### In This Issue
- Active Commute Week
- RecycleMania: Best In State
- Instagram Contest Winners
- AQ Bike Auction
- AQ Featured in Princeton Review
- Earth Day
- Farm Market on Campus
- Greener Grads

### Active Commute Week
In cooperation with National Bike to Work Week-- May 12-16--- YOU are encouraged to use alternative methods of transport including carpooling, rollerblading, walking, running, longboarding, biking, and taking the bus.

This year, Aquinas College is taking an active role as a Champion Sponsor! We will be hosting a pit stop on Friday, May 16th from 7am to 9am for bikers on their commute. The stop will be in the Hruby Lot, where there will be refreshments and snacks for bikers to fuel up.

Join the Aquinas group by registering at the website [here](#).

You can also win prizes and enjoy the culminating event at Brewery Vivant, Handle Bar Happy Hour on Sunday May 18th from 4:30-7pm!

The goals of Active Commute Week are to raise awareness and encourage active transportation. Active Commute Week Grand Rapids seeks to reinforce the benefits of an active lifestyle, which leads to healthy bodies and a healthy environment.

For updates on the road conditions that could potentially delay commutes during the week, download the app for smart phones: called City of GR 311.
RecycleMania: Best in State!

Over the last two months RecycleMania has been taking place at Aquinas as well as on college campuses across the country. During this year’s 14th annual national tournament, 461 schools participated in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Canada. That represents more than 5.3 million students and over 1.2 million faculty and staff!

Schools competed in 11 categories to see which institution can:

1. Recycle the most paper, cardboard, cans/bottles, and food waste on a per capita basis;
2. Produce the least amount of waste; and
3. Recycle the largest percentage of their overall waste stream.

The top category, Grand Champion, combines trash and each of the core recyclable materials to determine a school’s recycling rate as a percentage of its overall waste generation.

The results for this year are in:

- National Grand Champion Ranking: Aquinas took seventh place. (In 2013, Aquinas took 78th place.)

State of Michigan Grand Champion Ranking: Aquinas took first place. (In 2013, Aquinas took second place.)

We competed against GVSU, MSU, University of Michigan, Albion College, CMU, Eastern Michigan University, Kalamazoo College, Kendall College of Art and Design, University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, WMU, and Washtenaw Community College.

Great job Aquinas faculty, staff and students! We applaud your effort in working to recycle, compost and use the special collections on campus. Continue to be selective about your waste stream and help us reach our goal of Zero Waste by 2014.

To view AQ’s performance in other RecycleMania categories, visit recyclemaniacs.org.

AQ Sustains Instagram Contest

Congratulations to the winners of the AQ Sustains Instagram Contest! First place is Ana Cujar, second place is Cassandra Anthounay and third place is Dr. Peters. Thank you to all who participated by submitting photos or voting for your favorites!

AQ Bike Auction

This year’s Campus Safety online auction is in full swing! There are 43 bikes and 10 assorted electronics. Bidding is updated every day by 10:00am, but anyone interested can fill out a bid form on the website at any time.

This year’s online auction will end May 2nd. The online auction is a great way to purchase perfectly functioning items at a much lower cost. Reusing objects is a great way to reduce the amount of trash going to landfills and extend the life span of everyday objects. Don’t miss out on this wonderful opportunity! Check out the online auction here.

AQ Featured in Princeton Review

We are pleased to report that Aquinas College was selected for inclusion in the 2014 edition of “The Princeton Review’s Guide to 322 Green Colleges.” This one-of-a-kind resource -- published in partnership with the U.S. Green Building Council - is the only free, comprehensive guide that focuses solely on colleges that have demonstrated a notable commitment to sustainability. Check it out!
Earth Day

Reflection Boards
Thanks to all of you, Aquinas’ Earth Day celebration was a great success. Here are some of our favorite events:

The Aquinas community was asked to reflect on a few questions during Earth month. These included:
1) Nature has 3.8 billion years of brilliant designs and strategies. What can we learn from Mother Earth?
2) What is rewarding to you about living sustainably?

Our favorite responses were posted on white boards at the earth day event.

“Everything is connected. We are all connected to each other and we all affect each other. This is shown through all of the processes in nature and as humans, we are not excused from this.” ~ Student Response

Stake Your Claim: A Clothesline Endeavor
Students were asked to respond to the following: While you may not consider yourself a sustainability guru, we all have a place on this clothesline. Sustainability is crucial to the fate of our global community and as a member of that community, what is your stake in this? In other words: why is sustainability important to you?

We received some great responses, including:
• Our future generations
• Because we only have one of them
• I’d like to think that my great great grandkids will know what fresh air and a beautiful day feels like.
• This world is all we’ve got. Love your mother.
• Life is beautiful
• Making sure my family will be able to play outside

Clean Plate Club
Yes, our food waste from Wege is composted, but there is a great opportunity to decrease the amount of food waste generated. After every meal in Earth Month, post-consumer food waste (the stuff from your plates) in Wege was weighed. A daily weight was computed and posted to a board by the dish room.

Great news! The amount of composted waste decreased throughout the month of April. The peak waste from one dinner during the first week was about 3.41 ounces per person. By the end of April, the amount from one dinner was only 1.75 ounces per person!

Whether you are motivated by human morals, animal ethics, pesticide use, soil nutrition, or food miles, thank you for your participation during the month of April to reduce waste composted at Wege. Keep up the great work.
Farm Market on Campus
Who doesn’t love fresh produce and hand crafted goods? This summer, Aquinas College is partnering with Metro Health to bring a farm market to campus every Monday. Located in the parking lot of Browne Center, the market will feature 15-18 vendors including produce farmers, a bread maker, a flower stand, jewelers, a metal and wood worker among others.

The farm market will be open from 2:30pm-6:30, allowing people who work during the day to still stop and shop. Another advantage to the market hours on Monday is that is an off day for the Fulton Street Farmers Market.

The partnership with Metro Health allows for the market to be included with state programs such as WIC and Seniors Project FRESH. The market vendors will also accept major credit cards. Keep a look out from special events during the month of July! In the works are:

- An executive chef cook off using only ingredients that can be found at the market
- A kids day
- A health day where visitors can learn how to nutritionally and holistically care for specific conditions such as diabetes and weight loss!

Greener Grads: Donate your Gown!
Join Greener Grads in our goal to recover, repurpose and reuse one million graduation gowns this year. Together we can reduce the mass production and breathe new life into old gowns. Donate your gown after graduation, and we will make sure it gets a new life, stays out of the landfill and keeps our planet healthy and green. It may seem like a small contribution to you, but every gown counts.

A collection bin will be in place at Aquinas’ graduation ceremony, but you can also drop off your gown anytime to the Center for Sustainability (AB 255). Learn more here.