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Droske '11 brings energy conservation to the Morris campus and community

Summary: The recent Morris graduate is finishing up as a GreenCorps member with hopes of applying new skills learned through his experience to a future profession.

(June 29, 2011)-If you've had your windows open lately to catch a summer breeze, you might have heard University of Minnesota, Morris graduate Chris Droske '11, Stevens Point, Wisconsin, pass by on his distinctive, gas efficient moped. And energy efficiency is something that he is very invested in. Droske is finishing up his second yearlong term with GreenCorps as energy conservation specialist, an experience he has enjoyed immensely.

During 2010–11, Droske worked with Troy Goodnough, the campus sustainability coordinator and coordinator of the Morris GreenCorps housed at the Center for Small Towns, to host the annual Upper Midwest Association for Campus Sustainability (UMACS) Campus Energy Challenge in February 2011. The event is a competition among Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, and other regional colleges and universities to see who can maintain the lowest energy usage across their campuses during the month of February. The challenge looks at both electricity and heat usage. According to Droske, "Data submitted by each participating campus will be base lined using data from the past three Februaries, which will be weather normalized (using heating degree days), and then compared to the other UMACS campuses. The campus with the greatest overall energy savings per capita will win the UMACS Campus Energy Challenge."

Droske took the position in GreenCorps, a part-time AmeriCorps program, because he thought it would be a great opportunity to serve the community. He says that he learned a lot working with GreenCorps, especially in terms of being self-motivated on projects, and that it is unlike any job he has ever had. He is hoping to build off of the experience after graduation and is looking for work in energy efficiency. A chemistry major, he is especially interested in nuclear energy. He described GreenCorps as full of "diverse individuals, in terms of background, majors, and interests, who can all work together. Being environmental doesn't have to be left wing or right wing. Everyone can do their own part efficiently and cheaply."

The Minnesota [GreenCorps](#) is an environmentally focused AmeriCorps program administered by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). This program is funded through a grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service with additional support from ServeMinnesota. Partnering in this program is University of Minnesota, Morris Center for Small Towns.

The [Center for Small Towns](#) is a community outreach program housed at the University of Minnesota, Morris and serves as a point-of-entry to the resources of the University. Small towns, local units of government, K–12 schools, nonprofit organizations, and other University units are able to utilize the Center's resources as they work on rural issues or make contributions to rural society. Their mission is to focus the University's attention and marshal its resources toward assisting Minnesota's small towns with locally identified issues by creating applied learning opportunities for faculty and students.

Photo: Chris Droske

Through personal and academic discovery, the University of Minnesota, Morris provides opportunities for students to grow intellectually, engage in community, experience environmental stewardship and celebrate diversity. A renewable and sustainable educational experience, Morris prepares graduates for careers, for advanced degrees, for lifelong learning, for work world flexibility in the future, and for global citizenship. Learn more about Morris at morris.umn.edu or call 888-866-3382.