



# NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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Contact: Julia Isaacs, 350 Madison Climate Action Team, Divestment Committee (608) 467-7187  
Beth Esser, 350 Madison Climate Action Team, Co-Coordinator (608) 239-1353  
Abby Ross, 350 UW and Fossil Free UW, [amross3@wisc.edu](mailto:amross3@wisc.edu)<[amross3@wisc.edu](mailto:amross3@wisc.edu)>

## **“UW Madison Alumni and Students Join a Nationwide Multi-School Divestment Fund”**

Members of 350 Madison Climate Action Team, 350 UW and Fossil Free UW have joined a national campaign to influence the investment decisions of eighteen major colleges and universities, including UW-Madison.

“We have joined the Multi-School Divestment Fund which aims to pressure institutions to divest from fossil fuels,” said Kevin Meyers, an undergraduate active in Fossil Free UW. “Tax-free donations to the Multi-School Divestment Fund can now be earmarked for the University of Wisconsin-Madison, along with Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston College, Williams College, Dartmouth College, Georgetown University and twelve other schools.”

The Multi-School Divestment Fund facilitates tax-deductible donations for those who would like to give to an educational institution but are hesitant because the institution invests in the environmentally, financially, and morally hazardous fossil fuel industry. The Fund invests in socially responsible stocks, including those in sustainable energy companies. “Donations earmarked for UW-Madison will be held by the Fund until the UW Foundation, which manages the endowment for UW-Madison, makes a public commitment to divest from fossil fuels,” explains Abby Ross, of Fossil Free UW. “If the UW Foundation does not commit to divestment from fossil fuels by December 31, 2017, all donations earmarked for UW-Madison will be split between schools that have divested from fossil fuel stocks.”

Donors have many reasons for contributing.

“My four grandchildren deserve a planet they can live on,” said UW Madison Alumna, Judith Stadler. “Making a financial contribution to the Multi-school Divestment Fund is the very least I can do to help encourage my alma mater to do the right thing by future generations and divest from fossil fuels.”

“It’s time to move past petitions asking the UW Foundation to divest, and take stronger collective action,” said Julia Isaacs, a community member active in 350 Madison’s divestment committee. “That’s why I have contributed to the Multi-school Divestment Fund.”

“To avert the worst effects of climate change, scientists tell us that we need to keep *two-thirds* of known fossil fuel reserves in the ground,” said Beth Esser, mother of two young children and Co-Coordinator of 350 Madison Climate Action Team. “A leading institution like UW Madison should be divesting from risky fossil fuels and investing in renewable energy for the sake of my children and *for a strong financial portfolio*. My donation to the Multi-School Divestment Fund is an investment in the future of UW Madison and my children.”

"I contributed to the Multi-school Divestment Fund because I see the injustice and damage of a changing climate now, and see how business as usual will exacerbate and devastate students' chances of a livable shared future." said Karen Pope, UW Eau Claire Library Associate Professor Emerita. "I want to urge UW Foundation leaders to take seriously their stewardship ~ to invest in a sustainable economy."

Students, faculty, alumni, staff and friends of UW Madison can donate to the Multi-School Divestment Fund online by going to: [www.divestfund.org](http://www.divestfund.org).

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*350 Madison Climate Action Team is the local branch of [350.org](http://350.org), an international grassroots organization that is mobilizing a global climate movement. 350 parts per million (ppm) of CO<sub>2</sub> is the number that leading scientists say is the safe upper limit for carbon dioxide in our atmosphere. To get there, we need a different kind of ppm - a "people powered movement." Learn more at [350madison.org](http://350madison.org) or [350.madison.wi@gmail.com](mailto:350.madison.wi@gmail.com). Find us on Facebook: 350Madison Climate Action Team.*

*350 UW is a nonpartisan coalition of undergraduates, graduates, faculty and alumni demanding that the university and other organizations in the community divest their financial holdings from the fossil fuel industry. On Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/350UofWisconsin>*

*Fossil Free UW is a part of a national divestment campaign asking universities to divest from the top 200 fossil fuel companies. On Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/fossilfreeUW>*

*Learn more about the Multi-School Divestment Fund at <http://www.divestfund.org/>.*

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