

# Kris Ferguson – George Washington University



**Kris Ferguson has been the Recycling Coordinator at the George Washington University** in Washington D.C. since 2013. Prior to that he owned his own Solid Waste and Recycling Consulting Business and worked as a consultant for various private sector companies. Kris is married and has a three year old son and a one year old daughter. He is currently on the Board of Keep Virginia Beautiful where he helps find solutions to the intentional proliferation of litter while focusing on increasing the state's recycling efforts. Kris holds a Master's Degree in Natural Resources from Virginia Polytechnic and State University

THE GEORGE  
WASHINGTON  
UNIVERSITY

WASHINGTON, DC

# College and University Recycling Coalition

Learning to Reboot Recycling  
Collection Programs

Case Study: The George  
Washington University



# Campus Statistics



- Chartered in 1821
- 3 Campuses (Foggy Bottom, Mount Vernon, VSTC).
- 25,000 Students from all 50 States + 120 Countries
- 26 Residence Halls on FB and MVC
- Open Campus near Federal Government, IMF, World Bank, Tourist Attractions



# Prior Situation

- A pervasive rumor that GW does not actually recycle!
- Confusion regarding Single or Dual Stream Recycling as well as our other waste streams
- Spotty mechanisms in place to educate the community
- Staff and budgetary support mechanisms not fully understood
- No standards for infrastructure or signage, anywhere
- Confusing metrics and logic for existing infrastructure



# Containers Under Dual Stream System



# Signage Under Dual Stream System



# Solution



Hire subject area experts to manage all faucets of solid waste, across all three of GW's campuses, including recycling.

- Andres Harris – Zero Waste Coordinator
- Kris Ferguson – Recycling Coordinator
- Miles Milliken – Department Assistant

Having these new staff allowed for the creating of standards, prioritization of projects and continuous project management. Release and throw us to the wolves!

# Method

1. Identify Dedicated Staff
2. Create Standards for Future Bins and Signage
3. Assess Existing Infrastructure and Problem Areas
4. Create Logic for System Updates and Prioritize Them
5. Identify Funding Mechanisms
6. Manage Projects
7. Create and Conduct Trainings and Methods for Education
8. Assess Metrics of Projects and Program



# Single Stream Signage Standards

## TRASH

**Styrofoam Cups/ Containers**  
**Waxy Paper Cups/ Containers**  
**Coffee Cups**  
**Condiment Packaging**  
**Plastic Bags**  
**Plastic Utensils**

**Food Waste**  
**Coffee Grinds**  
**Candy/Snack Wrappers**  
**Soiled Napkins/ Paper Towels**  
**Soiled Pizza Boxes**

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 ALL MATERIALS LISTED ABOVE CAN BE PLACED IN THIS BIN FOR TRASH.



## Single-Stream RECYCLING

**CONTAINERS AND JARS**  
 Plastic Beverage and Food Containers (RTU)  
 Aluminum, Steel and Tin Cans  
 Glass Bottles and Jars  
 Juice Cartons

**MISSED PAPERS AND CARDBOARD**  
 Office Paper (White/Color)  
 Newspapers, Magazines and Broads  
 Folded Card and Corrugated Boxes  
 Junk Mail and Paper Inserts

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## TRASH CHUTE

ALL WASTE MUST BE BAGGED

**WHAT:**  
 Items Listed on the Trash Poster MUST be Bagged

**NO**  
 Broken/Sharp Items  
 Glass Breakable Items  
 Non-Food/Flammable Items  
 Sharp Objects/Syringes  
 Recyclables

**HOW:**  
 1. Bag and Tie Trash Bags  
 2. Breakables and Flat Paper Outward  
 3. Place Bagged Trash into Chute Carefully  
 4. Do Not Push or Force Trash Down  
 5. Do Not Use Force  
 6. Do Not Use Cardboard  
 7. Do Not Use Force

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## COMPOST

PLEASE NO STYROFOAM OR PLASTICS

**Bones**  
**Dairy Products**  
**Egg Shells**  
**Yard Waste**  
**Food Scraps**  
**Coffee Grinds**

**Napkins**  
**Paper Cups and Plates**  
**Paper Towels and Rolls**  
**Pizza Boxes**  
**Compostable Plates/Utensils**

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 ALL MATERIALS LISTED ABOVE CAN BE PLACED IN THIS BIN FOR COMPOSTING.



## ELECTRONICS RECYCLING

**E-CYCLING TOWERS (SMALL ITEMS)**

**WHAT:**  
 Cell Phones  
 Chargers/Cords  
 Batteries  
 Smart TVs  
 Tablets  
 CFL Light Bulbs

**E-CYCLING TOWER LOCATIONS:**  
 Marlin Center (Ground Floor Elevator)  
 Thomson Hall (2nd Floor Elevator)  
 Spring Hall (2nd Floor)  
 Eisenhower Hall (2nd Floor Elevator)  
 West Hall (2nd Floor Elevator)  
 West Hall (2nd Floor Elevator)  
 West Hall (2nd Floor Elevator)

**FIXIT REQUEST & DROP-OFF BIN (LARGE ITEMS)**

**WHAT:**  
 Computers/Monitors/TVs  
 Printers  
 Tablets & Readers

**HOW:**  
 • Submit a Fixit Request for 'E-CYCLE' or  
 • Place items in the Drop-off Bin  
 (located on the Support Building)  
 (during hours: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM)

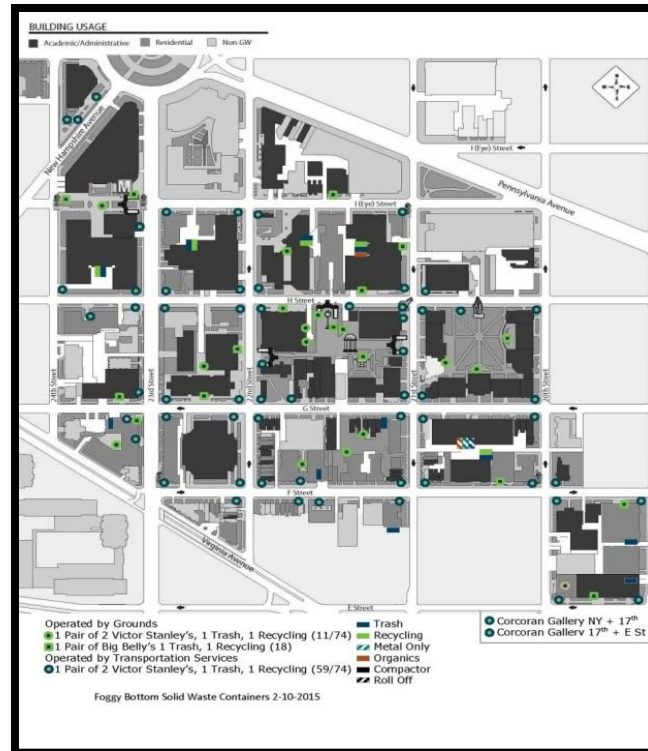
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# Single Stream Container Standards



# Logic for Single Stream Based Updates



Map of GW's Foggy Bottom Campus: All exterior waste collection locations are denoted by type.

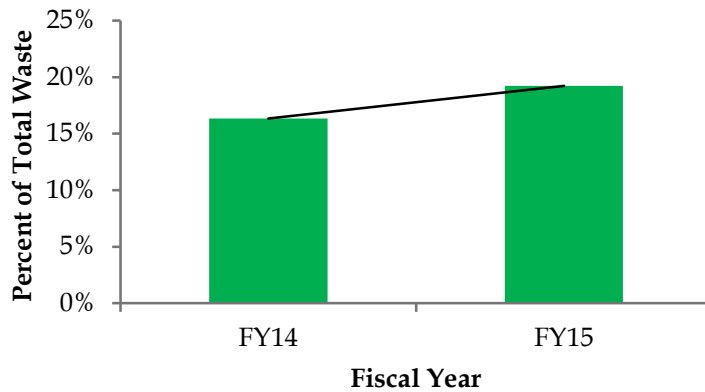
# Outdoor Litter Receptacles

## Identified as Our First, and Simplest Project

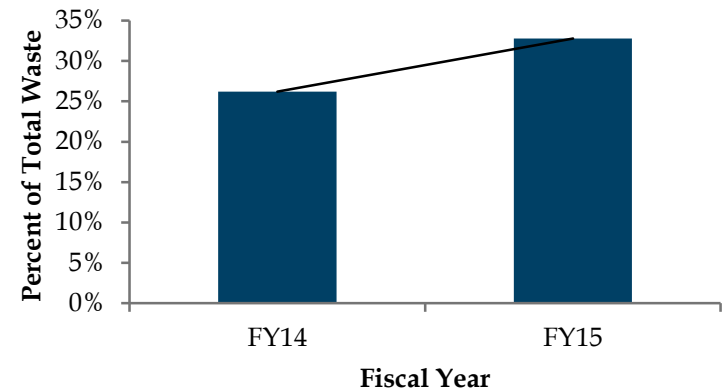


# Metrics

## Percent of Waste as Single Stream Recycling



## Percent of Waste Diverted from Landfill



# Conclusions

- Patience, Patience, Patience
- Understand how your organization interacts with solid waste
- Learn who the stakeholders are, housekeepers, event staff, student organizations, other sustainability initiatives
- Set ambitious goals to motivate your staff and community
- Prioritize projects, then create end stage logic to assess infrastructure before moving forward
- Collaborate across the higher ed, and solid waste industries

AN ONGOING (AND NEVER ENDING) PROCESS BUT WE ARE  
PAST THE MAELSTROM!

# Questions

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