

Saint Mary's "Focuses the Nation"

By Sophie Braccini

Steve Woolpert, Dean of Liberal Arts at Saint Mary's College, is one of hundreds of faculty members around the country engaging their institutions this month in "Focus the Nation," a project that coordinates teams of teachers and students at more than 1,000 locations to engage in a collaborative discussion about possible solutions to global warming.

"My hope is that Saint Mary's College can help our community confront the biggest challenge of our generation. We stand at a unique moment in human history. We are in a race against time to elevate global warming solutions to the top of the US political agenda," says Woolpert. "Decisions that are ours to make today – to stabilize global warming pollution and invest in clean energy solutions – will have a profound impact not only for us and our children, but indeed for every human being who will walk the face of the earth from now until the end of time." Woolpert quotes Republican Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger: "We know the science, we see the threat and we know the time for action is now."

Focus the Nation is an educational project. Each Focus team will invite local leaders and decision-makers to come to campus and participate in a non-partisan, round-table discussion of global warming solutions. During the last week in January, thousands of students on every participating campus, millions of students nationwide, will participate in workshops and panels, brainstorming global warming solutions. "In the next few years, we as a nation will make, or fail to make, critical decisions regarding global warming, pollution and clean technology investments. These decisions will have far-reaching and irreversible impacts on the lives of today's students and the lives of their children," explains the Focus the Nation team. "At this

moment in time, we owe our young people at least a day of focused discussion about global warming solutions for America."

On Wednesday, Jan. 23, 2008, Saint Mary's will host Focus the Nation: Global Warming Solutions for America. The event includes a daylong Eco-Fair and evening symposium. The Eco-Fair will be held in the Soda Center from 11:00 am- 5:00 pm, with green vendors, advocacy groups and non-profit organizations working for a sustainable future.

A 7:00 pm Symposium will feature experts discussing the challenges and opportunities presented by climate change. The speakers will be Stephen Schneider, an internationally renowned expert in global warming who is co-director of the Interdisciplinary Program in Environment and Resources at Stanford University; Robin Bedell-Waite of Contra Costa Hazardous Materials and the Contra Costa Green Business Program; Dan Lashof, who received his PhD from UC Berkeley's Energy and Resources Group and is a senior scientist with the National Resources Defense Council's Air and Energy Program; and Rob Lucacher, Senior Manager for Facility Services and Sustainability with Mervyn's LLC, who has extensive experience managing environmental affairs, operations and sustainability for major corporations in energy, technology, defense and manufacturing.

FOCUS THE NATION
Saint Mary's College of California Presents
Global Warming Solutions for America

ECO-FAIR
11 am-5 pm, Soda Center

The Saint Mary's event will kick off with an Eco-Fair in the Soda Center that will feature green vendors, advocacy groups, and nonprofit organizations working for a sustainable future.

ECO-FAIR PARTICIPANTS INCLUDE:
California Institute for Biodiversity
Chevron Energy Solutions
Everything Grows Interior Landscaping
Greenbelt Alliance
East Bay Electric Auto Association
Save Mount Diablo
Sierra Club, Bay Area Chapter
Slow Food East Bay

VIDEOS ON GLOBAL WARMING AND ECOLOGICAL DESIGN WILL BE SCREENED AT THE FAIR.

For more information, please go to:
<http://focus.smc.edu/news-and-events/>
<http://smc-the-nation.com>

JANUARY 23 SYMPOSIUM
7 pm-9 pm, Soda Center

Experts will discuss the challenges and opportunities presented by climate change. The speakers will be:

Stephen Schneider, a renowned expert on global warming, was a lead author for the Nobel Peace Prize-winning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and is co-director of the Center for Environmental Science and Policy and the Interdisciplinary Program in Environment and Resources at Stanford University.

Robin Bedell-Waite of Contra Costa Hazardous Materials and the Contra Costa Green Business Program.

Rob Lucacher, senior manager for facility services and sustainability of Mervyn's LLC. In his role, Rob manages facilities, energy, environmental and sustainability issues for the West Coast retailer.

Dan Lashof, a senior scientist with the National Resources Defense Council's Air and Energy Program. He was the lead author on the Policy Options for Stabilizing Global Climate report to Congress.

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Scheduled to participate in the Eco-Fair:

Building Solutions Contracting, Calculate Your Impact, California Institute for Biodiversity, Chevron Energy Solutions, ClifBar & Co., East Bay Regional Park District, Everything Grows Interior Landscaping, Greenbelt Alliance, International Rivers, Life Garden, Low Carbon Diet (Acterra), Sustainable Moraga, Melaleuca: The Wellness Company, Natural Resources Defense Council, Parents for a Safer Environment, PG & E (electric car), Provocare Presentations, San Francisco Electric Vehicle Assn., Save Mount Diablo, Sierra Club, Bay Area Chapter, Slow Food East Bay, SMC Project Green, Sustainable Lafayette, TALC (Transportation & Land Use Coaliton), Trendsetter, Village Green, World Centric