

Eco-Awesome: Using EcoReps to engage students in campus recycling

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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

- Located in Columbia, SC
- 25,200 undergrads, 8,500 graduate students
- 570 acre urban campus
 - 6.1 million sq ft of academic and research space
- Founded in 1801
- Member of Southeastern Conference for athletics



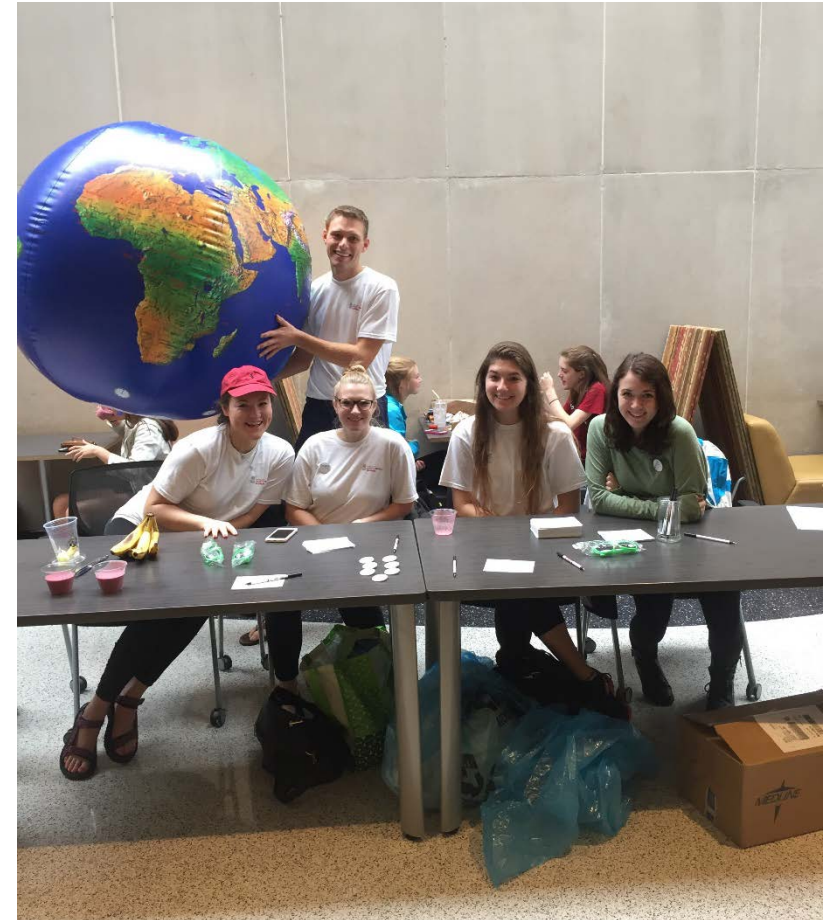
University Housing

- ~6,500 students live on campus, 5,000 are first years
- 24 residence halls
- 4 all female halls, 1 all male hall
- All students assigned to a learning community
- Room recycling bin provided in all but 1 hall
- Recycling collected from trash rooms/lobbies by Housing custodial staff



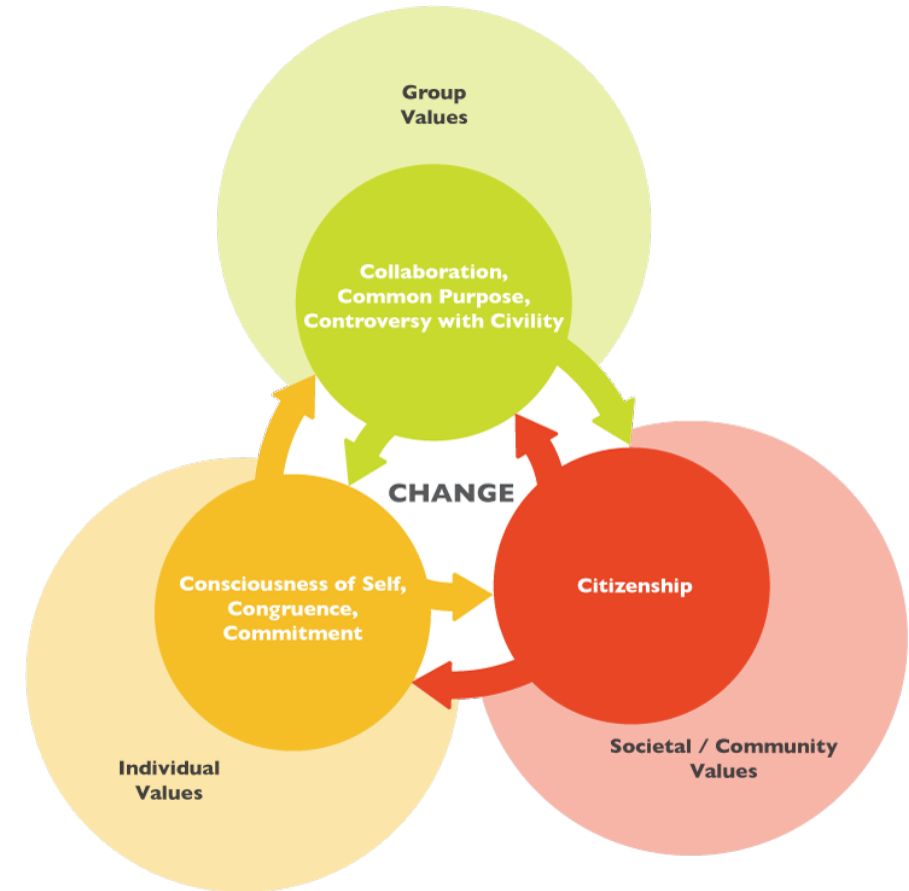
What are EcoReps?

- EcoRep programs are defined by AASHE as student programs that:
 - Focus on sustainable living practices
 - **Are based in residential buildings**
 - **Use peer education techniques**
 - Have a direct relationship with or are supervised by an employee of the institution (Erickson 2012)
- A peer leader is “a person trained to assist others in their peer group to make decisions about a specific topic through educational activities” (BACCHUS Network 2008)



How are they different?

- EcoReps work to change the **behavior** of students
- Based on theories of:
 - Peer education
 - Student development
 - Community based social marketing



(Higher Education Research Institute 1994)

Things to Consider When Starting a Program

- Structure and funding
- Connection to Housing
- Recruitment
- Job duties
 - What will the focus be?
 - Will they be based in residence halls?
 - How would EcoReps be different from other sustainability interns on your campus?
- Training
- Oversight



Common Structures: Housing

- Peer-leadership program run out of Housing
- Position on Hall Government or Residence Hall Association



PROS:

- Access to/support from Housing staff
- Knowledge of Housing policies
- Access to Housing resources like giveaways, money and marketing

CONS:

- May not be as connected to campus sustainability goals



Examples from Other Institutions

Clemson

- Staff advisor and GA
- 18 Eco Reps
- Volunteer/stipend
- Residence Hall focus
- Main duties: peer education, tabling, events and programming



University of Georgia

- Staff advisor
- 14 Eco-Reps
- Volunteer
- Residence Hall focus
- Main duties: environmental education programs, posters/bulletin boards, environmental sustainability pledge, attend RHA meetings and events

Common Structures: Office of Sustainability

- Advised and run by staff in Office of Sustainability
- Often has a student coordinator
- Funding could be joint Housing/OoS or just OoS



PROS:

- Integrated into other campus sustainability programs
- Less overlap/duplication in events

CONS:

- May have difficulty working with Housing staff
- Need to learn to speak the language of Housing

Examples from Other Institutions

Elon

- Staff advisor
- 7-8 Eco-Reps
- Paid hourly
- 60% Res Hall, 40% campus focus
- Main duties: peer education via Sustainable Living Lessons, programing and behavior change projects

Coastal Carolina

- Staff advisor
- 4 Eco-Reps
- Paid hourly
- Campus-wide focus
- Main duties: peer education, programming, outreach events, and presentations



Holding Students Accountable

- Set mutual expectations at the beginning
- Provide feedback throughout the year
 - After events
 - 1 on 1 meetings
- Ask them to reflect on their own performance
- Consider using a rubric





Expectations	Less than Expected	As Expected	More than Expected
<p>Time on Task</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not attend training retreat at the beginning of the semester • Misses more than 2 weekly meetings per semester and/or frequently arrives late • Attends less than 4 Hall Government meetings per semester • Volunteers at campus-wide events for less than 4 hours per semester or did not show up at scheduled volunteer time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended training retreat at the beginning of the semester • Misses 1-2 weekly meetings per semester • Attends 4 Hall Government meetings per semester • Volunteers at campus-wide events for at least 4 hours • Works 2-3 hours per week outside of the meeting to plan and prepare for EcoReps activities 	<p><i>Meets all "as expected" criteria and:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misses zero weekly meetings • Volunteers for more than 4 hours at campus-wide events • Attends more than 4 Hall Government meetings per semester • Participates in non-mandatory EcoRep activities (social events, volunteer opportunities etc...)
<p>Activity</p> <p><i>What students do in this activity</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans 0-2 events in the Fall Semester and 0-3 events in the Spring Semester • Does not communicate well • Does not model appropriate behaviors in the residence halls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans 3 events in the Fall Semester and 4 events in the Spring Semester • Communicates verbally with other EcoReps, supervisors, event attendees and others outside the organization about environmental issues and sustainability • Models appropriate behavior in the residence halls (ex: recycling, turning off lights...) • Builds relationships to inspire and motivate action by other building residents 	<p><i>Meets all "as expected" criteria and:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displays creativity in event ideas • Collaborates with other EcoReps to plan larger and more successful events • Demonstrates a passion for environmental issues
<p>Knowledge/Skills</p> <p><i>The knowledge and skills students apply, practice, or develop and how they apply, practice or develop this knowledge and these skills</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not exhibit an understanding of environmental issues and cannot communicate about them well • Does not actively participate in their campus campaign group • Does not plan ahead for events and turns in proposal forms late • Does not collaborate with other EcoReps or with Hall Government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhibits an understanding of environmental and social issues related to sustainability at events and can communicate them verbally and in writing • Develops understanding of civic engagement and how to make change in their community by working on a campus campaign • Plans, organizes, and prioritizes work • Develops skills to work in a team 	<p><i>Meets all "as expected" criteria and:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizes and acts on personal and social responsibilities by connecting their personal habits to larger sustainability goals • Actively engages in discussions about peer leadership and environmental issues and how these connect to future career aspirations

EcoReps at UofSC

- Established in 2008, re-designed in 2011
- Run out of University Housing
 - Overseen by Coordinator of Environmental Sustainability for University Housing and a Graduate Assistant
- Student Leadership Team
- 21 undergraduate students
- Paid a stipend
 - \$100/semester for each EcoRep
 - \$150/semester for Leadership Team



EcoRep Job Duties at UofSC

- Attend weekly meetings
- Plan and host 3 events in the Fall Semester and 4 events in the Spring semester for your residence hall
- Complete a proposal and evaluation for each event
- Attend Hall Government Meetings at least 4x per semester
- Volunteer for at least 4 hours per semester at campus-wide EcoReps events
- Encourage residents to participate in the Green Dorm Room Certification Program
- Follow, and encourage your residents to follow, us on social media



EcoReps Events...



No Impact Week

A week of personal challenges to live a no-impact life
November 2nd - 7th
#SCNoImpactWeek

Monday	November 02	Reduce your consumption & buy nothing new No Impact Week Kickoff 10am-2pm, Greene Street <i>*With sustainable giveaways!</i>
Tuesday	November 03	Make no trash Know Your Waste Sort 9:30am-2pm, Greene Street Reclaimed Runway 7pm-9pm, Russell House Ballroom Sponsored by Sustainable Carolina
Wednesday	November 04	Eat local and organic food Weigh Your Waste 5:30pm-7pm, Bates Diner
Thursday	November 05	Reduce your energy and water use Tap Water Challenge & Lightbulb Swap 9:30am-1:30pm, Greene Street
Friday	November 06	Take sustainable transportation Smoothie Bike 12pm-2pm, Greene Street
Saturday	November 07	Give back to your community Community Clean Up 9:30am-11am 11:30am-1pm Meet at Green Quad Learning Center

To sign up email ecorepsusc@gmail.com or visit [facebook.com/scecoreps](https://www.facebook.com/scecoreps)

Recycling Specific Events...



E-WASTE CRAFT
WORKSHOP
WITH INVENTOR
DANIEL CUMMINS

March.22
6:00 to 7:30 pm
Preston Seminar Room



Tips for Event Planning in Housing

- Work with Housing staff
 - Hall Directors
 - Residence Life Directors
 - RMs/RAs
- Make sure you know who can access the residence halls
- Use Housing's resources
- Meet students where they are



How Can EcoReps Help You?

- Educate students (and staff) about recycling
- Eyes and ears in the residence halls
- Serve as advocates for recycling in Student Government, Hall Government and on student advisory committees
- Plan RecycleMania events
- Waste sorts
- Manual labor



The EcoReps at the
University of South Carolina
cordially invite you to the

Southeastern EcoReps Conference

February 27, 2016



UNIVERSITY OF
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Questions?

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