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Well, good morning to you and good afternoon to some of you.

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I'm Bruce Reardon. I'm the director of the Berkeley Climate Change Network.

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This is the first in a short series of webinars presented by BCCN.

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Where we will look at how other universities are organizing themselves around the climate crisis.

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The objective, pretty simple here, to learn what's working

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In different places, what maybe is not working in other places and to help Berkeley as we

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get ourselves together and organize ourselves around climate so today

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We are featuring the Duke Climate Commitment, one of my very favorites of looking around the country.

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With our special guest, Toddy Steelman.

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Toddus, Duke's Vice President and Vice Provost for Climate and Sustainability. So welcome, Toddy.

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Thank you so very much, Bruce, for this very kind invitation and the opportunity to be together. It's really nice to see all of you and thank you for showing up.

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I've got, I don't know, 20, 25 minutes of a PowerPoint presentation to walk you through what our climate commitment is and would like to leave lots of time for questions at the end. And a lot of this is to say we are, I feel like I'm a year into

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Establishing a brand new office. So I still very much feel like I'm in

startup phase and we have a lot to learn. And I think it's conversations like this that have along the way that have also helped us sharpen what we're trying to do. And I've also tried to learn about what's happening in other places across the country. And there is no one model. You have to figure out what's going to be right for you. So it's really fun to have these conversations. So thank you again, Bruce, for the very kind invitation.

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I'm going to share my screen. It takes a moment for it to

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like realize it.

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While you're doing that, let me just jump in and say use the chat box here liberally today for your questions and your comments.

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There we go with the screen. And Toddy, actually, if you want to just do a minute or two, how are things in North Carolina? You've had

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a series of events here.

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We have. It has been last month was really tough on North Carolina.

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The beginning part of the month, we had a very, we had a tropical storm that dumped about 18 inches of rain in our eastern most cities and municipalities that was really quite devastating.

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So we had one one in a thousand year event. And then later in the month, we had another one in 1000 year event in the western part of the state when Hurricane Lynn

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the remnants thereof sort of dumped upwards of 33 inches of rain.

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into some parts of the western part of the state.

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And that has been truly devastating. The level of destruction that we've seen in the western part of the state is unusual in the sense that

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Usually when you have a disaster of some sort, you don't lose your basic infrastructure. And what's been really unusual about this particular disaster is that we've lost the roads.

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we've lost a lot of the transformers. We've lost a lot of the water treatment plants, the sewage treatment plants, just everything has been destroyed. So when it comes to recovery, it's a very different proposition.

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of doing that kind of restoration than

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what I would say is a typical disaster, right? But I think it's all signs of the intensity

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that we expect to see with a warming planet. You know, there's more energy, there's more water in the atmosphere, and it's arriving in different places and

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very severe ways. So thank you for the concern, Bruce. I very much appreciate that.

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You know, we've lost, I think, the death count is up to 124 people now in the western part of the state.

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So it's been really quite devastating.

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Which makes this work all the more pressing and important, doesn't it? So with that, let me launch into this. I want to talk to you about our climate commitment. What is the Duke climate commitment? Our ambition is to

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be recognized and sought out as an innovative and differentiated leader on the dimensions of climate and sustainability. So in the same way that places like Stanford and MIT are known for tech and engineering, we would like Duke to be known for climate and sustainability. So we want to not just think really great thoughts, that's important, but we also want to take action. And understand the very

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deep sort of complexities that are essential to understanding climate

change and convey that to our students.

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As we work towards empowering our people, our larger community to work for a more equitable, healthy, thriving, joyful, abundant.

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world for everybody. So that's sort of the larger ambition.

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We've been doing this work for a while.

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Or at least setting the stage for our ability to do this work for a while. Our Duke Forest was established in 1938, our 1931. Our marine lab was established in 1938.

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We've had a variety of assets, I would say across Duke that we are now sort of coalescing and bringing together. In 2007, we signed on to the President's climate pledge to be carbon neutral in 2024, which we will accomplish this year with the help of carbon offsets. But again, it's work that we've been doing for quite some time. We have our Nicholas School of the

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environment, which was established more than 30 years ago, our Nicholas Institute for Energy, Environment, Sustainability, Sustainable Duke, Duke Conson campus in China. And so again, a whole variety of assets that have been present, but not necessarily organized.

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under a larger banner of pulling towards climate and sustainability.

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So in 2020, our provost at the time and our president said, this is something we should begin thinking about. So how can we start to set the table of what that could be for us? So from 2020 is when we started the work and it's been a process, I think, up until now.

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And we've done that with a tremendous amount of support from across our university leadership. And it started with our board of trustees and our president.

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Who established in 2020 this climate and sustainability task force. So our board of trustees has been a very important component of this, 100% on board and participated very actively in the early days of

establishing this goal of

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making Duke sort of focus on climate and sustainability. That also led to a concurrent task force of about 50 faculty and staff who we got together at the same time this board of trustees

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group was getting together in 2020, 2021 to identify our research superpowers. So if we were going to focus on climate and sustainability, where would our research strengths lie? And then how might we begin to organize ourselves around that?

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And then since then, in 2022,

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We had a rather public pronouncement by our president who said, we are going to do this now. And then in 2023, he created our new Office of Climate and Sustainability and asked me to lead that. So up until that point, I had been dean of the Nicholas School of the Environment for five years, and he really wanted somebody who was going to wake up every day and hold this mantle

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of vice president and vice provost to guide this work from across the university. So that's just a little bit about where our university leadership has been.

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And how it is coalesced again over the last four years. So I've been in my position for a little over one year right now.

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So the vision for the climate commitment

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is to infuse climate and sustainability across our entire mission area, education, research.

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community partnerships, external engagement, and operations.

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When it comes to education, we want to make sure every student who comes to campus has some leaves with some degree of climate fluency. And so we would like to achieve that by 2028.

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And we're going to do that basically by infusing climate curriculum

across our 10 schools.

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So it's not going to be one or a few classes, the same classes that everybody takes.

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We're going to try to grow this organically in each school across the university.

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Which, as you will appreciate, is a pretty heavy lift. And we're working on that right now.

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When it comes to research, our discovery mission is very dear to us, and we want to point that towards mitigation, response, and adaptation when it comes to climate change. So very important to us.

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And we also know that we can't focus on everything. So there are a few areas that we want to be known for. Those are climate policy and finance, climate and health and oceans.

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In particular, because we feel like we have distinctive attributes that allow us to focus in those areas. We have a marine lab.

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We are part of a health system.

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And 50% of our graduates go on to work in the finance, consulting business sort of areas. So we're leveraging that extensive network that already exists out in the world and then also playing on the reasons our students want to come here in the first place.

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But we also have strengths in other areas, including environmental and climate justice, climate community resilience, and climate science and technology. So we will continue to build in these areas. But when it comes to our external communication strategy, it's really those ones in the first line that we are focusing on.

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And of course, we recognize that we haven't basically discovered everything on campus that people are interested in. So we want to continue to create a very big tent that enlists the interests and desires of our many, many faculty. We just had an event last week that got together 125 faculty in what we called a Climate Connections

event.

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for folks to meet each other from across campus that don't necessarily do work in any of these particular areas, but they have other areas that we want to continue to grow.

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On the operational side, we want Duke to be a place where from the moment you step on our campus, you are living and working in a more sustainable way. And so that will translate into the energy we use, the transportation we use, the food, our waste systems.

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All of it.

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External engagement, we also want, you know, we want to lean into the power of universities in terms of convening power.

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to be sought out and create purposeful partnerships we have the

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opportunity in North Carolina because we are a purple state.

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to have to engage across the divide, especially on statewide issues and other issues. So that leaves us in a position of

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Being able to have conversations, I think on our campus and wanting to convene conversations across the divide that we know we will need to cross

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In order to create the energy and sustainability and climate transition that will be essential for our future.

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And then finally, when it comes to community partnerships.

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We work both in Durham, Durham County with our partners down in Beaufort where our marine lab is across the state and other places where we are embedded in ways that we want to make sure we are working in partnership, co-creating solutions with our neighbors.

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So that's sort of the five big pillars.

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And I think at the end of the day, we recognize that our most precious resource is the people we have, whether those are faculty, our students, our staff, our community members, our alumni.

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So that we can demonstrate

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what can an institution of higher education do when it comes to climate change?

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keeping in mind that

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We're not the private sector. We're not the public sector. We're not the nonprofit sector. We are the higher education sector. So really.

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thinking hard about what are the attributes that we and only we as the higher education sector can bring to this.

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I want to talk now just a little bit about leadership and structure and how we've gone about this.

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I've made it a little bit of a study to uncover the other positions that have been held. And it seems like, Bruce, you're going to be hearing from some of these other places. But there are three basic models out there, I think. Folks either have a vice provost, and that's what you see at Harvard, Michigan, Yale, and Brown.

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or you have a dean in a school that's leading these efforts, which is what's happening at Columbia and Stanford, or you have a vice president or a chief sustainability officer. You have numerous examples of that, but I convene a monthly call that gets together these groups, the folks that you see here together so we can continue to talk

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about sharing the joys and sorrows of trying to do this kind of work. And if Berkeley were to add somebody, we would love them to join this group as well. And of course, my position is a little bit different because I'm a vice president and a vice provost. So I've got both those portfolios of work that I pull together under our new office.



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And so that's sort of the point behind this slide is that my office and my position was created in July 2023. So I've been doing this work for a little bit over a year now. And that enabled me to create a brand new Office of Climate and Sustainability and to begin to roll up underneath that brand new office of climate and sustainability some of these

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other units on our campus that do some of this work, but then pulling it together so we can harness our collective ability to pull in the same direction.

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And so that's what this starts to look like. The green petals on this flower, the Nicholas Institute, the Duke Forest, the Duke Campus Farm, and the Duke Gardens are now aligned underneath my office of climate and sustainability.

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We have a climate commitment advisory council that guides our work. That is a group of faculty, staff, and students, basically a committee that basically a council that guides our work, advises our work. And then, of course, we're pulling in everything from across the university.

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So our office is the primary, but not the only driver of this effort.

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We see ourselves as the key implementers, like we wake up every day to keep this effort moving forward.

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And we work all across campus to be the connectors, the communicators.

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that keep the work moving so far. And so this is what our org chart looks like.

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On the left hand side, or at least for me, it's the left, the leadership, administration, research, education, operations, community partnerships are the circles

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So you start to get a sense of sort of who's dedicated to achieving what tasks. So we've got 13 staff.

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So far in our office, hiring a couple of more people probably over the next few weeks.

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to bring them into relief.

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In how we keep, again, you've got to have people that wake up every day to drive this effort forward.

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Our advisory council, that's the group I was just talking about. So we've got 100 plus advisory body that guides this work of faculty, staff, and students.

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They focus on sort of meso level strategy um

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I in our office set sort of the high level strategy and then we rely on them to figure out how we actually really get the work done.

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And we've got it organized in four subcommittees. So those 100 people are divided across four subcommittees.

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one devoted to operations, one to education, one to research, one to external engagement.

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with co-chairs, faculty co-chairs, and then staff who are logistics lead that help

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get the work actually done.

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So community engagement threads through everything that we do, as do our Jedi principles.

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So because it is a university-wide effort.

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One of my key jobs over the last year has been to how do we infuse this work in both the provostial side and the presidential side

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of the university. And so that effort sort of comes into play like

this. So these are just sort of some of the key positions in our provost cabinet and how I've been working in partnership with these different vice provosts

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to create

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Again, collaborations or partnerships for how we infuse our climate and sustainability commitment and values into what they are doing.

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And it's been a lot of fun to think about, okay, what will that look like with our vice provost of the arts? Or what does that look like with our vice provost for the libraries? Or what does that look like with our vice provost for faculty advancement? And so it's been really fun to be in a creative, generative space with these other vice provosts and think about how we advance this throughout the entire institution.

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The same goes because I sit on the president's cabinet

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Also working, excuse me, with our president's cabinet

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to figure out, okay, what will it look like to put climate and sustainability values into our IT section, right? So that means thinking about green data centers, for instance. Or what does that look like when we think about finance, our finance, our vice president for finance? So we're working on a new vice president for procurement.

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Who really will focus on sustainability or athletics.

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We have a student athlete, a recently graduated student athlete now who will lead up our climate and who will be our climate and sustainability fellow and help us sort of drive work on how we create more sustainable athletic events and work with our student athletes. So again, really fun to begin thinking through how we build out these partnerships and institutionalize these values.

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And then finally, in working with our deans.

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One of the nice things about coming into this role, having been a dean for five years, is that I had really great relationships with the

deans.

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And so that's been another really wonderful partnership to think about

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In partnership with the deans about what they would like to be doing when it comes to climate and sustainability. There hasn't been uniform uptake, as you would imagine. But I feel like my job is to create a coalition of the willing. And if we build it, other people will follow and they need to figure out what their path forward is going to be as well. So it just gives you an idea of how we're trying to build this out institutionally.

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That is also translated, I would say, by our deans into faculty hiring. So for instance, last year we had 10 hires

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that happened on that.

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The deans themselves basically just said, look, if this is going to be a university-wide sandbox, I want to play in it. So we're going to go out and start doing our own hiring. So that's not money that's coming from me or a provost. This is just action that's taking place

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by our deans.

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And so since 2021, when we started some of these conversations, we've had about over 40 hires

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in the climate and sustainability space, and we've got another 11 hires that are taking place this year. So on average, we're seeing about 10 to 12% of

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The new faculty coming on campus.

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are related to climate and sustainability, which is really exciting.

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for us so of course it takes a lot of resources to do this kind of work. Duke has an upcoming campaign. We have three pillars in our campaign. One is related to our student life.

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One is related to science and technology, and the other is related to climate. So we will be a major feature in our upcoming campaign. And these are the four areas that we have identified in terms of the resources that we want to move forward. So how do we create our sustainable campus and sustainable world? That's the operations piece.

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climate fluency and climate leadership. That's our education piece.

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Regional Incubator for global solutions, because we are in the southeast, we know we want to be doing a lot of work in our own backyard, but that ends up being a microcosm of what happens out in the larger world on a global scale.

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And then these consequential conversations

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that create better policy and decisions for all. So that's sort of how we are devising our campaign, which will launch in February.

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I would say communication is an area where we have done a very, very poor job

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And have lots of room for improvement just in the process of hiring a brand new director for climate strategy and communication.

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to help us with both internal and external communication, but this has been one of the biggest challenges, I would say, that I have dealt with so far. It's really hard to keep everybody on the same page.

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And to let people know all the work we're doing because universities are very decentralized places. So just trying to penetrate through the noise

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that everybody gets has been a real challenge. And I feel like this is an area where I really need to do a much better job.

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The next steps

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for the climate commitment. We have a lot of work coming up for us. I

would say the opportunities for us are the campaign, the challenges for us really are keeping everybody on the same page, dealing with folks that are skeptical.

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Our students want us to go a lot faster than we're capable of going.

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We don't deal with a lot of climate skeptics on campus. That has not been an issue for us, which has been nice.

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But I guess all of this is to say this has not been without its challenges, and I'm more than happy to talk more about that.

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Yeah, thanks for bringing us up on

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We have a lot of work left to do ahead of us, and I'll just leave you with the idea that it takes a village to raise a climate commitment and we are always building that village.

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I think, Bruce, that takes me to the end. I'm going to stop sharing there and see if I can come back to the

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And here we are.

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Okay, very good.

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Thank you, Toddy. Wonderful.

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Thank you.

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Bravo.

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So line up your questions in the chat box and Tiff Dresden is going to help me pick some of them out. Let me start with a couple that we're wrestling with right now on the campus, Toddy, since we are

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talking about

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the same similar kind of effort here for Berkeley. One is about the all-encompassing decision you made that it's research, it's education, it's external affairs.

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and its operations.

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we're having that discussion or those discussions are happening here

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How did you come to that or was that just a given from the start that it wouldn't just be research?

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Yeah. So, you know, it was it really came from our board of trustees

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When we established that task force back in 2020, 2021.

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And so as we, I co-chaired that task force and, you know, what evolved over time is that

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it was going to be insufficient for us just to focus on research if you really want to have the impact that you want to have. And I think our teaching is infused into our research. Our research is also infused into the community engagement that we have, not for everybody, of course, but in lots of other places. So wouldn't it be a really nice statement to say, let's do it across the entire mission. And our president, President Price.

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was very supportive of all of this. And so I think

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We had a moment in time where we have the Board of Trustees and the president who are exactly on the same page. And I'm sure you could all appreciate given today's politics.

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That is not something that you can take for granted.

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And we're very fortunate to have that degree of alignment. But that's where it came from, Bruce.

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Okay, good. Let me try one more and then we'll turn to Tiff and she'll give us a couple from the chat box and we'll get going.

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Yeah.

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The second one is kind of the similar

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How did you bound this? What were the boundaries you said? If I got it right, you had basically three areas

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finance and policy being one, oceans being another.

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and climate and health being a third

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And you said there are other areas, but those were the three that you've

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most focused on.

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So...

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Was that a given also or was that a big debate yeah

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No. Yeah, no, you will imagine that there's a lot of controversy around narrowing down priorities as there should be, right? Everybody is very passionate about the research you do. So I would say we've got a three-tiered strategy. At least this is how I try to talk about it. We have a three-tiered strategy.

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First tier is things that we want to be globally known for because we can't be known for everything and that will, you know, and so that's the climate policy and finance, oceans and climate and health.

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But we have many other strengths.

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And these strengths also came out of that



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50 person task force that we established at the very beginning.

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climate science and technology, especially energy transformation.

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Community.

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Climate Community Resilience, environmental climate justice.

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and climate and data. And so

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To date, so those are areas of demonstrated strength that we're going to continue to push forward and we've put

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Upwards of \$2 million in seed grants out in those areas.

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So it's not like money is just going to those known four areas. It's going out into all these areas. So that's the second tier. When I say we've got a three level, the known force are areas of demonstrated strength. And then how do we continue to grow?

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and create a larger umbrella

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All right.

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So that everybody on campus can see themselves, not everybody, I think, but how can many, many people on campus see themselves in this work

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Even if they're not in those first two tiers, because we want to create a great big open doorway for people to think really creatively about this. So that means we have

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Catalytic grants, \$5,000 each that just allow people to get together.

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\$20,000 grants that allow people to grow up an idea. And then we ladder up into, again, this \$2 million that we've already allocated,

anything from \$100,000 a year to \$150,000 a year to almost \$200,000 a year, depending on the competition.

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That allows them to grow something up.

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So it's sort of a laddered approach that allows us to continue to grow because the things that are important today will continue in all likelihood to be important, but they're going to be new things, right? We've got a whole area of material science that we're now working in that we weren't working in three years ago.

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Yeah.

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And so we have to continue to create room for these ideas to grow.

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So that's the three-tiered approach.

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Excellent. Great, Toddy. Okay, Tiff, give us a couple of questions from the

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Yeah. Thank you. Thank you so much, Toddy, for that. That was amazing.

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Sure.

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I'm just going to go and chronological order here. And this is a question that I've been wondering about for in the context of Berkeley. This is from Alexi.

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If Duke has fossil fuel companies sponsoring schools and research.

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How does the university-wide climate commitment contend with that?

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For example, are they still, are research units still taking money from fossil fuel companies?

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Yeah, that has certainly been the case in the past.

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I am not sure if we have

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folks continuing to take money right now

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I get this question a lot from our students and I would say, you know, we stand on a pillar of academic freedom that says faculty have the discretion they should have to accept funding from the sources

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Mm-hmm.

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They should. And at the end of the day, we do not

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I mean, when

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when we do enter into those agreements.

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The companies do not have final say over the research.

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So I like to at least make it clear that there's a firewall there between the

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who gets final say in what's published and how it's published. So there's that.

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And I know that certainly in the past.

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some of the research that has taken place has come from fossil fuel companies, but has also funded

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energy, you know, alternative energy solutions

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So I think it's also important when you're on a campus to demonstrate that, you know.

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I think companies can be part of the solution.

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maybe not all of them. But I think there is room for us to think about

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How do you engage in different tools?

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One of which is divestment, one of which is protests, one of which is engagement.

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And I think that's important for us to model and to have conversations around. So, you know, I think, again, I would say academic freedom is very important to us. We're not going to get in the way of faculty and the research that they want to conduct.

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We do have this values commitment.

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of the climate commitments. So I would hope that faculty would think about it and how it is aligned or isn't.

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And in the meantime, then I think about the structures we have in place to

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ensure that we do not have interference by companies that provide funding

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any entities that provide funding, actually. And the idea of think about the strategy that you want to use to engage in the change that you want to see.

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Thank you.

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Thank you for that.

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So I'm going to skip down to a question from Shane

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I'm curious how climate

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And this is in quotes, climate fluency

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is defined across disciplines for both faculty and students

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How defined is this concept and how thoroughly is it infused or integrated and tracked across different programs?

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Yeah, excellent question. And we are really battling our way through that right now. So we have something called the Fluency Framework.

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That is...

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puts, I don't know, safety straps and guardrails around what we really want folks to be doing and then provides a lot of discretion to each of the schools and colleges to define within that area.

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And so we are piloting this semester in three of our schools, nursing.

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engineering and public policy, what this will look like.

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with the idea that we will learn a lot this semester.

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Like if you were to grow it up organically in these three schools, what does that look like? How does that then pair with our fluency framework? And we've got a group of faculty that are working on something called our North Star, which is like, this is where we want everybody to be going. So what does that really look like?

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And we're wrapping an evaluation framework around this also as part of a pilot.

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So we hope by the time we get to the end of this semester.

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we have a lot of fodder.

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that will better inform, you know, it's very much an adaptive learning process. We're going to learn a lot by doing and just embrace the fact

that we're not going to get it all right out of the starting gates and just continue to iterate on it.

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So that we can go into the spring semester and maybe take this to the other seven schools

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Based on what we've learned so far.

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So I can tell you that the committee, the subcommittee that's working on this, man, they are 100% committed to what we're doing on it. And it is not an easy lift.

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So I imagine we're going to have a lot of friction points around this.

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And when we get to the point of like, okay, we are going to need, you know, a metric ton of resources, I think, to kind of help accelerate the efforts that people have put effort, you know, people have put a lot of energy into this. So then how do we accelerate and support the work that comes out that's recommended?

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So we definitely do not have it figured out yet. But I feel like we've got processes in place that are moving us

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into a learning state where we will continue to

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figure out how we are going to do it.

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Toddy, next question about money. They could all be, many of them, as you touched on, could be about it. Chicken and the egg, that old question.

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Did you put this together in great form and then go after money or did you go after money so you could put it in great form or what version of that?

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I think some of each

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I'm a really big fan of leading with vision. It's the field of dreams,

school of thought. Like if you build it, they will come.

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So I feel like it's it's our job to paint a vision that is compelling that people want to be part of.

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So I think that is part of the story. But then again, you know, we've got some pretty loyal friends who are part of Duke who launched us into, you know.

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several million dollars that was very helpful to provide some funding that gets us launched into this. So we were able to, we had about \$36 million that got us started.

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And now as we move into the campaign, that is, you know, we have a

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an opportunity to raise a lot more money to advance these ideas. So, you know, my hope is that we will continue to be able to provide a compelling vision and accelerate the work and get people energized and want to be part of what we are trying to do.

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Given how important these issues are to

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I think students and the planet and the change we would all like to see.

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36 million is impressive. That's good. Thank you. Tiff, you're

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Yeah. Yeah.

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Here's a question I want to

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jump down to a question from Gail.

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How does one get high level commitment

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Okay.

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to trickle down to department level FTE hiring when department chairs aren't necessarily aligned

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Yeah.

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Yeah, and I don't, I am not going to pretend that we have everybody on board because we certainly do not.

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But I think it has been interesting to see how different deans and different departments have wanted to play.

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This is a great story. I think our French department is one of our biggest supporters.

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So try to wrap your head around that for a moment. Like how does a French department play in the climate and sustainability place? And this was a huge learning opportunity for me because

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you know, the

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just the way you think about climate change in a language, whether you're talking about past tense, present tense, or future tense has really important implications.

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And so they've created a research project about talking in the future tense in French and what that means for climate change. So I thought that's a really interesting spin on it. And then many of the Francophone countries in Africa

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are highly affected by climate change.

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And so there's another sort of spin on it that, you know, if you're not necessarily thinking about it, and it wasn't intuitive for me, but once they start talking about it, I'm like, you know, climate change is everywhere. So it's really interesting how you, you know.

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spin your imagination. And so, you know, the French department becomes a poster child for us to be like, look at what the French department



is doing, right? And so if French can do it, anybody can do it. So I feel like where we see these pockets of creativity and innovation, like what we're seeing in theater studies or in visual arts.

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or in nursing, for instance.

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Holding them up, shining a light on them and just demonstrating by example that there are really creative areas

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And I feel like the peer-to-peer networks are the most powerful ones that we have. So it's really going to be faculty talking to faculty and inspiring each other. It's not going to be me.

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So whatever we can do to build out those networks

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And create those little sparks, I think, serves us well.

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Excellent. Thank you.

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Yeah, thank you.

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Yeah, absolutely.

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Okay.

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We can make your slides available. Yes, we can have slides afterwards. And we did record. What about the fluency framework? Is that something that we can...

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see publicly i mean

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Let me just see if I can find it and drop it into the chat right now.

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Okay, okay.

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Yeah.

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Tiff, you got a question well

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Yeah. Yeah. Let's go with Claire's question

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When a policy as economic, finance, health, and equity impact.

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how do you bring together researchers with expertise in these areas that are siloed in different departments and schools

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You mentioned some grants. How effective is this and what else can we do?

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Very good.

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So we just had this event

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Where we had 125 faculty from all 10 schools, faculty and staff from all 10 schools show up.

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Okay.

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And we seeded that event. So it was three hours

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So, I mean, one, I was super excited that

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In the middle of the semester for us, when people are just crazy busy, we had 125 people show up for three hours to do this work. So it tells us that there's an interest, a hunger to get together and to think about these issues.

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And it was structured in such a way we had eight

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lightning talks from lightning talks

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Okay.

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Mm-hmm.

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very, very different disciplines. Again, some of these unsuspecting areas that you would think just to demonstrate how it's present, but boom, boom, boom, three minutes each. So that was really good for like an hour.

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Mm-hmm.

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And then we got into um

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We did a world cafe, if you've ever done a world cafe, where we put people together in groups of, I don't know, five to eight.

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Mm-hmm.

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And brainstormed on key questions and then you rotated three times. And so you got to meet upwards of 15 or 20 odd new people.

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Hmm.

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in doing that and have these great conversations.

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So it was, you know, and plenty if we had food, we had drink, we had alcohol, we had, you know, all the lubricants that you need to get conversation rolling.

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And that's, I think, just having those resources. So we hired a professional facilitator for that work.

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We'll produce a report. And out of that was like three or four new ideas on how we can continue the conversation.

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So I think those are places where I think you have unsuspecting collisions that take place.

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that you just didn't realize would happen. And so our role, my office's role is to create those collision spaces

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And then to cede the work afterwards. It's not enough for people to collide, but then it's like, okay, here's a \$5,000 grant if you want to continue the conversation.

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make a compelling case to us for what you want to do.

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And then you can move into that \$20,000 sort of planning grant that would allow you to ladder it up.

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And, you know, in some of the cases we have

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grants that are very sort of more basic research

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And then in other cases, we have grants that are just like.

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The price to play is that you have to bring somebody from a very different area.

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to the table. So we use the rules, the guidelines in different ways to incentivize different kinds of collaboration.

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Great, thank you.

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There's a question from Roger Bales about your carbon neutrality commitment.

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that it's scope one and scope two

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maybe not scope three is one of the questions and also

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how are you going to identify credible offsets to meet the goal and eventually move away from offsets?

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Yeah, so excellent questions.

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We have scope one, scope two, and some scope three included in what we have done.

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We have, so that's been part of the bane of our existence is including scope three because the travel portion, the air travel and the commuter

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portion is just so brutal for us. Like it was great during COVID and now it's just bounced back to

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you know moving back towards where we were in 2020, 19, 2019.

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And that's just a really hard one because, again, you don't want to circumscribe faculty's ability to engage in scholarship.

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But I think we could all do a better job in terms of like, I love the fact that I get to do this here, talking to you in California instead of having to fly out to California. That's awesome. So how we think about our carbon footprints, that's just an aside. We also established our own carbon offsets program. So we have a three person team.

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that develops our own carbon offsets, vets our own carbon offsets, and has sort of gone through not only our internal vetting, but a third party certification process.

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So we feel pretty good about our carbon offsets. So we were going to basically say we did this in 2024. We said we were going to do it.

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We have accomplished it. We did not include our health system the last time we did this, and we also did not include our international campuses or our lease space the last time we did it. Our campus has grown by 3 million feet.

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Since we established our initial goal. And so we're going to call it job done

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With the benefit of offsets this year, and then we're going to draw an even bigger circle and start all over again.

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And again, think really hard about scope one, scope two, and scope three, what we want to include, what we don't want to include.

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Be very transparent about that and then set a new goal for 2050.

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So, and that will be, you know, the goal there is net zero

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So, and we would like to do as much of this without carbon offsets. I think we all recognize now that some of the challenges that come with carbon offsets. We also live and work in a regulated electricity market and are held hostage basically by our energy provider with the amount of renewables we can actually put on our system. So we're very hamstrung in a lot of ways.

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And so, you know, everybody has to work within their own constraints, but that's where a lot of really great learning also takes place. And I think we're proud of what we've learned. We knew that

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But there's still a lot of work left to do in terms of how we want to decarbonize.

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Sure.

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Thank you. Yeah, so let's take a question from Gail Breger.

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Do you have a general sense of Duke's focus on

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mitigation versus adaptation.

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I mean, do you mean from an operations standpoint or a research standpoint or just generally philosophically or all of the above?

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That was very impressive thing.

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Gail, what...

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I was thinking more in terms of not so much your campus operations, but in terms of your departments and the research and teaching.

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Yeah, it's all of the above for sure. I mean, we've got folks that are definitely working on mitigation, a lot of really interesting carbon sequestration work, materials-based work going on.

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We also, excuse me, a lot of work going on, adaptation, resilience. And so I would say we cover the gamut.

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of the work that is taking place. So the

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Yeah, I don't think we're we're

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I mean, you know, we take the faculty's lead on this. We're not really determining it from a top-down standpoint. We're interested in seeing where the faculty want to go because we feel like they are creative engines.

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And so don't put any constraints on that per se.

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When we talked a couple months ago, Toddy, and then you mentioned this quickly again in your talk today, students want you to go faster.

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Okay.

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What's your story? What's your discussion? Talk about your discussions with the students.

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Yeah, well, I mean, this won't come as a surprise to anybody who has anything to do with students, I'm sure, but they want us to be done right now. And, you know, just be moving a lot faster. And, you know, I think that's terrific. I think they push us in very constructive ways. We've got a huge town hall that we'll have with our students on Thursday night.

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bringing them sort of all together, anybody who wants to hear about what we're working on and doing.

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Divestment is always a really big issue with them, not surprisingly. The fossil fuel research is always a really big issue with them. Environmental climate injustice is also a very, very big issue with them.

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and community engaged research is also a very big issue with them. And they push us. And I think that's really great. It's also opportunities for us to engage into our learning mission about why we have some challenges or we can't go as fast as they would like us to go.

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like divestment is a really good example. Duke has not divested. We have a climate commitment. And so last year we had a year-long seminar series on

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Investing for mission-based institutions. What does it mean if you are a mission-based institution with something like a climate commitment

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And you have an investment portfolio, Dumac is our investment arm. And how do you think about that?

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Divestment is a blunt tool and we have a very large endowment that we could use in a variety of different ways. So we invited experts to come and talk to us every month. We had faculty, staff, students.

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I would say about anywhere from 20 to 40 would show up every month and engage in this sort of deep conversation that we would have with these

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Our most activist students and our most activist faculty led it

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So it was really terrific. I mean, just to have that deep conversation

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We ended the year basically by recognizing that divestment probably was not right for us.

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And that there would be other ways that we could actually engage our



endowment more constructively. And so this year we have two courses that are taking place.

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In collaboration with our investment arm. So we have faculty, staff, and students in our investment arm, DUMAC,

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working together to figure out how do we actually

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identify the carbon footprint of our portfolio so that we can think about a decarbonization strategy as opposed to a divestment strategy.

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And so that's what we would like to do moving forward. I don't know if we're going to end up there. But the fact that Dumac is actually partnering with us on this, I think bodes well. We've got a lot of work left to do, but I love that we're engaging in our research and our teaching mission as we figure out what the right

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solution is for us.

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Good. Thank you.

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One big question. Obviously, Berkeley in organizing itself around climate is we're going to do it our way um but

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Given that, what are three things that three top things that you would tell us

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Mm-hmm.

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to watch out for or to be careful about or whatever that you've learned because you've been at this now for a few years.

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Yeah, I would say you're always going to have skeptics.

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And people will be cynical, like you're not real it's not

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you know, it's just greenwashing or window dressing and you just can't

let those folks get you down.

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You just have to, you know, what's your North Star and just keep driving towards it. And I think as long as you feel like it's real, you just keep pushing. So I would say that.

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Second thing I would say is that you will have people

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that if you are not doing the thing about a climate commitment is that it's so broad.

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If you are not doing the one thing that somebody cares about.

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You know, whatever that thing is it means

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you're not doing anything. And of course, that's not true.

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But if you haven't created the bike lane that that person really, really cares about, then the climate commitment isn't real.

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And so, you know, I think that's just like, I understand that you are passionate about that bike lane and I wish I could do it tomorrow, but it's part of a larger transportation plan that's actually part of systematic change on campus. And that's going to take a little bit longer.

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But this is how we're going to get there.

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And just trying to explain. And so I think that's it. And then I think the other piece is the communication piece.

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That is such a tough nut to crack.

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Because you need an internal communication strategy and you need an external communication strategy. And if I had 20 communicators, I don't even know if I could be successful in this because it's so broad.

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Mm-hmm.

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And what we do and the noise is so loud just trying to penetrate with constant messaging, you know, what we are doing.

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And of course, the communication feeds into the skepticism and the other pieces like it's not real.

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Mm-hmm.

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And so I think those are the big things. You got to keep the faith

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You can't let people get you down and you got to figure out

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how to just stay on top of the communication ball. That's what's eating my lunch right now.

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Thank you. Tiff, we got time for just a couple more. What have you got?

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Okay, a couple more.

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Regarding electricity, this is from Alexei, is your campus developing its own renewable electricity like solar or geothermal on campus?

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Yeah, so we are working on a geothermal play. We are not exactly sure if we have, you know, we have

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ATES, Aquathermal uh aqua

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Now I can't remember what the acronym starts for, stands for, but we were storing water underground in the winter when it's cooler and in the summer when it's warmer and using the

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differentials in terms of our heating and cooling. So we just don't know if we've got the

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the geology that will support it. So we're doing that work right now. But if we do, we are really excited about that because we are going to push forward on that really hard.

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So we're doing that work right now. Again, part of our research and teaching mission, we're unfolding that classes.

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Yeah.

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And then we have 100 megawatts of solar that are coming on next

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year in 2025 that will take care of half of our electricity

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I think the primary thing is money to do it.

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load at that point, but that is our absolute maximum limit, regulatory limit in the state that we are allowed to have.

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Hmm.

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That's very frustrating for us because we would invest a lot more

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Hmm.

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Okay.

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in renewable energy, solar plays and other sorts of things. But because Duke Energy, who's our electricity provider, our utility.

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is managing everything. They will only allow so much to come on. And if we were to build more, they would just count it in their

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Right.

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decarbonization effort, they wouldn't give the credit to us. So there's no incentive for us to move forward that way, right? Which is very frustrating.

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Got it.

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Thank you.

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Javi, I just read a study yesterday that

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It looks like the research is showing that climate impacts and climate disasters are not moving the needle much so far in this country in terms of

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interest in climate change or voting.

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In terms of climate change. What about for academia? Have you seen, and maybe it's too soon.

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I mean, you've had a number of disasters, not just the ones

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In the last couple of weeks, have you seen that make a difference for how people are looking to you and the other universities in North Carolina?

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Mm-hmm.

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I think it partly depends on who you're talking to. For our students, climate is, for some of our students, climate is a voting issue for them, for some of our faculty too. But I would say they're in the minority.

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I think that if I really think about what's happening here in North Carolina, and we are one of the states that could really make a difference in this election, this is not the issue that's going to make the difference in any shape or form.

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And right now.

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You know, talking about climate change when we've got this level of destruction in the western part of the state in particular just feels like

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it feels too political, quite frankly, when we really need to be focused on recovery.

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Mm-hmm.

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And I think that's partly because, you know, the causes of climate change can be perceived as political and it very quickly gets turned in those

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polarizing directions, which is not constructive for anybody. So staying focused on recovery is really what we need to be doing right now. But I don't think, I mean, but what I tell the students and, you know, where I'm in front of people is that this will be the most consequential

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election on many issues, including climate change.

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Because the differences between the candidates and so it

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behooves you to inform yourself about what that means and if this is an issue that is important to you.

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then you should vote your conscience.

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Yeah. Last one, and thank you for giving us the hour today.

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where do you want to be in five years or 10 years? What's the vision here for a big picture?

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Yeah, well, I would like to see, you know, I want us to achieve our climate fluency on campus so that every single student that graduates from Duke

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has a degree of climate fluency. Every major is a climate major. Every career is a climate career in some degree or form or fashion. And we are having that impact at scale because I feel like that's how universities can have impact at scale is through our graduates and that magnifying impact that we have.

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I would want our campus to be, I want us to have a circular waste system that is integrated into Durham and Durham County so that we can lead by example of what a circularity, you know, what circularity really looks like. And that begins with our \$3.4 billion procurement.

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And how we are using that in environmentally preferred procurement program that also favors to the degree possible local purchasing and equitable purchasing.

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And I would like us to be out in the forefront of creating partnerships

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and collaborative efforts that organize universities globally

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to have the impacts that I know we can all have.

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In partnership. So, you know, I think that's, I would love us as a sector to really be out in front saying, this is what we can do.

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Great. One more.

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One final from Roger Bales. In UC's system-wide fossil-free planning, we have advanced

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campus as the living laboratory, in quotes, for climate solutions. Most UC campuses are either doing or considering this

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that cuts across education, research for on-campus solutions, and research more broadly. Is due considering

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a formal and visible program like that.

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to increase on-campus engagement.

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Yes, absolutely. We have a group called

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sustainability and climate applied learning scale.

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And have a good chunk of change basically that allows us to be doing  
this work. And it is very much sort of the campus

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Using the campus as our

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Our test bed in a whole variety of different ways and that's been  
really fun to we just launched this

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I'm trying to see if I can find, there it is.

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the

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the problem with trying to

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type and talk at the same time. So scale is our effort basically to do  
this across campus. And we've got a full-time position that is focused  
on this that interfaces with faculty. So if faculty have ideas about  
what they want to plug into a class, we've got a full-time position in  
funding and a grant program that allows us to do that.

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Great. Well, look, thank you very much, Toddy, for giving us this hour  
here today. We'll look, yes, let's have some applause here, the  
virtual applause. Thank you.

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But no..

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Yes.

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Thank you all for sticking with us for an hour. There are much more to  
come as Berkeley organizes itself. And like we said.



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We're going to do this with a couple of the other universities that Toddy showed on the beginning are part of that little mini network already.

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Yeah, and thank you for your interest in this. It's really important. And I think, you know, let's see what we can all do together.

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Awesome.

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Great. Thank you all. Thank you, Toddy.

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Thank you.

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Have a good afternoon, everyone.

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Yeah, thank you.

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Thank you, Toddy. That was truly impressive. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

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Thank you.

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And we will post the recording.

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Bye, everybody.

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Não.