

Rooted in Sustainability: Sweet Briar College's Campus Community Celebrates Earth Week, Hosts Waxter Environmental Forum

Sweet Briar College honors Earth Week with campus-wide sustainability events and a keynote by author and food systems scholar Dr. Kelly Alexander.

SWEET BRIAR, VA, UNITED STATES, May 11, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- From April 21 to May 3, the Sweet Briar College community celebrated an extended Earth Week through a series of events showcasing our community's commitment to sustainability and learning about environmental issues.

One of the celebration's highlights was a community-wide lunch hosted by [Alumnae Relations and Development](#), the Center for Human & Environmental Sustainability, and the Sustainability

Club on April 24 featuring students and faculty produce and herbs grown on campus. During the lunch, students in the agricultural operations course also sold greenhouse produce and portable reusable bamboo utensil sets. Other events throughout the week included canoe certification and hiking with the Outdoor Program, learning about sustainability issues in the fashion industry with Indie's Designers, rumba outside with the Sweet Dancers, a bonfire during the Lyrid meteor shower, and paper and collage making with repurposed materials.

The centerpiece of Earth Week was a keynote address by Dr. Kelly Alexander, this year's Julia B. Waxter Environmental Forum speaker. Dr. Alexander, author of *Truffles and Trash: Recirculating Food in a Social Welfare State*, spoke to the community on April 29 in Mills Chapel about the six years of research on food waste in Brussels, Belgium, that she completed for the book. During the talk, Dr. Alexander spoke about food waste in restaurants and grocery stores, models for more sustainable practices, and her time learning about the challenges of addressing this global problem. She also participated in a Q&A, book signing, class visits, and meals with campus



Community-wide lunch hosted by Alumnae Relations and Development, the Center for Human & Environmental Sustainability, and the Sustainability Club.

community members during her time at Sweet Briar.

“The similarities between how we nurture ourselves and what we consider disposable are the same factors. If we can think of them along a spectrum instead of opposites, that would be my hope,” said Dr. Alexander during her keynote presentation.

Dr. Kelly Alexander is an assistant professor and George B. Tindall Fellow of American Studies at the University of North Carolina’s College of Arts and Sciences. She is a James Beard Award-winning writer and former *Saveur* and *Food & Wine* magazine editor. Dr. Alexander’s work has appeared in *The New York Times*, *Newsweek*, and *O: The Oprah Magazine*. She also co-authors *The New York Times* best-selling barbecue cookbook *Smokin’* with Myron Mixon.



Dr. Alexander, author of *Truffles and Trash: Recirculating Food in a Social Welfare State*.

“The Sweet Briar campus community is so passionate about sustainability. Several recent student projects have addressed food waste. It is something we seek to minimize in our campus food system, so it was perfect to have Dr. Alexander as our Waxter Forum speaker during Earth Week this year,” said Dr. Lisa J. Powell, director of the [Center for Human and Environmental Sustainability](#), associate professor of environmental science and agriculture, and STEM division head.

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*Dr. Kelly Alexander, author of
Truffles & Trash*

[The Julia B. Waxter Environmental Forum](#) is supported by an endowment established at Sweet Briar by the late Julia Baldwin Waxter '49 and her husband, Bill. In addition to

presenting a public lecture, each forum speaker interacts with environmental science students through class visits, meals, and informal conversations. Dr. Alexander’s visit was also given by Sweet Briar’s Leadership in Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems certificate and environmental science programs.

Sweet Briar's commitment to sustainability is more than tradition—it's a defining part of the student experience. Students learn to lead solutions for a more just and sustainable future through programs like the Center for Human and Environmental Sustainability, the Leadership in Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems certificate, and a nationally recognized environmental science major. To learn more about studying environmental science at Sweet Briar, contact Admissions at admissions@sbc.edu or call 434-381-6142.

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Sweet Briar College Farm's Rosé wine earned Gold



Apiary overlooking our field of wildflowers providing forage for pollinators

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