

have come to us, asking what we can do for them.” And she has the answers.

Cooley would like to see MUSC’s colleges include sustainability information in their curricula. “Does a new dentist know how to set up shop, using the most efficient lighting, making the office more energy efficient?” she asks, hypothetically. “Do they know that studies have shown that daylighting makes people perform better? It all affects the bottom line. You always start to explain it from a dollars-and-cents angle. That’s what people know. But we must teach our students to integrate environmental, social and economic solutions to ensure a better future for everyone.”

Cooley and her staff encourage others to save energy – primarily fuel and electricity – every chance they get. Cooley estimates MUSC receives 10,000 commuters a day, and promotes alternative methods of transportation, from bicycles to mass transit to videoconferences. Then, of course, there are the usual reminders: turn off lights when leaving a room, or computers and appliances at the end of the day. System upgrades have resulted in significant financial savings. From 2000 to 2008, Engineering and Facilities performed upgrades that save the

university \$3.1 million annually. Under an energy performance contract started in 2009, Engineering and Facilities has saved and additional \$2.5 million annually, mostly through efficient lighting, water conservation, energy management, fume hood upgrades in laboratories and campus-wide steam system improvements.

The S&R Program’s work has not gone unnoticed, earning several awards, including the 2011 Earth Day Award from the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control, 2011 Community Pride Environmental Stewardship Award and the 2010 Energy Project of the Year Award from the Association of SC Energy Managers.

The staff refuses to rest on its laurels, however, continuing to look for more work despite its relatively small size. The program continues to add patient units, operating rooms and labs to its recycling obligations. And as the university expands to other parts of the greater Charleston area, so too does S&R.

“A lot of departments are moving off campus,” Cooley says, “so we go with them.”

Trash doesn’t stand a chance.



Consider that last year, MUSC shredded and recycled approximately 520 tons of waste office paper (all shredded for confidentiality), 309 tons of cardboard and 120 tons of yard waste, among many other items, from books to batteries. The Sustainability and Recycling Program, under Cooley’s direction, handled much of that waste.

