

## **Building Our “Green” Capabilities**

Yale University Procurement is committed to ensuring that the University’s purchases are environmentally responsible. But along the way, Yale buyers have discovered that it is not so easy answering the questions, “what to buy?” and “where to buy it?”

Seeking the answers, we often look to third-party certifications and verifications which attempt to measure either single attributes or multiple attributes of sustainability. When properly identified, these standards can add significant convenience and reliability to determine the “greenness” of products, services and suppliers. Some examples of these standards include GreenSeal, Ecologo, EnergyStar, EPEAT, LEED and many more.

While industry standards are helpful, the vast number of them can introduce even more complexity and confusion into the purchasing equation. To sort it all out, we turned to the experts within our own walls of ivy.

### **Yale Students and Alumni Offer Environmental Guidance to Staff**

In early December, buyers from Purchasing Services and Facilities had the opportunity to discern fact from fiction with the help of Yale PhD candidates from the School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, Anastasia O’Rourke and Graeme Auld. The duo de-mystified third-party certifications by exploring the meaning, credibility and the fit into the procurement context at Yale.

Yale alum Sarah O’Brien, has also extended a helping hand from the Green Electronics Council to look at one specific standard, EPEAT (Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool). EPEAT is a system to help purchasers in the public and private sectors evaluate, compare and select desktop computers, notebooks and monitors based on their environmental attributes. EPEAT also provides a clear and consistent set of performance criteria for the design of products, and provides an opportunity for manufacturers to secure market recognition for efforts to reduce the environmental impact of their products.

### **Many Yale Computers Meet High EPEAT Standards**

Working with Procurement staff and several IT buyers from across the University, Sarah led us through the EPEAT verification process for electronics. Armed with new information and a handy EPEAT product registry, we were delighted to discover that many of the computers we recently purchased for business purposes meet the EPEAT “silver” and even “gold” standard. This means that these electronics have met multiple environmental criteria beyond their EnergyStar rating, the current Yale standard. For more information on EPEAT, please visit: [www.epeat.net](http://www.epeat.net).

Future goals for Environmentally Preferable Purchasing at Yale include ongoing work to identify and adopt the most desirable standards while ensuring that the procurement process remains quick, easy and affordable...just the way we like it!

If you are interested in attending an EPEAT webinar or have general questions on Environmentally Preferable Purchasing, please contact [brenda.naegel@yale.edu](mailto:brenda.naegel@yale.edu).