

The Ramapo College Masters in Sustainability Studies Program
In Partnership with the Ramapo College BSN/MSN Nursing Programs
Invites You to the First Lecture in Our 2016 Series

"Lessons of Sustainability: Voices of Key Practitioners"

HEALING HOSPITALS: ADVANCING SUSTAINABILITY IN HEALTH CARE

Kyle Tafuri

Senior Sustainability Adviser
Hackensack University Medical Center

Wednesday, January 27, 2016
SC 219 Friends Hall, 6-7:30 pm

Free and Open to the Public---Help Spread the Word

MASS graduate Kyle Tafuri is a pioneer in a new, fast emerging field that seeks to do medicine sustainably. In this talk, he discusses the challenges of building a new field real-time while working in a large hospital and sets forth what is achieved through sustainable practice in the health care setting. See how hospitals are making strides towards connecting the two and helping prevent chronic disease. The challenge is to make medical facilities into centers of planetary as well as physical health.

Those parking on campus should acquire a parking permit from the guard booth at the north entrance. For additional information or an advance parking permit, contact Professor Michael R. Edelstein at medelste@ramapo.edu.

Kyle Tafuri demonstrates how large, complex institutions can be rapidly converted to a sustainable path when there is strong support. He serves as Senior Sustainability Adviser at the Hackensack University Medical Center, the largest provider of in- and outpatient services in the state of New Jersey. Kyle started with a ten month internship at the hospitals' Deidre Imus Environmental Health Center while in the MASS program. He was subsequently hired to begin the daunting task of reshaping a large institution with 10,000 employees, including 2,700 physicians, and 1,250 beds.

Kyle and his green team have made rapid and impressive inroads. With the support of 200 volunteers which he has helped recruit and train, initiatives have been undertaken for sustainable behavior change, bringing about a notable cultural shift. There is now green purchasing, water conservation, medical waste education and keyboard recycling. The hospital converts waste vegetable oil into biodiesel fuel and biodigests all food wastes. Improvements in healthfulness of food have been achieved. Mercury use has been largely eliminated. Non-toxic materials are used. A sustainable rooftop garden is open to the public featuring trees and shrubs and employing permeable pavers. Inside, a green living wall uses plants to clean the air.

Working with the firm TerraCycle, an effort has been made to reduce waste across the board. Rates of recycling have more than doubled. Medical waste generation has been halved. Efficiencies have been achieved in heating and cooling resulting in lowered energy costs and greenhouse emissions. It is not surprising that during Tafuri's tenure HUMC has twice won Practice Greenhealth's highest Environmental Excellence Award with recognition as one of the top 25 green hospitals in the country.