

## **2022 Sustainable Solutions Challenge**

### **Stakeholder Interview Summaries – Prepared by Suraya Souidi**

#### **HEATHER SADOWSKI**

Wellness is an important focus at the University of Richmond, and it is also part of sustainability on campus. Heather Sadowski is the Director of Health Promotion, focusing on education, outreach, and the first-floor services at the new Wellbeing Center. Since this is the first time the Sustainable Solutions Challenge is encouraging students to consider wellness in the context of sustainability, she is excited to hear ideas for the Wellbeing Center.

Although the link between sustainability and wellness is less self-explanatory compared to other departments on campus, Sadowski understands the importance of collaborating with the Office for Sustainability. She states that the partnerships with the Wellbeing Center “provide outreach and education opportunities to our campus community” in order to enhance the wellbeing of both students and other community members.

Sadowski says that “My ultimate goal is to make [the Wellbeing Center] sustainable for student’s wellness. It’s a place where there’s many different amenities, and this is a spot where you can explore different amenities throughout your time on campus to discover what can be sustained throughout your lifetime.” In order to achieve this, Sadowski looks to engage students in educational opportunities so that they will want to keep up wellness behaviors after college in a sustainable way. Some examples of this are interactive cooking classes and meditation classes. Sadowski understands that the building “is so new, that sustainability can be a great aspect that we can learn from—how can this building support students past their time on campus?”

From Sadowski’s perspective, there needs to be “a community that cares about one another,” and because of the pandemic, the demand for wellness within our community has been enhanced significantly. Although the programs to support our community are already present, Sadowski notes that a barrier within wellness is the awareness of these programs: “Sometimes, until someone needs those services, they don’t know that they’re there. We would hope that they would know where to go, but [we need to] draw awareness to the holistic approach that we provide to wellbeing.” She would like to bring an intentional awareness to opportunities that will help students thrive.

For students who are interested in proposing an initiative related to wellbeing, Sadowski recommends teams to learn about the different initiatives and programs that the Wellbeing Center offers and align their proposal with boosting awareness and understanding for these opportunities.