

**Los Angeles Community College District's
Sustainable Building Program
NACUBO Narrative**

To protect the environment and to provide leadership in combating global climate change, the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) has gone green in a big way. Thanks to \$5.7 billion in bond funding, the LACCD has ended a 35-year hiatus on fresh construction and has looked toward the future by building green, living green and developing green power. The District has partnered with environmental organizations to develop a Sustainable Building Program that has established the LACCD as an innovator, leader and promoter of environmentally friendly solutions.

Launched in 2002, the District's Sustainable Building Program is leading a green revolution with about 90 green buildings completed, under construction or planned at the LACCD's nine schools. Many of the buildings are on colleges in underserved areas where buildings constructed with environmentally responsible methods and materials are otherwise rare. These new facilities, while highlighting green construction practices, also are curbing operating expenses. At the same time, the District has held down construction costs by working with the Division of the State Architect to speed the completion of its projects.

To help minimize the carbon footprint of the new buildings, the facilities are being equipped with energy-efficient features that are expected to save the District approximately \$4 million in energy costs annually. The new structures also are designed to cut maintenance costs and conserve natural resources. Several colleges have constructed new sports facilities with artificial turf that reduce sports-related injuries and cut water use. The long-term savings from these facilities provide additional capital for more building projects.

A key component of the LACCD's green efforts is a cutting-edge, four-part Renewable Energy Program designed to make each of the nine campuses energy independent. Through a combination of alternative-energy generation methods — mainly solar, but also such options as wind and geothermal power — the District is working toward producing sufficient on-site power for each college to meet daily electricity needs and become carbon neutral. The District already operates several solar farms, including a three-acre, \$1.2-million solar farm at East Los Angeles College that officials estimate will generate 1.9 million kilowatt-hours of electricity per year that should reduce electricity costs by \$270,000 per year.

The LACCD's energy initiative also promotes efficient power production. Plans call for each college to have a central plant – eliminating the need for less-efficient multiple systems – to heat and cool all buildings on campus. To spur energy conservation, the District is conducting energy audits on each campus. Energy-consuming equipment in all buildings will be retrofitted and state-of-the-art technologies will be installed to reduce energy use.

In addition, the District is weaving the principle of sustainability into its educational program. Through its Green College Curriculum and training models, LACCD is educating its students to fill the U.S. economy's growing number of green-collar jobs. After decades of serving Southern California, the District's colleges are well-positioned to teach students and surrounding communities about the benefits of sustainability and green living.

The District was one of the first public agencies to join the California Climate Action Registry, a private nonprofit organization that tracks greenhouse gas emissions. The District is one of 11 organizations in the Clinton Climate Initiative's pilot program to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions by upgrading campus buildings without using capital budgets or increasing monthly operating costs.

The LACCD's \$5.7-billion Sustainable Building Program should receive the National Association of College and University Business Officers' *Innovation Award* because of its "lead by example" efforts to change the way public agencies do business while also demonstrating its steadfast commitment to the global environment. The design, construction and transformation of one of the nation's largest community college districts shows that there are countless opportunities for businesses and public agencies to "go green" and save money. By taking the lead through its ambitious, large-scale plan to use sustainable design in new campus construction and renovation, the District believes its efforts will greatly benefit our communities and society as it sets a benchmark for other educational institutions.