

Abigail Schaus '24 and Angela Busheska '25 promote sustainability through the Easton Climate Action Plan

By [Bernadette Russo](#), Assistant Arts & Culture Editor
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Think locally, act globally. Two students have taken this saying to heart through their work to help improve the climate crisis by looking inward to the Easton community.

Since the fall semester, Abigail Schaus '24 and Angela Busheska '25 has partnered with the [Nurture Nature Center](#) to activate Easton's new [Climate Action Plan](#) (CAP). Under the guidance of Economics Professor Christopher Ruebeck, the group is working to develop an online dashboard of sustainability initiatives and resources that will be open to the public.

Schaus and Busheska have been allotted a three-year contract and grant through the Landis Center for Community Engagement to develop the project. According to Schaus, the goal by the end of that time is to give the city of Easton full autonomy over the dashboard so citizens can become empowered to create community-based change.

“This is a very dynamic project. Since it does not belong to Lafayette as a community, it's not going to end when our time here at Lafayette ends,” Schaus said. “Sustainable progress is an ongoing operation.”

Schaus and Busheska each play their own parts in the project's development. Schaus's role lies in the front-facing end through community outreach. She has connected with various local organizations such as Buy Fresh Buy Local of the Greater Lehigh Valley and the Lehigh Valley Food Policy Council to gather information on their respective sustainability plans and resources.

Behind the scenes, Busheska is responsible for implementing this data into an accessible online platform that is digestible for the public. Her time living in North Macedonia, one of the most polluted countries in Europe, has exposed her to the realities of environmental catastrophe. Through this experience, she has



Abigail Schaus '24 and Angela Busheska '25 are passionate about creating a more sustainable world through the development of the Easton Climate Action Plan. (Photo courtesy of Lafayette College: Adam Atkinson)

accumulated a background in creating sustainability applications for nonprofit organizations, which she is now implementing into the development of the CAP dashboard.

“Growing up in this polluted area in Europe and seeing all this damage firsthand is really what drives me to use technology for good, especially for climate change...At the end of the day, I believe that we need to be more informed about what’s happening,” Busheska said.

Once completed, the dashboard will go live on the Nurture Nature Center’s website as an extension of their organization. The first completed draft of the dashboard is expected to debut over the summer.

While Busheska and Schaus are working on this initiative under the Nurture Nature Center’s instruction, the organization places a large emphasis on integrating students into the world of social entrepreneurship. According to Busheska, the experience has been educational as well as environmental.

“We also are learning in the process,” Busheska said.

Beyond this project, Schaus is looking to pursue a future that combines her environmental studies major and data science minor. She finds that working on the CAP is a way to pair sustainability practices with concrete data to inform citizens and encourage community-driven change.

“At the end of the day, it’s out of love and respect and dignity for the folks of the community that’s not driven by any kind of wealth or power,” Schaus said.

Busheska added that she hopes this initiative will be a bridge between the Easton community and Lafayette and encouraged the college to further collaborate on climate action.

Although this initiative is not central to Lafayette, Schaus believes that members of the campus community have the power to enact real environmental change in Easton during their time living in the area.

“I feel like there’s somewhat of a responsibility for us to be those active citizens and acknowledge those impacts,” Schaus said. “Climate change is not something you can confine.”