

2009 Climate Leadership Summit Summary Highlights



The 3rd annual [American College & University Presidents' Climate Commitment](#) (ACUPCC) Climate Leadership Summit convened August 12 – 14th in Chicago, Illinois. Approximately 250 higher education leaders attended, including presidents, chancellors, business officers, facilities directors, sustainability coordinators, funders, and others. Former President Bill Clinton and several other notable speakers, addressed attendees, who also had the opportunity to network with one another. Since its launch in 2007, the

ACUPCC has grown to 650 signatories from all 50 states and the District of Columbia. More than five million students attend signatory schools, representing more than one third of the students enrolled in US higher education institutions. This year's Climate Leadership Summit focused on four key topics: 1) accessing funding and financing to support climate and sustainability efforts; 2) creating climate action plans that encompass operations, education, research, and community engagement; 3) leading a transformational change process across the campus community; and 4) leveraging the ACUPCC network to scale up climate action.

The Summit took place at Chicago's famous [Palmer House Hilton](#), with event planning support provided by [a5](#). We worked to reduce the Summit's environmental impact by including local and organic food, promoting the use of public mass transportation, and reducing resource use in energy and Summit materials. Leftover food was given to [Special E.](#), a group that rescues food from events and donates it to homeless shelters, missions, and compost centers. The 2009 Climate Leadership Summit was a carbon neutral event with the emissions associated with the event offset by carbon credits generously donated by [First Climate](#).



Dr. Anthony Cortese,
President of Second Nature

The Summit opened with a welcome from Dr. Anthony Cortese, President of [Second Nature](#), the primary supporting organization of the ACUPCC, who applauded the courageous leadership of the ACUPCC signatories to commit to climate neutrality in order to create a thriving civil society for future generations. He also acknowledged the 80% of charter signatories that have submitted their [greenhouse gas inventory reports](#). Dr. Cortese extended a special thank you to Peter Wege, Jonathan Wege, and the [Wege Foundation](#) for hosting the Summit and for its continued generous support of the ACUPCC.

The opening keynote was presented by [Martha Kanter](#), Undersecretary of Education of the US Department of Education, and former Chancellor of Foothill-De Anza Community College District. Dr. Kanter reaffirmed the importance of collaboratively working to address climate disruption across sectors, and that a key leverage point to do so effectively is to create a common agenda for how we live and educate children and adults across the country. Under the leadership of Dr. Kanter, the [Department of Education](#) has signed an MOU with the US Departments of Energy and Labor to advance the US workforce by creating green jobs.



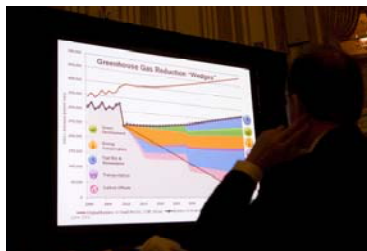
Dr. Martha Kanter,
Undersecretary of Education of
the US Department of Education



(Above) Jonathan Wege of the
Wege Foundation and Joseph
Soldano of Professional Supply Inc.

Joseph Grasso, Assistant Dean for Finance and Administration at Cornell University and Chair of [NACUBO's Sustainability Advisory Panel](#), opened the working sessions with a presentation on “Financing Higher Education Sustainability Initiatives.” Mr. Grasso discussed the potential implications for higher education if the Senate passes climate legislation. He noted that

ACUPCC signatories have a competitive advantage, considering that signatory institutions have calculated their greenhouse gas (GHG) emission liability and are creating plans to neutralize that risk exposure.



Building on the financing sustainability session, Michael Kinsley, Senior Consultant at the [Rocky Mountain Institute \(RMI\)](#), shared RMI's [Campus Climate Project](#), which is working with 12 colleges and universities to uncover barriers to climate action planning and share innovative solutions.

Michael Crow, President of Arizona State University and Co-chair of the ACUPCC Steering Committee, provided an update on the initiative.

[Peter M. Senge](#), Senior Lecturer at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and founding Chair of the [Society of Organizational Learning \(SoL\)](#), facilitated a session on leadership and change. For Dr. Senge, “leadership and change are the same thing,” as change means to “step across the threshold.” Dr. Senge also reminded us that the climate change is a symptom of the problem of how we humans think, plan, design, behave, and live.

With the Grand Ballroom full of great anticipation, Dr. Michael Crow introduced President Bill Clinton as a “master teacher.” President Clinton, also founder of the [William J. Clinton Foundation](#) and the [Clinton Climate Initiative](#), stressed that



President Bill Clinton

higher education needs to demonstrate that energy efficiency and GHG mitigation are important and economically feasible, and that investment in energy efficiency and renewable energy is good business practice. He urged the participants to use their examples to ask their Senators to pass a climate bill. President Clinton provided compelling statistics for moving away from a carbon-based economy: the [American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy \(ACEE\)](#) has [written](#) that energy efficiency can cut US emissions by 50%; and, [McKinsey & Company](#)'s reporting that a ["\\$520 billion in upfront investment in energy efficiency, could save \\$ 1.2 trillion and cut consumption 23% by 2020."](#)



Richard Fedrizzi, President of the US Green Building Council

Following President Clinton's inspiring speech, participants made their way to the [Chicago Cultural Center](#) for a welcome reception sponsored by [Johnson Controls](#). After a dinner hosted by Aramark Higher Education, [Janine Benyus](#), biologist, innovation consultant and author, delivered a wonderful evening address on the concept of [biomimicry](#). Dr. Benyus expressed that the university is the cradle of innovation, and that higher education is finally directing this creative innovation toward the most worthy goal and challenge of transforming from a carbon-based society to a sustainable society.

Day two began with breakfast and an update on federal policy by Jim Elder, Founder of the [Campaign for Environmental Literacy](#). Dr. Elder provided a summary of recent federal legislative activity regarding

environmental and sustainability education in higher education. Highlights included the [University Sustainability Program \(USP\)](#) and the [Energy Sustainability and Efficiency Grants and Loans for Institutions](#) program, both of which have become law.

[Rick Fedrizzi](#), CEO and Founding Chairman of the [US Green Building Council](#), thanked the ACUPCC for creating a framework for institutions and a sector to neutralize GHG emissions. Mr. Fedrizzi defined a green campus as "a higher education community that is improving energy efficiency, conserving resources, and enhancing environmental quality [through] education for sustainability and [through the creation of] healthy living and learning environments."

The ["International Approaches to Education for Sustainability"](#) panel was moderated by Harold Glasser, Associate Professor in Environmental Studies and Chair of the President's University-wide Sustainability Committee at Western Michigan University. The panel included Kiran Banga Chhokar, Higher Education Program Director, [Center for Environmental Education \(CEE\) in India](#); Dr. Lik Meng Lee, Associate Professor in Planning, [University of Science in Malaysia](#); Dr. Shin-Cheng Yeh, Professor, [Graduate Institute of Environmental Education](#) at the National Taiwan Normal University in Taiwan; and Andrew Chamberlain, Head of UK Programs & Scotland Manager



(Above) Members of the International Panel



for the [Environmental Association for Universities & Colleges at Queen Margaret University](#).

The Summit continued the focus on international efforts with a presentation by Jose Zaglul, President of [EARTH University](#), located within 8,000 acres of rainforest in Costa Rica. Today, EARTH University is providing a new generation of entrepreneurs, political leaders, and educators with the training to address issues, including violence and sustainability, that have challenged Latin America and the world for decades.

The Summit's final session addressed "[Funding Climate Action and Other Higher Education Sustainability Efforts](#)." Michael Crow moderated a panel that included Janet Anderson, Director of the [Lane Community College Foundation](#); Shoshana Buchholz-Miller, Associate Director with [Arabella Advisors](#); and Jessica Boehland, Program Officer with [The Kresge Foundation](#). The panel discussed how to approach foundations, what projects foundations are looking to fund, and how the Kresge Foundation is restructuring its organization to support sustainability projects on a larger scale in the higher education arena.

Associated Events & Meetings

There was a substantive [pre-conference workshop](#) for colleagues working with [Second Nature's Advancing Green Building Program](#). This capacity-building initiative is supported by The [Kresge Foundation](#) to help under-resourced higher education institutions construct and renovate campus buildings in ways that save money, reduce environmental and health impacts, and serve as educational tools.

Additionally, other meetings that took place during or immediately after the Summit included:

- a Funders' dialogue on Education for Sustainability that was co-hosted by the [Environmental Grantmakers Association](#);
- an ACUPCC Corporate Partners meeting;
- a meeting of the [National Association of College & University Business Officers \(NACUBO\) Sustainability Advisory Panel](#);
- a meeting between the ACUPCC and the [US Green Building Council \(USGBC\)](#) regarding working together toward a vision for green campuses for all within a generation;
- a meeting of the [ACUPCC Steering Committee](#); and
- a meeting of the [Second Nature Board of Directors](#).

Thank you to the sponsors of the 2009 Climate Leadership Summit of the American College & University Presidents' Climate Commitment.

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Summit Partner

NACUBO - National Association of College & University Business Officers

The ACUPCC is seeking financial support for the continued recruitment and implementation phase of the program from 2009-2010. For more information, please contact Andrea Putman, Director of Corporate Partnerships with Second Nature, at 617-722-0036 or aputman@secondnature.org.

Supporting Organizations

