

*“A critical mass of faculty, students, staff, and administrators must choose sustainability, conservation, re-use, and recycling in our routine, daily campus tasks. The Academic Planning Committee of the faculty should address the recommendations of the task force for raising the environmental literacy of all Central students.”* – Taken from Strategy #15 in Central’s Strategic Plan

In the spring semester, 2006, I was taking the only graphic design class that Central offered, taught by Eric Bumgardner. One of our first big assignments was to create an “eco-logo,” a clear, distinct, and simple reminder of Strategy #15 and Central’s stance for the environment. The logo was to convey the ideas of stewardship to the environment as well as intergenerational responsibility. Also, the logo was to be “distinctly Central,” reflecting or relating to Central College.

Immediately, I had an image in mind. I envisioned a leaf design that recalled Central's existing athletic logo. In this way, the new design could, by association, carry with it Central's identity and reflect the collegiate community.

I knew the eco-logo needed to be straightforward and simple. A major goal in graphic design is to visually convey an idea in the simplest way possible. I also knew that the eco-logo could be used for any number of college-related things, so versatility was a necessity. The logo needed to be as effective in a one-inch space as it was on a poster. On this same note of simplicity, I wanted the eco-logo to have a single, solid color. I settled on green, a color which would be representative of nature and would be viewed in a literal sense (i.e., Central’s quest to be “green”).

I researched strategy #15 and one of the biggest themes was that of environmental stewardship. To represent the human side of the man/nature interaction, I decided to use the image of an outstretched hand. The interaction of the hand and the leaf in the current logo is based completely on ideas of stewardship and responsibility to the land. The hand, engulfed by the leaf, represents our place in nature as opposed to our separation from it. As a part of nature, then, it is our duty to find our natural role in the world.

With an eco-logo, strategy #15 could be fully realized. It allowed Central to have a visual identity behind their environmental programs and action, and it gave the community a way to tie all of these practices in sustainability together to create a unified idea. It has been a pleasure to see the eco-logo in action and to see Central making advances in their drive for an environmentally responsible campus.

Adam Bartelt, '08