

Hope College Alumni Sustainability Affinity Group News

Hope Sustains

Celebrate Earth Month!

“Hope Sustains” Alumni Affinity Group Engages in Transformation on Campus and beyond in the Call and Spirit of Creation Care.

Please join us on Hope’s Milestone Weekend, May 16-18 to celebrate the Class of ‘74, all alumni, and take the Sustainability Campus Tour starting at 2pm, Saturday the 17th at the Jack Miller patio.

Given the themes of rebirth, redemption, and resurrection affirmed in this Spring season, a number of campus events reflect Hope’s commitment to ensure the preservation and well being of our planet for generations to come.

In each edition of the *Hope Sustains* newsletter, we profile Hope Alum who are living sustainable lives and livelihoods in a manner that affirms their call to Creation Care.

Hope Sustains is a “creation” of our Alumni Affinity group and seeks to acknowledge the work our alma mater is doing to demonstrate a commitment to God’s word to care for our world through our faith as well as through our actions.

The *Hope Sustains* Newsletter is published three times a year in Spring, Late Summer, and December/January.

Find us on **LinkedIn** at <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/14356673>.



Find your inner “Ent” and a tree to hug at Hope’s Tree Sap App on iOS or Android

Defining Our “Ecos...”

Hitting the Road, Hitting the Beach, Running for the Good... for Life. From Grand Haven to Holland

We don’t always know where our feet will take us. Or, how our path will inform and direct our journey in life. For Kyle Funk, Class of 2018, that journey began on the streets, the track, and the sands by the water’s edge on these “home” shores of Lake Michigan.

Kyle Funk, Hope alum, is a runner.

Prior to his college life, Kyle took on the Mile, the 2-Mile, and the 4x4 Relay in Track while at Grand Haven High. Moving down the road to Hope, he moved up to the 5K in Track, and ran Cross Country. Then, the 26.2 mile true test of one’s perseverance, focus, stamina, and endurance with the Haven-Holland Marathon: Hometown to College town.

It was during those hours on the run through the sands, the forests, the ever-changing topography and the seasons along the edge of Lake Michigan that Kyle gained his deep appreciation for the environment, affirming his walk in the Christian faith and its special responsibility we have been given to care for God’s creation.



Student Kyle at a past Hope Recycles event

Kyle’s time at Hope fueled his personal commitment to sustainability. His focus turned to how urban environments could make a difference in mitigating their problematic impact on our ecosphere. His reading of the book *Can a City be Sustainable?* led to his concern for the impact that political science plays in the human endeavor of a just approach to answering the call to creation care. He set about to craft



Hope Alumni Profiles in Sustainability

Hope Alumni Sustainability Board Co-Chair Kyle Funk

a composite major in environmental studies, incorporating political science in the context of the urban environment.

Kyle plugged in as one of the earliest student participants in the Hope/Holland Sustainability Institute, with Director Michelle Gibbs. The Institute was a unique college/municipal government collaboration seeking to identify efficiencies in traditional, renewable energy, housing, and resource reclamation. Kyle worked on a number of projects with Michelle including the Green History of Hope College, bike infrastructure in the Hope Master Plan, building a “Green” tour for the admissions office, as well as furthering the cause of sustainability on campus through promotional brochures and posters.

Kyle found further affirmation of his path in the work and teachings of reknowned Hope Religion professor Steve Bouma-Prediger, who advocates a workable etymology of creation care reflected through the Greek word “eco” or “house.” The “ology” or “study” of this house — this “Ecology” — by Bouma-Prediger’s definition, is the study of God’s creation informing and directing our actions as humans on this planet. Through the mentorship of these two Hope icons, Kyle found deep and lasting direction on his life’s chosen path.

A sophomore year in Berlin working and studying at CIEE Global Institute, where his professors — teaching architects — further shaped his belief that urban planning and infrastructure was the clear path to global sustainability.

(Continued)

Returning to Holland for his junior and senior years, Kyle ended his run at Hope in 2018.

He now is engaged as a senior program specialist for Transportation, Infrastructure, and Solutions with the **Center for Municipal Practice at the National League of Cities (NLC)**. During his time at NLC he's worked on the Housing and Community, Sustainability, and Urban Innovation teams, assists the research team on the annual State-Municipal League Report.

Kyle currently resides in Medina, OH with his husband and currently sits on the city's Zoning Appeals Board and the Advisory Board for the Ohio Conservative Energy Forum. He coaches Science Olympiad for the Grand Haven School District. In his free (?) time he enjoys cheering on the Cleveland Guardians, Michigan Wolverines, and running, kayaking or hiking in the nearby Cuyahoga Valley National Park.

Kyle keeps his Hope connection alive while as the co-chair **Hope College Alumni Sustainability Board** who all share a common vision living out the call to steward God's "ecology" in this ever-evolving ecosystem known as planet earth.

Is it "Green" Yet?

The December Hope Sustains Newsletter introduced readers to the newly retrofitted "Sustainability House" on fourteenth street in Holland, the residential Kleinheksel Cottage. In the Fall, its resident students moved into the cottage with new solar panels on the roof, new insulation in the walls, and a new heat pump furnace and water heater in the basement.

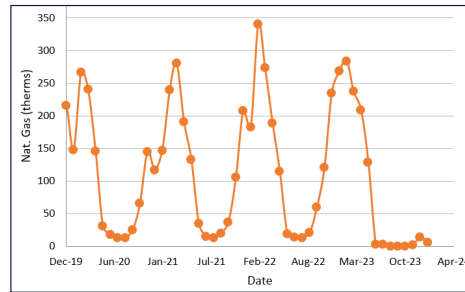
This project was made possible by funds donated by '73 alums, Anne and Richard Hiskes, and completed according to plans designed by Hope Engineering students. The energy savings have been impressive,



Grounds Director Bob Hunt with the Recognition

even considering that one benefit of the project has been the addition of central air conditioning via the heat pump.

According to data submitted by Engineering professor Jeff Christians in January '24, overall CO₂ emissions from the house have dropped by 50% and overall energy usage (gas + electricity) is 4 times less than before the retrofit. Using data from the energy supplier SEMCO, to compare similar size homes, Kleinheksel used 25% LESS natural gas than homes considered highly energy-efficient, "good" homes.



As Jeff concluded, and the matrix you see here confirms, the Kleinheksel went from being 2-times worse than efficient homes to being 2-times better.

This "life lab" represents the measurable energy outcomes and clear difference that energy retrofitting can make even to homes built well over a century ago. It also represents the kind of impact that the Hope College Alumni Sustainability Affinity Group seeks to achieve in concert with our on-campus Sustainability Partners.

"We are to fulfill our calling to be caretakers of the earth, regardless of whether global warming is real, or there are holes in the ozone layer, or three nonhuman species become extinct each day. Our vocation is not contingent on results or the state of the planet. It is simply dependent on our character as God's response-able human image-bearers."

— Steven Bouma-Prediger, *For the Beauty of the Earth: A Christian Vision for Creation Care*

Earth Month Highlights

Environmental Major Approved...

In early April, Steven Bouma-Prediger shared with the Green Team the following Curriculum update: The new Program Proposal for ENVR major and revised minor and New Course Proposal for an Introduction to Environmental Studies class were approved by the Curriculum Committee!! Students may start submitting major declarations in the fall semester.

Hope College Received 2023 Tree Campus Higher Education recognition from the Arbor Day Foundation...

the sixth year in a row that the foundation has honored Hope for its commitment to effective urban forest management.

The Tree Campus Higher Education program honors colleges and universities for effective campus forest management and for engaging staff and students in conservation goals. Hope achieved the title by meeting Tree Campus Higher Education's five standards, which include maintaining a tree advisory committee, a campus tree-care plan, dedicated annual expenditures for its campus tree program, an Arbor Day observance and student service-learning project. Currently there are 411 campuses across the United States receiving this recognition.

The Hope campus is populated more than 2,000 trees, representing approximately 100 different species from around the world, spread across some 200 acres.

The End of the Year as We Know it...

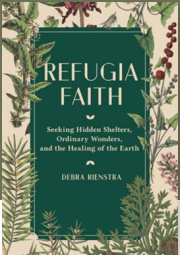
At the end of the April — final classes before final exams — a month filled with Earth Day, Earth Week and Arbor Day observations around the campus.



2024 Creation Care
SUMMER BOOK READ

HOPE Church
77 W 11TH ST.
HOLLAND

6/18, 7/16, and 8/20
12 pm-1pm
Light Refreshments





<https://hope.edu/sustainability/>
<https://hope.edu/offices/sustainability/hope-sustains.html>

Join Alumni members of Hope Sustains and "sustain" the conversation!

You can reach out to *Hope Sustains* through Hope's website link and Michelle Gibbs, Director of Sustainability, at 616.395.6811, or gibbsm@hope.edu. This newsletter is developed and edited by Hope Sustains Board Members Rich Hiskes '73 and David Beattie '73 with Executive Editor and Publisher Michelle Gibbs.

