



2023 Campus Race to Zero Waste Case Study University of South Florida

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Focus of Case study:

Benchmark to measure the USF's outgoing waste, identifying the challenges and opportunities for waste diversion/reduction. Creating awareness campaigns to improve recycling and reduce contamination.

Detailed description of campaign or effort:

After monitoring the recycling bins in MSC for a month, successfully sorting out contaminants, feeding plastic bottles and aluminum cans to the reverse vending machine (RVM), this supported material recovery, but also donates \$.05 per item to the USF Feed-a-Bull Pantry. This program raises up to \$5,000 dollars per year to the pantry to provide food for food insecure students. To celebrate Earth month, Student Government launched a recycling campaign that raises awareness surrounding the six RVMs on campus. This campaign also includes a recycling competition between UCF vs USF; simultaneously engaging students and incentivizing them to recycle. This friendly competition between rival college campuses supports sustainable materials management and raises money for a cause that directly benefits students. During the month of April, USF college 5,863 bottles and cans; before that we collected over 11,000 cans and bottles to date and in a single month, we increased collection by nearly 50%. This challenge inspired students to recycle right and allow them to feel good about their contributions. As an additional means to further these recycling efforts after the competition ended, GLOBE presented a student resolution to Student Government which created a case for strengthening recycling on USF's campus. As a result, this resolution was voted on and passed into legislation. USF continues to pursue its

commitment to sustainability and it starts with responsible materials management and is fostered by the innovation of its students.

Planning steps & timeline to implement:

- 1/23-1/27 Determining the building of study – Marshall Student Center (MSC)
- 2/1-2/7 Contacting staff to coordinate logistics
- 2/13-3/13 monitoring recycling bins in MSC (Monday-Friday)
- 3/15 Campus tour with consultant from Circular Solutions – to see recycling program and identify cost savings
- 3/20 drafted an update for the “Recycle Right” educational signs
- 3/30 GLOBE presents Recycling Resolution to Student Government Relations Committee, passed to Senate
- 4/1-4/30 USF vs. UCF Recycling Challenge begins – collecting bottles/cans for the reverse vending machine
- 4/1 USF Forest Preserve Cleanup with ECORE and NROTC – donated bottles/cans to reverse vending machine
- 4/3 Launch of Recycle-Bull social media campaign
- 4/10 Requested quotes from approved vendors for “Recycle Right” signage
- 4/11 GLOBE presents Recycling Resolution to Senate and is approved as an initiative
- 4/21 Collected bottles/cans from USF Sustain-a-Bull Symposium event to RVM
- 4/22-4/23 Collected bottles/cans from USF vs UCF baseball games to RVM
- 5/3 received RVM results, USF collected more materials than UCF

Resources and stakeholders involved:

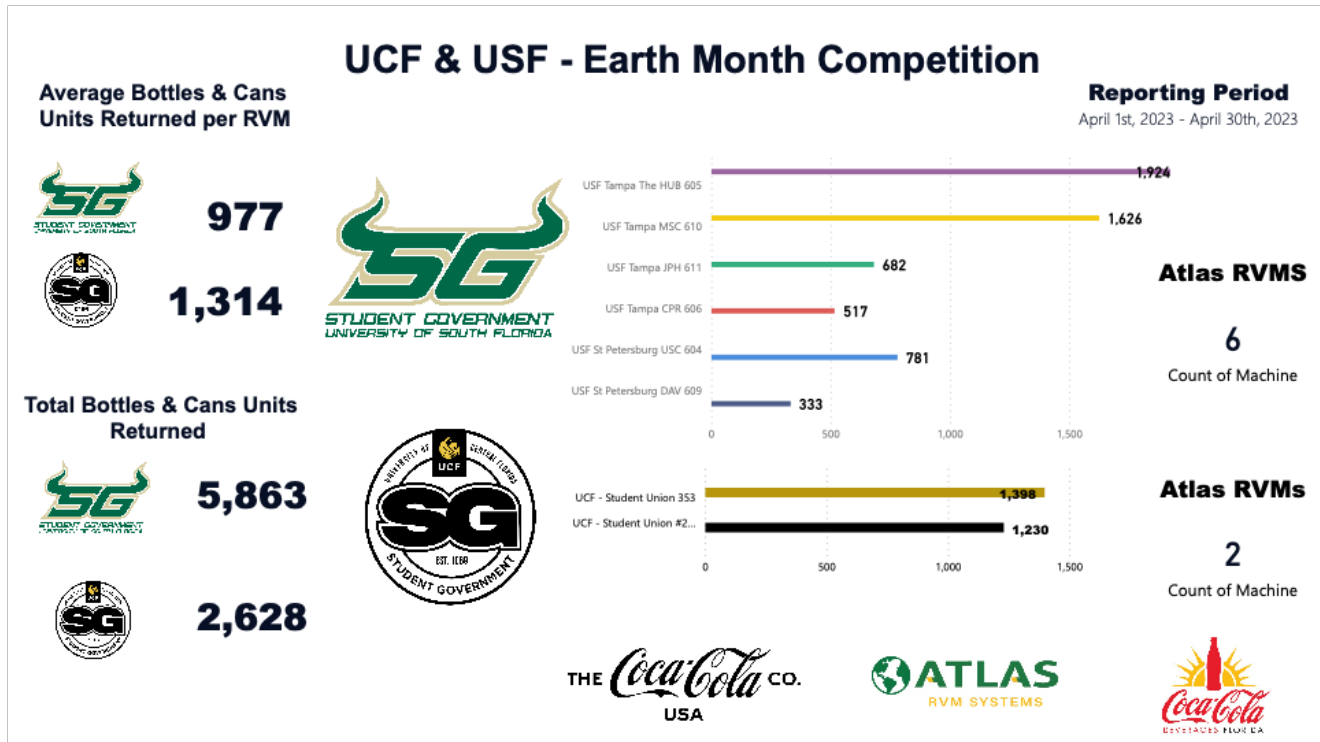
This multi-faceted approach has incorporated several stakeholders and integrated the work of many individuals to make this educational initiative possible. Between coordinating with the Marshall Student Center janitorial staff to change pick-up time to allow for data collection, working with the on-campus Waste, Recycling, and Fuel Program, Student Government, and student groups such as GLOBE and NROTC to spread awareness about recycling right and participating in campus clean ups.

Additionally, this project would not be possible without the support of Facilities Management, Auxiliary Services, ECORE, Student Government; along with student organizations including, NROTC, Global Leaders Outreach for a Better Environment (GLOBE), the Student Environmental Association (SEA), and GenCLEO. This on-going educational and awareness campaign is being funded by the Student Green Energy Fund, utilizing the Coca Cola sponsored reverse vending machines, as a part of the 2020 World Without Waste Challenge, this initiative aims to collect the bottles and cans Coca Cola produces and return them directly back the manufacturer for material reuse. Additionally, with each can/bottle donated raises \$0.05 to the USF Feed-a-Bull Pantry.

Describe the Results of this campaign component:

- **General results:**
 - Student Government shared a video campaign promoting the USF vs UCF RVM Challenge
 - SG Recycling Resolution
- **Specific measurable impact:**
 - Data from RVMs at USF and UCF: As seen pictured below, USF collected over 5,800 cans and bottles in the month of April, this collective effort was in part of the education and awareness

campaign centered around recycling with the RVMs. This effort simultaneously reduced contamination and directly recycled the materials back to the manufacturer.



What would you do differently in the future?

In the future, establishing a team of 5-10 people to work directly with the Waste, Recycling, and Fuel Program Manager, Lincey Arya, to set up logistics for collecting the 48 outdoor recycling bins (i.e., any recycling bin outside of a building on campus) and auditing several bags would be more useful than targeting a single building on campus. According to the EPA, auditing 10% of the bags from the site serves as an equal representation of the waste sample. This would allow for a more composite representation of the recyclable materials generated and disposed of on campus. Additionally, this avoids having to collect the bagged material from the Marshall Student Center and coordinating logistics with their team.

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

A campus cannot manage what is not measured, so taking the first step by auditing and reviewing the current waste stream is an essential place to start. Using the Campus Race to Zero Waste case study as a benchmark serves as a baseline for the college, this can lead to the creation of waste reduction initiatives and improving recycling rates on campus.

Photos and Graphics:

RECYCLE-BALL CHALLENGE

USF NEEDS YOU! | APRIL 1ST - 30TH

USF IS COMPETING AGAINST UCF TO RECYCLE THE MOST!
PARTICIPATE BY UTILIZING OUR RECYCLING VENDING MACHINES ON THE TAMPA AND ST. PETE CAMPUSES!

W USF vs. UCF X

SG
STUDENT GOVERNMENT
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA

RVMs recycle your empty aluminum cans or plastic bottles, regardless of brand. The USF Food Pantry receives 5 cents for every bottle collected.

RVM LOCATIONS: TAMPA - The MSC, Cooper Hall, The Hub and Juniper Hall | ST. PETE - The USC and Bayboro Breezeway

Coca-Cola
BEVERAGES FLORIDA

WHAT IS AN RVM?

Reverse Vending Machines now at 6 locations on our Tampa and St. Pete campuses!



WHAT DO THEY DO?
RVMs recycle your empty aluminum cans or plastic bottles, regardless of brand.

HOW DOES THAT HELP?
RVMs support our sustainability efforts and the USF Food Pantry by donating 5 cents for every bottle collected.

HOW DID WE GET THEM?
USF partnered with Coca-Cola to install the machines in support of the World Without Waste initiative



WHERE ARE THE RVMs?

Cooper Hall
outside in the vending alcove

Juniper Hall
first floor

Marshall Student Center
first floor by Panera

Locations

The Hub
outside the main entrance

