



University of South Florida faculty and students with the Association of Environmental Engineering & Science Professors Distinguished Lecturer, Prof. Lutgarde Raskin (3rd from right front), the Altarum/ERIM Russell O'Neal Professor of Engineering at the University of Michigan. Photo credit Marcy Kornfeld.

The University of South Florida (USF), University of Central Florida, University of Florida, and Florida Gulf Coast University hosted Professor Lutgarde Raskin, the 2018-19 Distinguished Lecturer of the Association of Environmental Engineering and Science Professors (AEESP), on Friday November 2, 2018. Each year, the Distinguished Lecturer is selected by the Lectures Committee of AEESP, in recognition of his or her excellence as both a researcher and educator and their ability to give engaging oral presentations to members of the environmental engineering community and general public. Dr. Raskin is the Altarum/ERIM Russell O'Neal Professor of Engineering at the University of Michigan. She is a pioneer in molecular microbial ecology applied to water quality control and anaerobic bioprocesses. Her research focuses on managing the microbiome of drinking water systems and developing anaerobic bioprocesses for resource recovery from waste streams. She has published about 135 peer-reviewed journal papers and 360 conference proceedings papers and abstracts. By the end of the Distinguished Lecture Tour Dr. Raskin will have visited 17 institutions, giving at least one talk from two lecture topics. Jeff Cunningham, Associate Professor in Civil & Environmental Engineering at USF, is the lead organizer for the event and said, "USF and our co-host institutions are very honored for

the opportunity to have Professor Raskin visit our campus and share some of her knowledge and expertise with our students, our faculty, and our neighboring professional community.”

Her lecture at USF, “***Converting urban organic waste streams into sustainable resources with novel anaerobic bioprocesses***” showed how knowledge of diverse microbiomes coupled with sustainable technology design practices can lead to the development of novel anaerobic bioprocesses for resource recovery from urban organic waste streams. For example, the stomach of ruminant animals inspired the design of membrane bioreactors that could produce valuable organic chemicals that could be used for biomethane and other bioproduct production. The microbiology wonder was investigated through life cycle costs and environmental assessments to ensure financial viability and environmentally sustainable waste management.

Over 100 people registered to attend Dr Raskin’s lecture, and a student poster session organized around her visit. Thirty-six students presented posters, engaging with peers and faculty from the four different institutions. Student Wainella Isaacs from USF said it was a, “Great day spent learning about the impactful environmental engineering research being conducted by our AEESP - Florida Family.”

Dr. Raskin is also a current member of the Board of Directors of AEESP, a private nonprofit organization founded in 1963 with over 885 members today. USF faculty are also highly engaged with AEESP; Dr. Maya Trotz is the current President, Dr. James Mihelcic is a past president, Dr. Sarina Ergas is a past secretary, Dr. Cunningham previously chaired the dissertation award committee, Dr. Amy Stuart is a member of the Lectures Committee, and all of the USF faculty co-hosted the biennial conference in 2011.