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1. UCU links up with South Thames College to win Green Gown Award

UCU's work with South Thames College on sustainability and community engagement was recognised at the annual Green Gown Awards on November 5th. The ceremony at the University of Birmingham highlighted the "excellent example of building a local sustainability alliance; working with and learning from other organisations and sectors". It is the first time that a trade union has co-ordinated a winning entry in the history of the awards. Our colleagues in Unionlearn and Lewisham College also won in the Learning and Skills category. For further details ref the UCU press release:

<http://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=6371>

2. UCU Environment Rep Training

Calling all UCU Environment Reps who have not participated in the union's training programme. Our 2 day course dates for 2013 are:

Leeds - Feb 20th and March 19th, 2013

London - June 18th-19th, 2013

Please contact Karen Brooks, UCU Training officer for further information.

kbrooks@ucu.org.uk

3. UCU Education for Sustainable Development Strategy

UCU has made ESD a priority area for our environmental work. We have been linking up with a range of organisations across the sector to press for this at institution and sector level. We represented the TUC at the first meeting of the Skills Task Group which reports to the Green Economy Council. This will produce a draft skills strategy document in early 2013 and we will need to lobby hard to get policies that will provide a framework for effective integration across all sectors.

Our approach should be one of integrating ESD into as many projects and activities as possible. As an example NIACE has asked us to circulate details of next year's Adult Learners week as one opportunity to showcase work being done in the sector

NIACE – deadline Dec. 13th

Adult Learners' Week is a national celebration of the benefits of lifelong learning and therefore the perfect opportunity to highlight not only the many types of learning options available but also the rich variety of adults who access them. For the champions of sustainable development, Adult Learners' Week presents a great chance to showcase the learning successes of the individuals and groups you are working with.

4. UCU support for Energy campaign

We are facing an energy bill crisis. Families are suffering huge financial hardship, and one in four households can't afford to heat their homes. Cold homes are damaging the health of vulnerable members of society, including children, older people and people with disabilities.

The UCU is a member of the Energy Bill Revolution – an alliance of more than 100 charities, unions and businesses calling on the Government to use the money it gets from carbon taxes to make our homes super-energy efficient. This is the ONLY permanent way to drive down energy bills and end fuel poverty.

Now new research for Consumer Focus shows that the Energy Bill Revolution is also best for economic growth and job creation. Compared to alternatives the Government is considering to boost the economy, like cutting VAT, reducing fuel duty or investing in capital infrastructure projects such as building roads, an energy efficiency programme is a more effective way to stimulate the economy. It could create 71,000 jobs by 2015 and up to 130,000 jobs by 2027.

Please take two minutes to sign the petition at www.energybillrevolution.org, and ask all your friends and networks to do the same. Thank you for your support.

5. Greener Jobs Alliance AGM

The AGM took place on November 14th at UCU Head Office. Since it was set up in 2011 the GJA has provided a focus for organisations campaigning around jobs and skills. We have attracted funding to support local demonstration models as well as using the Green Skills Manifesto to press for national action. In 2013 we will be updating the manifesto including adaptations to reflect policy in the 4 countries – England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. To help this process we will be running a series of events next year in conjunction with our partner organisations. Watch this space for further information.

6. EAUC Sustainability Exchange

The Sustainability Exchange was launched recently. UCU is pleased to be one of the supporting partners for what should be a vital service provided by the EAUC. There is a huge number of resources that can be accessed for free. There are 4 priority areas:

Leadership and Governance, Estates and Operations, Partnership and Engagement , and Learning, Teaching and Research. These have been developed to accurately reflect specific challenges that face the higher and further education sectors. Visit at:

http://www.sustainabilityexchange.co.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=7&Itemid=14

UCU is keen to promote research projects. We hosted a pre-conference event on Nov. 9th at the TUC on 'Union learning and Green Skills'. This featured Green Economy research projects being carried out at Exeter University

Further details on 'New skills for green jobs' and 'Clear About Carbon' can be found at <http://www.marchmont.ac.uk/Projects/index.asp>.

7. Global campaigns

"The world's most well-known climate scientist, James Hansen of NASA's Goddard Institute, addressed 75 union leaders and allies at a global trade union roundtable in New York City in October."

http://author.ilr.cornell.edu/news/GLIJamesHansen_102312.html

The presentation by James Hansen can be watched here

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-dbmqhon5TY>

UCU will be supporting the:

NATIONAL CLIMATE MARCH on Saturday 1st December - midway through the Qatar Climate Talks - COP 18

12.00 - 1.30 Assemble Grosvenor Square and build the "Grosvenor Square Keystone pipeline" from the Canadian High Commission to the US embassy!

1.30 - 3.30 March to Parliament

3.30 - 4.30 Build a giant mock fracking rig outside parliament!

For further details visit the CACC website

<http://www.campaigncc.org/>

If you are planning to attend and want to join the UCU contingent let me know at the email below.

Get in touch

If you are a UCU member looking for advice on sustainable development or have ideas for greening the FHE sector please let us know. Contact: Graham Petersen, UCU Environment Co-ordinator:
gpetersen@ucu.org.uk