 3 private and 3 public universities). Members of SMHEC are KCC, DeVry University, Governors State University, Illinois Institute of Technology, Joliet Junior College, Lewis University, Moraine Valley Community College, Olivet Nazarene University, Prairie State College, St. Xavier College, South Suburban College, and University of St. Francis.

- 2nd SMHEC Linking and Leveraging to Build Resilient Communities Workshop held on May 1st again brought together administrative teams from the 12 colleges and universities and their community leaders to share progress in sustainability initiatives and to explore next steps. Sarah Coulter kicked off the workshop with “An Overview of Resiliency—Introduction to the Rockefeller Foundation’s City Resilience Framework.” Groups addressed regional stressors and organization/institution reactions to the stressors and recommended future work.
**6th Annual SMHEC Sustainability Conference**, held on October 22 at Moraine Valley Community College, built on the success of the Linking and Leveraging Workshop by bringing together mayors, managers, and community leaders to share progress, problems, and solutions to make the Chicago Southland the Greenest Region. Mayor Dan McLaughlin of Orland Park was a keynote speaker and Edith Makra, Director of Environmental Initiatives for the Metropolitan Mayors’ Caucus presented the origin, development and evaluation of the Greenest Region Compact (GRC). Using pre-conference templates, the participants discussed how to help the Mayors Caucus finalize the GRC2. Participating municipalities were awarded certificates recognizing their sustainability efforts.

**4th Annual SMHEC Student Sustainability Summit, “Opportunities, Internships, Networking, Action,”** was held on April 10. The Summit was created by students, for students, with all students as presenters. The keynote speaker was Steve Buchtel, Executive Director, Trails for Illinois; there was a panel of recent graduates who discussed their career trajectories in sustainability and how they launched their careers; a “Share Fair” where sustainability professionals introduced participants to volunteer opportunities, student-made opportunities, internships, and career pathways; and, as always, presentations from fellow students discussing their experiences working in the “green” arena.

**STATE-WIDE AND NATIONAL INITIATIVES**

- **Illinois Green Economy Network (IGEN).** KCC is the founder and participating member of the sustainability network of all 48 Illinois community colleges. IGEN is the only state-wide community college sustainability network in the country, and provides opportunities for grants and sharing among all members.
IGEN’s Sustaining Funding Sources for 2015

KCC continues to participate in four IGEN-funded projects:

- **Solar for Schools**
  The Illinois Solar for Schools program offers teacher professional development, curriculum resources, technical assistance and instructional equipment to middle school and high school teachers across the state of Illinois to help them incorporate solar energy topics into their classroom. The Illinois Solar for Schools project team is comprised of personnel from the Center for Renewable Energy at Illinois State University, in partnership with staff and support from the Illinois Green Economy Network and four partnering community colleges, including KCC.

- **Power Pack**
  IGEN is partnering with the Midwest Renewable Energy Association (MREA) to offer the Illinois Power Pack program, a model community outreach and solar deployment program to advance photovoltaic (PV) installations in the state. The program is a logical extension of KCC’s National Science Foundation C4 grant as it funds efforts to partner with solar manufacturers, PV installation contractors, electrical supply houses and credit unions to offer ‘Power Hour’ seminars – a one-stop shopping experience for consumers to learn about, select and finance a solar PV system.

- **HVAC Equipment Loaner program**
  KCC was selected to participate in the Illinois Home Performance Equipment Loan Program (“IHPELP”) to provide area-wide HVAC professionals with access to a comprehensive set of home energy diagnostic equipment at no charge. The equipment valued at over $10,000 supplements the home energy diagnostic curriculum at KCC as well.

- **TAACCCT (Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training) grant.** KCC joined 17 other IGEN colleges to utilize a Department of Labor TAA grant to fund on-line, open-source courses. The grant enabled KCC to develop a 6 credit-hour certificate program consisting of two 3-credit, online courses addressing Sustainable Resource Management.

- **2010-2015 Illinois Campus Sustainability Compact.** The compact outlines objectives such as purchasing renewable energy, implementing green building practices, developing sustainable transportation options, improving water conservation, and incorporating sustainable dining practices. KCC has been recognized as achieving a Gold Level of
achievement—the highest level. Only about a dozen colleges and universities have been recognized as achieving the Gold Level. The plaque, signed by Governor Quinn, can be seen in the Sustainability Center at KCC.

- **Illinois Recycling Association** (IRA). KCC is taking the lead with IRA to create a state-wide certification program in Sustainable Resource Management. The first students completed the certificate in Fall of 2014 and KCC is now collaborating with the IRA on a state-wide national certification exam. To date only three states have accredited national certification programs through the National Certification Board of the National Recycling Coalition. With this new program, Illinois will be one of the next two or three states to be accredited.

**EXTERNAL RECOGNITION**

- Kankakee Community College has been named one of the “greenest” colleges in the nation, and is the only community college (number 23) on the list, published by BestColleges.com. The team which compiled the list reviewed more than 240 schools rated by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education. AASHE “recognizes colleges and universities that have achieved the greatest level of success with green initiatives on-campus and within in their surrounding communities. The association gauges these efforts using the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS), a voluntary system that allows different colleges and universities to report trends and track their sustainability efforts.” KCC’s STARS score is 67.94, a gold-level ranking. “Kankakee Community College encourages students and faculty to participate in aggressive recycling initiatives and conservation efforts and hopes to make Kankakee synonymous with sustainability,” according to the listing at [www.bestcolleges.com/features/greenest-universities](http://www.bestcolleges.com/features/greenest-universities).

- At the 2015 Illinois Recycling Association/Solid Waste Association of North America/Illinois Counties Solid Waste Management Association Annual Joint Conference, Dr. Bert Jacobson accepted an award on behalf of Kankakee Community for Outstanding Recycling Education Partner. Other award winners included NUCOR Steel (Best Use of Recycled Materials) and the John G. Shedd Aquarium (Outstanding Non-Profit Waste Reduction & Program).

- Timothy J. Wilhelm, Professor and Program Coordinator for Electrical Technology, was a “rock star” at an Advanced Technology Education (ATE) Principal Investigators Conference in October. According to the Community College Daily reporting on the conference:

  “Never underestimate the value of a cool, hands-on project to attract students to science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). That was the message of the faculty and students who opened a plenary session at the last week by playing rock and roll music with electric guitars they built. [“Just doing my best to represent Kankakee Community College on the National stage...”] said Wilhelm later in a Facebook post.] With that rollicking start, the audience was tuned in for the discussion among high school and community college instructors and their students about the ways the National Science Foundation (NSF)-funded STEM Guitar Project has improved math scores, boosted students’ soft skills and sparked their interest in STEM....Timothy J. Wilhelm described the nuts and bolts of offering the guitar building as a credit course at Kankakee Community College in
Illinois. His lessons cover federal safety regulations, quality control, first aid and CPR, as well as math and materials science. The introduction of each new tool comes with safety lessons. Wilhelm has found it an effective pedagogy for both traditional college-age students and older adults to learn work ethics and teamwork. A military veteran who was very quiet at the beginning of the semester kicked up his heels as he carried his guitar out of the last class. A young man told Wilhelm he had turned around his idea of himself as a failure. “Now I feel like I can do anything,” he quoted the student.

This is Donald McCoy, a consultant for STEM education and the moderator for the STEM Guitar session playing Tim’s guitar.

- Jennifer Martin, KCC Electrical Technology Program Coordinator, won the Midwest Renewable Energy’s solar car race with this this KCC solar car. The “Green Mini Demo Derby” was held at the 26th Annual Energy Fair June 19-21, 2015 in Custer, WI.

The car, the race, the winner!