

Cats Optimizing Recycling Education - CORE - Progress Report

Email

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Project Manager Name

Jill Burchell

Requested Metrics

Basics

1. # of people in the core project team involved in planning and execution of the project (if they're a student/ staff/ faculty etc.).

4 CORE Staff

Jill Burchell- Staff

Nana Adwoa Akuffo Amoh-Asante- Student

Chloe Stenmark- Student

Courtney Kim- Student

RAs – 262

CDs – 14

GCDs – 7

ACDs – 5

Custodial Unit-100

Facilities management-5

Eco reps- 6

Total number of people involved in CORE project- 403.

2. # of hours on this project (broken up by students/ staff)

Jill Burchell

Primary Project Coordinator- Total number of hours :378 hours.

Nana Adwoa Akuffo Amoh-Asante

Graduate Assistant -Total number of hours spent :612 hours.

Chloe Stenmark

Recycling and Facilities Specialist - Total number of hours :100 hours.

Courtney Kim

Recycling Specialist- Total number of hours :133 hours.

Tyler Johnson (Previous recycling specialist)- Total number of hours: 57 hours

Total number of hours spent on the project: 1280 hours

Engagement

1. # of students directly engaged with recycling education

FALL 2023

7631 students engaged directly through Bin It to Win It (BI2WI)

BI2WI engagement experiences: 284 sustainable engagements

1. 262 sustainability education entries (programs, events, bulletin boards, etc. that teach about sustainability)
2. 22 engagements with sustainable features (programs and events that were facilitated using sustainable materials)

BI2WI video submissions: 25 recycling education videos

1. 750 total likes
2. Pima had the most per capita likes with 56% of building population liking their video.

SPRING 2024

532 students engaged directly through 1 on 1 recycling education in the dorms this semester.

Arbol de la Vida- 105 out of 685 residents

Coronado- 160 out of 650 residents

Colonia de La Paz- 83 out of 439 students

Arizona-Sonora- 70 out of 372 students

Likins- 51 out of 348 students

Apache-Santa Cruz -63 out of 305 students

7320 students were engaged via social media through their CDs by sending them links to educational Instagram posts addressing recycling issues.

2. # and type of interactive events held (i.e. Focus groups, interventions, workshops)

5 Focus group meetings have been held this academic year.

1 Staff meeting at Colonia de La Paz

of students reached through these events

2 students were present for the 1st focus group discussion.

3 students were present for the 2nd focus group discussion.

6 students were present for the 3rd focus group discussion.

3 students were present for both the 4th and 5th focus group discussions.

19 students were present at the staff meeting.

Recycling

1. #Results from recycling surveys conducted

Recycling contamination quiz sent to 7,631 students and 31 staff in the fall semester with 996 students completing the quiz.

Recycling survey for spring semester conducted as part of End of Year (EOY) students' survey sent out by Housing. The results from the survey are not yet available.

2. # Contamination rates

This spring semester, recycling data collected by Facilities Management shows a decrease in the percentage of contamination per person in the dorms, particularly in the dorms where 1-on-1 education has been done.

January- 45.3 % per resident

February-32.3 % per resident

March- 35% per resident

Contamination rates in dorms where 1-on-1 education has been completed.

Coronado

January-45.7% per resident

February-25.5% per resident

March – 42.6% per resident

Arbol de la Vida

January- 45.1% per resident

February-32.6% per resident

March-22.5% per resident

Colonia de La Paz

January-51.4% per resident

February-65.1% per resident

March-75.5% per resident

Arizona-Sonora

January-51.5 % per resident
February-24.4 % per resident
March-37.3 % per resident

Likins

January-40.3% per resident
February-11.8% per resident
March-18.9% per resident

Apache-Santa Cruz

January-36.5% per resident
February-13.3% per resident
March-15.9% per resident

Despite the inconsistencies in the percentage reduction of contamination rates in the dorms where 1-on-1 education was conducted, there was a reduction in contamination in most of the dorms. The inconsistency in percentage contamination rates can be attributed to the varying amounts of actual recycling collected in each dorm monthly. Unfortunately, the reduction in contamination rates did not result in an increase in total recycling as originally intended. It is possible that students placed fewer contaminants in the recycling bins but may have disposed of recyclable materials in the trash instead. Accounting for lower amounts per pound of recycling collected, which contributes to the mixed picture seen.

Contamination comparison per month (pounds per resident)

Coronado

January-0.48 pounds per resident
February-0.24 pounds per resident
March -0.26 pounds per resident

Arbol de la Vida

January- 0.51 pounds per resident
February-0.31 pounds per resident
March-0.18 pounds per resident

Colonia de La Paz

January- 0.56 pounds per resident
February-0.56 pounds per resident
March-0.48 pounds per resident

Arizona-Sonora

January-0.67 pounds per resident
February-0.32 pounds per resident
March-0.28 pounds per resident

Likins

January-0.52 pounds per resident

February-0.04 pounds per resident

March-0.21 pounds per resident

Apache-Santa Cruz

January-0.77 pounds per resident

February-0.14 pounds per resident

March-0.10 pounds per resident

Looking at the actual contamination in pounds per resident, for most dorms, the contamination has reduced over time.

Project Accomplishments

This semester, the CORE team started 1-on-1 recycling education in the dorms. The team visited 6 dorms over 3 months and interacted with 532 students. Team members moved from room to room, engaging with residents, inspecting their recycling, and addressing several misconceptions about recycling on campus. These personalized interactions also identified materials that residents were confused about or not recycling properly and informed the creation of signage to address these problems. Data collected from the dorms visited shows a reduction in contaminated recycling per pound per resident.

Additionally, the team was able to organize five focus groups this academic year, with one conducted online. Two focus groups were specifically organized for RAs and CDs, who provided unique perspectives about recycling and sustainability. During these focus groups, we evaluated BI2WI, as well as students' attitudes towards sustainability in general. Valuable feedback was obtained regarding the timing of BI2WI, training of staff members in preparation for BI2WI, incentives for the competition, and programming in general. The team also had the chance to join the Colonia de La Paz staff meeting, which was insightful. The CORE team was made aware of peculiar recycling and contamination problems in the building and received valuable suggestions on how to collaborate with staff to improve those problems.

Also, to receive more feedback from RAs regarding the effectiveness, timing, and organization of BI2WI, a survey was sent out to RAs. Nineteen RAs completed the survey.

Additionally, the CORE team was able to obtain stickers containing recycling information that will be placed on the recycling containers in all the dorm rooms. These stickers have the recycling website on them and will serve as a quick reference guide for students who may be confused about which items to recycle.

Next Steps

1. Restructure the programming of BI2WI. Based on the feedback received during the focus groups and a poll sent out to CDs, CORE would like to change the timing of BI2WI from four weeks in October to six weeks starting from the beginning of September and ending in the middle of October.
2. Special training will be provided for both RAs and CDs to prepare them for BI2WI in the fall. In the past, CDs had to train their RAs after receiving training from the Sustainability Coordinator. For the next competition, the Sustainability Coordinator will be conducting a new BI2WI training course for RAs to prepare them for the competition.
3. Increase the visibility of pre-made bulletin boards. Feedback from focus groups and staff meetings with RAs revealed that most RAs struggle with creating content for bulletin boards during BI2WI. Increasing the awareness of existing pre-made materials will facilitate information sharing during BI2WI.
4. Start working on BI2WI posters, Instagram posts and other marketing materials from now through the summer so the CORE team can distribute all the required materials in time before the start of BI2WI.
5. Increase student engagement by partnering with ECO-reps to explore increased use of social media interventions for recycling education.
6. Put mini stickers with recycling information on recycling bins in all rooms in the various dorms over the summer. These stickers show items that can be recycled and have the link to the recycling website where students can get more information.
7. Organize additional focus groups next year to evaluate the effectiveness of organizing BI2WI over four weeks in October versus six weeks from the beginning of September to mid-October. These focus groups will address other aspects of the competition including marketing and engagement.
8. Standardizing recycling signage across campus and redesigning recycling rules signage, incorporating student feedback from the focus groups held.

Challenges Faced

The attendance for most of the focus groups was significantly low, despite the extensive marketing efforts and incentives that were provided. In the case of the zoom focus group, most of the participants had little to no knowledge about BI2WI, which affected the quality of the feedback they

were able to provide.

It has been challenging finding the right time to have 1-on-1 educational sessions in the dorms. Finding the sweet spot between going early enough to meet students before they go to class but not too early to wake them up from their sleep has been difficult. Occasionally, there are very few students in the dorms, and this affected the number of students we were able to reach.

Also, the recycling and facilities specialist resigned from her position, and it has been challenging to find another person to replace her.

When examining the recycling data of dorms where 1-on-1 recycling education has been implemented, inconsistencies in contamination rates have been observed. The amount of contaminated recycling per resident has decreased in most dorms. However, the decrease in the amount of recyclable material collected creates a false increase in contamination rates.

Project Support

CSF can support CORE by assisting in advertising our job posting. They can also refer qualified candidates to us, if possible. Additionally, CSF can aid in promoting our focus groups.

Photo Link

Media/Links

https://emailarizona-my.sharepoint.com/:f/g/personal/namohasante_arizona_edu/EnvpCj22KPFKIFdvvYCW5gYB7AuszCr5yMAwjR2nJV4psg?e=WvKJBI