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Virginia Tech Staff Employee of the Week

September 24, 2007

Group Name: Lawrence R. Bechtel
Job Title: Recycling Coordinator
Employee's Home Department: Physical Plant
Employee's College or VP Area: Vice President for Administrative Services
Nominated For: President's Award for Excellence and Governor's Award for Community Service & Volunteerism
Nominated By: Joseph L. Scarpaci, Professor, College of Natural Resources
Virginia Tech Hire Date: August 25, 1992



Summary

Larry Bechtel is a long-time employee in Virginia Tech's Physical Plant Department where he serves as Recycling Coordinator. In a time where environmental issues and matters of sustainability prevail in media and academic research, Larry Bechtel has gone out of his way to make this voluntary program much easier for the university community.

Following significant state budget reductions in 2002, he creatively structured the program to use fewer resources by incorporating student volunteers. He has worked with students, faculty, staff, and alumni to establish the means to get materials recycled. A faculty member commented, "For the past three years, I have had the pleasure of watching students systematically comb the buildings' respective departments, collect recyclable materials, and then separate them just outside my door. I have come to hear good things from students and staff about this program across campus. This is a very visible program, and it allows those of us interested in sustainability issues to point to a very grassroots and practical way to support our environment. In all of this, Larry Bechtel has served as an informal environmental steward. This kind of civic engagement forms an important aspect of the quality of life that we enjoy on campus."

Mr. Bechtel's contributions expand beyond his efforts on the environmental front. His work as a sculptor has had an impact throughout Montgomery County and the New River Valley. He is known as a promoter and creator of civic art, including a sculpture of Mrs. Nannie B. Hairston, a prominent Civil Rights leader in this community. He also created the Fallen Officer Memorial in Roanoke and a bust of Captain Schaeffer, a white Quaker civil rights leader. One community leader stated, "I believe that Larry Bechtel has embraced this philosophy of reaching out into the community through his civic art projects. I believe that Virginia Tech has a fine example of staff excellence and how the university reaches out to all walks of life."

About the ["Staff Employee of the Week"](#) Program

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