



2023 Campus Race to Zero Waste Case Study Chapman University

Contact info:

Jenny Kaufman, Office of Sustainability, Chapman University
sustainability@chapman.edu
(714) 628-7370

Focus of Case study: Chapman's "Ditch the Dumpster" program was designed to divert waste from the landfill during the student move-out process by offering accessible, one-stop donation stations where students can bring a variety of household, kitchen, and electronic items that they no longer need or don't have room to take home with them. We collect these items and partner with local organizations to give these items another life rather than pile up in a landfill.

Detailed description of campaign or effort:

In previous years, the Office of Sustainability set up donation boxes in residence hall areas during student move-out to divert items from the landfill, but donation boxes were repeatedly contaminated with trash and items that could not be donated, often rendering the contents of the donation boxes unusable. This year, we set out to create a "Ditch the Dumpster" program that would allow us to have oversight of the donation collections process, ensure we receive good quality donations, and prevent donations from becoming contaminated with trash.

From January to May 2023, we designed, built, and carried out our Ditch the Dumpster program. The planning period involved: (1) identifying key areas near residence halls where we could set up our donation stations to optimize the amount of donations collected, (2) coordinating with storage unit vendors (PODS Moving & Storage) to rent units we could use to collect donations, and (3) establishing relationships with local partners who could receive the donations we were to collect. Then, we hired over 30 current Chapman students to serve as Move-Out Eco Reps that would staff the donation stations over the move-out period. Move-Out Eco Reps were trained on how to run the donation stations, what items to accept, and how to coordinate with our Residence Life and Custodial Services groups to make this program a success. For four days during student move out, our donation stations were open 12 hours a day for students to drop furniture, home decor, kitchen supplies, appliances, books, clothing, shoes, and food donations at. PODS storage units were then dropped at our donation partner facilities, emptied by staff, and removed by PODS personnel.

Students were made aware of the Move-Out Eco Rep position and Ditch the Dumpster program leading up to its implementation through social media posts, flyers, emails, and Residence Life communications. Due to the effective communications and thorough planning, we were able to collect more donations than we have in years previous and create a program that can be replicated in years to come.

Planning steps & timeline to implement:

- Establish donation partners (Goodwill, Habitat for Humanity, One World Clothing and Shoes, OC Animal Care, OC Humane Society, local food pantries)
- Communicate with partners to determine what items to collect at our donation stations
- Contact PODS to coordinate storage/transportation for donations.
- Contact waste service provider to acquire a dumpster for any items that are unacceptable for donation
- Advertise Move-Out Eco Rep positions
- Hire and train Eco Reps to run donation stations
- Advertise donation stations
- Collect donations and ensure PODS are successfully delivered to donation partners

Resources and stakeholders involved:

The expenses for running our Ditch the Dumpster program included PODS storage unit rentals and Eco Rep salaries. Budget support came from the Office of Sustainability, which operates under the Facilities Management umbrella.

Describe the Results of this campaign component:

- **General results:**

We diverted as much waste as possible from the landfill and were able to provide our partner organizations with large quantities of useful, uncontaminated donations. Additionally, we permitted Chapman students to take items from the donation stations to furnish their future apartments/homes, helping to create a culture of reuse and sustainability at Chapman.

- **Specific measurable impact:**

In total, three 16-foot PODS storage units were filled. The PODS units held furniture, books, kitchen supplies, appliances and home decor, and we estimated that enough was collected to fill the average backyard swimming pool. We collected clothing and shoe donations in large collection units provided by One World Clothing and Shoes, and enough clothing and shoes were donated to fill a 40-foot shipping container. We also coordinated efforts with the campus dining services to collect over 2000 pounds of food donations.

What would you do differently in the future?

In future years, we would like to increase the number of donation stations we have across different areas of campus to make the choice of donation over dumpster even easier and more accessible to students. This year, we primarily marketed our donation stations to students living in on-campus housing. Going forward, we also plan to encourage students living in off-campus housing to bring any items they wish to donate to our donation stations.

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

Start planning your donation program early - it takes time to establish donation partners in your area, sort out the PODS/storage unit logistics, hire and train a team of Eco Reps, and get your Ditch the Dumpster program off the ground. We started planning in January 2023 for our Ditch the Dumpster program that took place in May 2023.

Photos and Graphics:



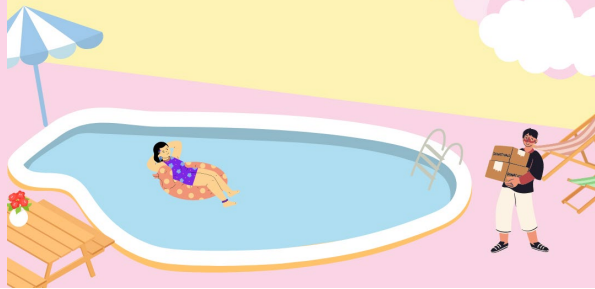
In total, we diverted about 4,400 cubic feet of waste from the landfill.



Thanks for helping Chapman reduce our contribution to greenhouse gas emissions from the landfill!



We donated enough furniture, books, kitchen supplies, and home décor to fill a backyard swimming pool



We donated enough clothing and shoes to fill a 40-foot shipping container

