When Opportunity Knocks ..... AAC&U
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........ Capitalize on it

• Grant received from The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust in Feb 2015
• $1,000,000 to be expended in one year
• Establish the *Environmental Cooperative at the Vassar Barns*
  • $700,000 Capital and $300,000 staff salaries and program cost
  • Vassar commitment to provide staff salaries for years 2 and 3 of the initiative
  • Vassar contributed approximately $500,000 towards total renovation cost of the barn
The Environmental Cooperative at the Vassar Barns:

1. Timing and Planning Process
2. Project Scope
3. What’s Next
December 2014: Grant Proposal developed by a group of four and our grants office – found a sweet spot that was of interest to the Helmsley Trust.

**Goal:** Establish the Environmental Cooperative at the Vassar Barns to integrate Vassar’s environmental science research, education and outreach activities under an organizational umbrella; catalyze the potential of the Vassar Farm and Ecological Preserve for deepening collegiate and community engagement with the environment; partner with outside agencies and organizations to provide Vassar students with opportunities to engage with and learn from a broad range of environmentally focused organizations.

**Strategy:** Renovate a wing of the historic dairy barn on the Vassar Farm and Ecological Preserve as a home for the Environmental Cooperative and to serve as a point of entry to the Farm and Ecological Preserve; hire staff to manage the Cooperative and coordinate research and outreach activities.
Our mission is to strengthen place-based environmental awareness throughout the Hudson Valley by supporting current efforts, developing new programs, and inspiring deeper engagement in conservation education, outreach, and research by the college, community and region.
Environmental Cooperative Events Summary
June 2015 - December 2016

Total Events = 142
Total People = 2,326
What’s Next?

New Grant Funded Projects getting underway:

NYS DEC Hudson River Estuary Program - $50,000 - planning for integrated stormwater management at Vassar.

NYS DEC Hudson River Estuary Program - $50,000 – Natural Resources Inventory in the City of Poughkeepsie.
Strategic Planning For the rest of the Barn and surrounding land – October 2016

*Center for Experiential and Environmental Education*

- Enhanced intensively mentored, research based, hands-on, small group, etc. work in the Vassar curriculum
- Flexible Teaching and Learning space to support the above
- School Age After School Program - Place Based Environmental Education
- Bunk House
- Summer Theater Performance Space
- Accessible Trails
- Exploring Science at the Vassar Farm (elementary school program)
- Poughkeepsie Farm Project Educational Programs
- Athletic Locker Rooms and Showers