

Press Releases

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Eagle Diesel Initiative Aims to Reduce Waste, Power Campus Fleet

Business, Chemistry, and Environmental Science departments team up to convert cooking oil to Bio-Diesel

BROCKPORT, NY—Students and faculty from the School of Business Administration & Economics and the Departments of Chemistry and Biochemistry and Environmental Science are teaming up to make The College at Brockport, State University of New York, a little greener.

Eagle Diesel is a program designed to give students the opportunity to apply knowledge and skill in a situation very similar to that of a functional company. The effort, which remains in its formative stages, plans to convert used cooking oil provided by the Brockport Auxiliary Service Corporation (BASC) into useable fuel for the campus fleet. The students [updated the campus on their progress](#) as part of Brockport's annual Scholars Day.

Such an effort would have widespread benefits. It would provide a cleaner, more environmentally friendly fuel for the various lawnmowers, tractors, and other maintenance vehicles that the College operates. And, according to student leaders behind the initiative, it could leave to substantial financial savings. The students believe they can produce Bio-Diesel from somewhere between \$1.70-\$2.00 a gallon. They say the current rate for commercial Bio-Diesel hovers around \$3.50 a gallon.

The major benefit, however, has been providing students with an engaging experiential learning opportunity and a chance to work shoulder-to-shoulder with faculty mentors.

"The experience I've had so far has been absolutely invaluable," says **Skyelar Habberfield**, a senior marketing major and the Student CEO of Eagle Diesel. "I've been able to take what I've learned in the classroom and apply it in very real ways. It really is preparing us for everything we're going to face in the workforce."

Alex Theuman, a senior accounting major and Eagle Diesel's Safety and Compliance Officer, agrees.

"This is giving us a chance to have a lasting impact and not just have Brockport be a name that is on my resume," Theuman says. "This project gives me an opportunity to have my name attached to the College as much as the College is attached to me."

The effort is making progress. The students continue to work with their faculty advisors to refine their business, operational and safety plans. Next week, they hope to purchase \$3,600 in production equipment utilizing grant money that was secured from the College's Division of Academic Affairs by advisors **John Gardner** and **Kyongsei Sohn**, professors in the School of Business Administration & Economics.

Ken Johnston, a junior environmental science major and the group's Chief Production Chemist, is teaming with **Steve Godleski**, chair of the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, on a new production technique that should make the process more efficient. The hope is to produce a full-scale successful batch of Bio-Diesel by the end of the semester.

The group hopes to begin full-scale production next year.