



2018 RecycleMania Case Study Competition

Case Study Template

Please focus your case study on one component of your RecycleMania competition. This could be your outreach and marketing strategies, fundraising strategies, techniques to engage key campus stakeholders to ensure success, connecting with off-campus partners, key events or gatherings, incentives for engagement, etc.

Note: Submissions for the 2018 RecycleMania Case Study Competition may be used as a best practice resource on www.recyclemania.org.

1. Contact info (name, department, school, email, phone)

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2. Focus of Case study

(Summary 25 words or less)

Towson University's Zero Waste Campaign focused on encouraging the use of reusable items by students and the implementation of Zero Waste Events on campus.

3. Detailed description of campaign component:

(300 words or less)

The "Zero Waste Campaign" had three main components: zero waste educational presentations, education-tabling events and the implementation of zero waste events during the competition.

The Office of Sustainability (OoS) hosted four tabling events, and the Lambda Theta Alpha sorority hosted one tabling event. During these events, students were asked to participate in a "Decomposition Game," where students guessed how long it takes waste items to naturally break down, and a waste sorting game. After participating in the activity students were engaged in a conversation about the importance of waste reduction and encouraged to pledge to "chooseTureuse". A reusable prize, such as Spork, travel cup or mug, was offered to discourage the proliferation of single use items on campus.

The Office of Sustainability continued efforts made during the fall semester to engage student organizations to host zero waste events on campus during the spring RecycleMania campaign by giving presentations and offering additional support. As a result of these efforts, three zero waste events took place during Recyclemania. First, the Office of Sustainability presented to the Black Student Union on the importance of zero waste events



and held a live demonstration by providing compostable dining ware and Valentine's Day themed cookies. Next, we collaborated with the Phi Mu sorority on their annual Alumni Brunch, during which bulk food items were purchased and compostable serve ware was provided. Lastly, a Zero Waste Bike Safety Training event was held on campus during which pizza and compostable serve ware was provided. In addition to these efforts, the OoS also conducted follow up meetings with organizations who received zero waste presentations in the fall such as The Center for Student Diversity (CSD).

4. Planning steps & timeline to implement:

- Fall semester:
 - Ecoreps and OoS gave Zero Waste Presentations to student organizations including: Kappa Delta sorority, Phi Mu Alpha fraternity, The Center for Student Diversity, Phi Mu, and Theta Chi fraternity.
 - OoS reached out to student organizations asking if they would be interested in hosting a Zero Waste Event in the spring
 - Priced and gathered swag materials such as reusable sporks and travel mugs
 - Prepared educational activities such as Decomposition Game and Waste Sorting Game
 - Scheduled tabling events
 - Drafted social media and email announcements
- 1 month before tabling/events:
 - Reserved tables in high traffic areas
 - Coordinated with student organizations who agreed to host zero waste events: confirmed number of students, catering used, dining ware needed, composting stations, and signage
 - Recruited volunteers to assist at tabling events and zero waste events
- 2 weeks before tabling/event:
 - Created geofilter design
 - Confirmed with organizations hosting zero waste events that they had everything they needed
- 1 week before tabling/event:
 - Purchased geofilter
 - Printed signage
 - Confirmed volunteers' availability
- The day before tabling/event:
 - Packed up supplies
- Day of tabling/event:
 - Posted announcements to social media
 - Took pictures
 - Had volunteers man the waste stations at the zero waste events to ensure proper disposal
 - Sorted and weighed the waste after the events and recorded the data

5. Resources and stakeholders involved



Explain what budget or in-kind resources were needed, what if any campus dept's or groups supported the effort, what staff or volunteers were involved.

Supplies:

- 200 reusable sporks: \$318.00
- 50 Reusable Starbucks cups: \$50.00
- Snapchat Geofilter: \$12.13
- "Zero Waste Event" banner: \$208.40
- Compostable supplies for Phi Mu Zero Waste Alumni Brunch: \$150.00
- Cookies and drinks for The Black Student Union's Zero Waste Event: \$154.00
- Compostable plates and 6 cheese pizzas for Zero Waste Bike Safety Training: \$83.94

In-kind resources:

- Recyclemania Banner (TU Sustainability Office)
- Decomposition game
- Waste Sorting Game
- 25 "Go Green" reusable travel mugs (TU Office of Civic Engagement & Social Responsibility)

Staff (4)

- Sustainability Manager: Patricia Watson
- Sustainability Student Employees: Kimberly Joseph, Elena Sachs
- Office of Civic Engagement and Social Responsibility Grad Assistant: Kincade Stirek

Volunteers (5)

- Lambda Theta Alpha Sorority sisters (4)
- Ecoreps (1)

Campus Departmental Support

- Office of Sustainability
- Office of Civic Engagement & Social Responsibility

6. Describe the Results of this campaign component

a. General results (*ex: attracted the attention of campus president, campus paper did a news story on the event, etc.*)

- Towerlight News Story: Towson's campus newspaper ran a news story based on the OoS' Zero Waste efforts titled, "What a waste: How to Improve Your Trash Habits."

<http://thetowerlight.com/what-a-waste-how-to-improve-your-trash-habits/>

- Recognition by University President: The campus president, Dr. Kim Schatzel, supported our various efforts through liking posts on Instagram and Twitter.
- Adoption of in-house composting by campus offices: Multiple campus offices requested to adopt composting within their offices because of the zero waste presentations and conversations that took place during the fall and spring semesters. These offices include: The Center for Student Diversity, The Black Student Union, and The Student Government



Association. Each office was provided with the appropriate bins and signage by the OoS. Given the size and reach of these organizations, this is a great start to creating a campus climate centered on landfill waste reduction.

- Catering conversion by The Center for Student Diversity (CSD): CSD has pledged to request that all of their future Black and Gold catering be zero waste. Given the size and importance of this office, this is a big step towards creating a campus climate where zero waste events are the norm.
- Implementation of the Environmental Conference as a Zero Waste Event – Post RecycleMania: Because of the efforts and continued conversations that took place during RecycleMania, the Environmental Conference Committee decided to make the 2018 Environmental Conference, which took place on April 4, a Zero Waste Event. At this event, RSVPs were utilized and catering lowered their portion size factor so that no excess food was ordered. Guests were asked to bring Tupperware with them to take home any leftovers, reusable lunch kits were provided as a giveaway, and reusable dining serveware was utilized. The great success of this event proves that large scale campus events can be converted to a zero waste format.

b. Specific measurable impact figures, if applicable (*Ex: Reduced contamination rate 13%, Gathered 316 pledges to recycle more, etc., 250 people engaged, etc.*)

- **2,162** Snapchat Engagements were recorded for the RecycleMania kick-off event
- **267** “I Choose TU Reuse” signatures were gathered
- **72.6%** of the waste generated during the Phi Mu Alumni Brunch was diverted from the landfill to recycling and compost. Figure 1 below illustrates the waste statistics collected during this event. The only reason that 27.35% of the waste went to landfill, causing this not to be a zero waste event is because disposable plastic tablecloths were used that the Office of Sustainability was not made aware of in advance.

Phi Mu Zero Waste Brunch Statistics		
	Weight	% of Total Waste
Compost	30.88 lbs	43.67%
Recycling	20.5 lbs	28.99%
Landfill	19.34 lbs	27.35%



Total	70.72 lbs	100%
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Figure 1. Phi Mu Zero Waste Brunch Statistics

- As a result of the new composting system provided by the OoS, the SGA decided to have a waste competition between their executive board and their senate/judicial board to see who composted and recycled the most. **68.36%** of the waste disposals made by the SGA members from March 5th to April 9th were diverted from the landfill and went into either the recycling bin or the new composting bin. This illustrates that students have been utilizing the recycling and composting bins more than the landfill bin. Figure 2 below summarizes the usage data recorded during the competition.

SGA Composting Competition Results				
	Executive Board/ Cabinet		Senate/ Judicial Board	
Compost	12 uses	8.76% usage	0 uses	0% usage
Recycling	99 uses	72.26% usage	10 uses	25% usage
Landfill	26 uses	18.97% usage	30 uses	75% usage
Total	137 uses		40 uses	

Figure 2. SGA Waste Competition Results

- As a continuation of the efforts made during Recyclemania, the Environmental Conference was made a zero waste event and **98.57%** of all the waste produced at the event was diverted from the landfill, making this a truly zero waste event. In addition, only **40.57 pounds** of waste was produced at the event from 180 attendees, and only **0.58 pounds** of this went to landfill. Figure 3 below summarizes the waste data recorded after the event.

Environmental Conference Waste Statistics			
	Before Sorting	After Sorting	Final Percentage%
Compost	14.47 lbs	23.47 lbs	57.85%



Recycling	17.36 lbs	16.52 lbs	40.72%
Landfill	8.58 lbs	0.58 lbs	1.43%
Total	40.41	40.57	100%

Figure 3. Environmental Conference Waste Statistics

7. What would you do differently in the future?

- Make the snapchat geofilters educational in some manner, rather than simply promoting Recyclemania or attaching a pledge. We will consider exploring other options for filters that contain educational and impactful facts.
- We will have the event coordinator sign off on the Zero Waste event checklist to ensure all procedures are properly followed.
- Reaching out to more organizations and offices earlier in the semester for zero waste presentations would increase the number of students reached and potentially the number of zero waste events hosted throughout the year. In the future we would like the Eco reps to set a goal of presenting to at least 5 organizations/offices each semester to increase awareness.
- Currently the upcharge for converting to an event to reusable serveware is a barrier. Funding a reusable items event kit for our catering service to may make it easier for other organizations and offices on campus to host zero waste events. For example, the purchase of reusable tablecloths and dining ware sets could have further reduced the amount of waste produced at the zero waste events during Recyclemania. This would be a tiered reusable kit since not every event calls for china - i.e. Ikea items and kraft paper table cloth.
- Increase the promotion of the events and efforts made during Recyclemania by increasing the use of social media and signage throughout campus during the entire campaign and not just for individual events.

8. What advice would you give to another college that wanted to do a similar effort?

- Collaborate with fraternities, sororities, and student groups in the fall to get a dedicated group of volunteers
- Try to convert an existing annual event that the university or a large organization hosts into a Zero Waste Event.
- Develop key talking points to give to volunteers
- Focus on one message and one activity per event. Keep it simple!

9. Photos and Graphics

Please include photos and other visuals below, examples could include social media posts, posters or other graphics related to the project. Include captions where necessary.



Thank you to the 197 people who stopped to sign!



One of the "I choose TU reuse" pledge sheets



Zero Waste Phi Mu Alumni Brunch



Volunteers sort waste after the Phi Mu Zero Waste Brunch.



Students play “The Waste Sorting Game” at The Black Student Union’s Zero Waste Valentine’s Day Event

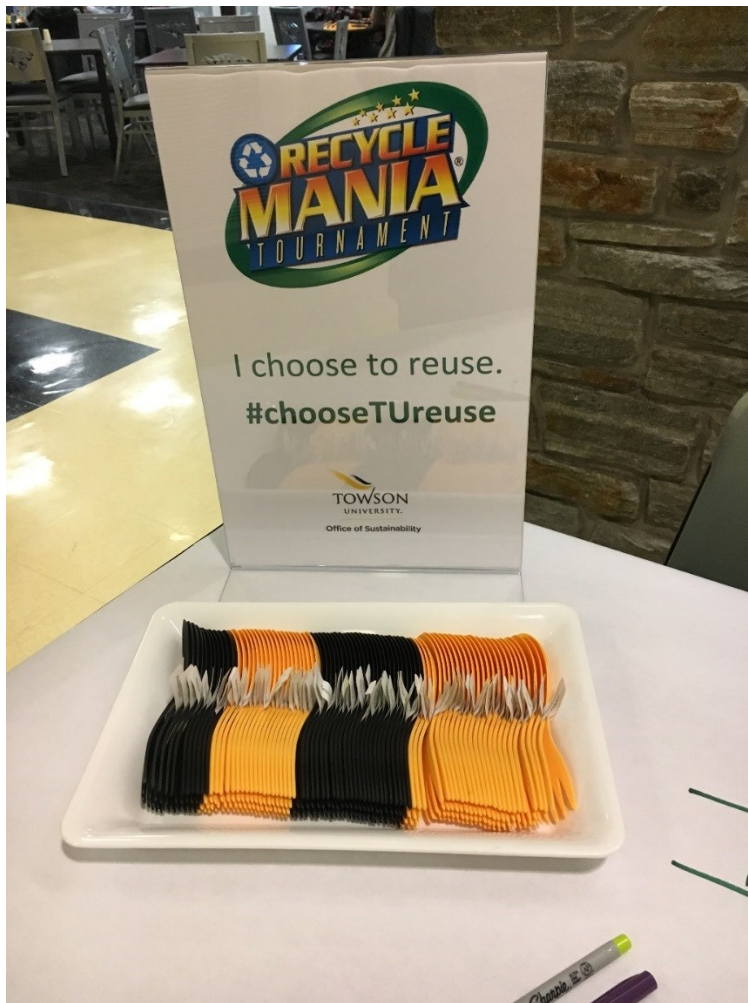


Lambda Theta Alpha tabling event





The Office of Sustainability tabling for Recyclemania



Reusable sporks giveaway



Zero Waste Event Banner

*Please email completed template form and supplemental documents (photos, newspaper articles, website links, etc. to helpline@recyclemaniacs.org with "RecycleMania Case Study submission-Campus Engagement – Awareness Campaign" in the subject line. **Case study submissions are due no later than Friday, May 11, 2018.***