

University of Montana
Eco-Rep Newsletter
2014-2015



Kicking Things Off

2-Day Orientation:

In late August, the Eco-Reps went through a two-day orientation to get a tour of campus with a focus on sustainability, introduce us to helpful staff, and offer us a chance to begin planning the year's events. On day one, we received a campus tour that took us to the Native American Building, Recycling Center, Recreation Center and Campus Gardens. We met with head staff at these locations to learn about their sustainability initiatives and ways to implement these services in our program planning. The following day we met with Residence Life and Resident Assistants to discuss collaboration throughout the year. The orientation gave us a great introduction to the Eco-Rep program and allowed us to begin brainstorming ideas.

Floor Meetings:

In the past, Eco-Reps were allowed to introduce themselves and the program to residents at the beginning of the year floor meetings hosted by the RAs. We were not allowed this year, so instead we wrote a pitch for the Eco-Rep program that we gave to RAs. We asked that they read it to residents if time allowed. Sure enough, many RAs obliged and helped spread awareness about our program. During the floor meetings, we also set up tables in the residence hall lobbies where residents could ask questions about the Eco-Rep program.

Eco-Rep Meetings:

Along with being in contact through email and phone every day, each week our entire Eco-Rep group met twice to discuss and plan upcoming events. Every Tuesday morning, the five of us met with Nicky Phear and Chris Olsen. We gave program updates and kept Nicky and Chris updated on our work. Then, every Tuesday night the five Eco-Reps met again to plan future events.

Bulletin Boards:

Bulletin boards offer an easy way to keep residents informed on Eco-Rep activities. We received designated space in Miller, Pantzer, Knowles, and the Craig/Duniway/Elrod complex. At the start of the year, we used the bulletin boards to post our biographies to introduce ourselves to the residents. Following that, we kept the boards filled with energy saving tips and news about upcoming sustainability events.

Eco-Rep Initiatives

Establishing a Campus Garden

Ellen Whittle, a UM grad student, is very interested in growing and consuming local food. She worked with other sustainability-minded people across campus to propose a new campus garden in the open space surrounded by the Craig/Duniway/Elrod complex.

She came to the Eco-Reps for assistance in broadcasting her plan and obtaining data on student support for the project. To help her, we created a survey that we distributed at multiple events including the UM Farmer's Market and a cider press event.

Ellen appreciated the help and was able to create convincing graphs to demonstrate the strong support on campus for her project. We will continue assisting Ellen this year as her project takes shape.

CAMPUS GARDEN SURVEY

Residence Hall:

Year:

Major/Minor:

1. How often do you eat at Dining Services establishments on campus?

Never 1-2 times per month 1-2 times per week Daily

2. Would you like the option of eating food grown on the UM Campus?

Yes No Don't care

3. Would you like to see more space on campus utilized for gardening/food production?

Yes No Don't care

4. Would you be more or less likely to choose a residence hall located next to a food production garden?

More Less Don't care

5. If there were opportunities to volunteer in future proposed UM gardens, would you volunteer?

Yes No

6. Please list your top produce choice(s) to be grown in such a space:



would volunteer in a garden on campus

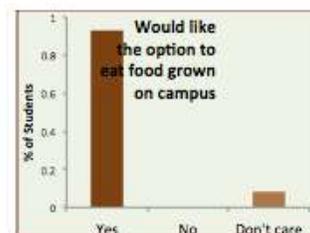
■ Yes
■ No



81% of surveyed students eat at UM Dining establishments daily.



93% of students polled would like to see more space on campus utilized for food gardens.



Submitting a KRELF Proposal

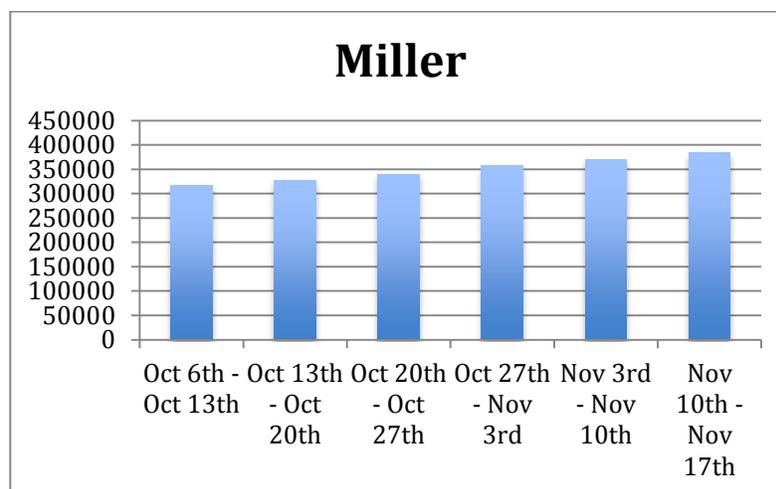
The Kless Revolving Energy Loan Fund is where the Eco-Reps receive the majority of their funding. The KRELF comes from the Sustainability Fee on the registration bill, which students can opt-out of paying. As Eco-Reps, our goal is to educate residents about the benefits of the Sustainability Fee, and eventually, we want to see that Residence Halls with Eco-Reps will have lower opt-out rates than those without. We recently submitted a proposal requesting funding for the 2015 academic year, and our proposal was accepted. We will work with the KRELF committee to grow the Eco-Reps program next year.

Planning for the Energy Competition

We are planning an energy competition next semester where residence halls will compete to lower their energy use. We are still in the process of planning exactly how we will measure energy use and structure the program, however, we worked this semester on engraining the idea of energy-use in the residence halls. Through posters, we passively educated students about conservation through energy-saving tips. We offered ways to be sustainable through turning off lights and being more efficient with laundry.

We also wanted to get residents used to tracking their hall's energy use. We monitored electricity for each hall and made graphs showing each week's total. All halls demonstrated an increased energy use as winter set in. Hopefully, this makes students aware of their consumption and ready to participate in next semester's competition.

One example:



Social Media

In the spring semester, we increased our social media presence. Our likes in Facebook increased by about 50%, which helped us engage with campus. During the energy conservation competition, we had a social media campaign where we encouraged students to submit pictures of ways they conserved energy using the hashtag #umenergycomp. We also used paid ads to reach the people who hadn't already liked our page, which helped with engagement. We used our Facebook page to post pictures from events, inform people about upcoming events, and post Eco-Rep news.

Hellgate High School Presentation

In collaboration with Climate Action Now, Take Back the Tap, and Re-Invest Montana, we ventured to Hellgate High School. Each organization presented on the mission of it's program and what initiatives it takes to accomplish its goals. Many students at Hellgate plan on attending the University of Montana, so a large part of the presentation was focused on how to get involved in these eco-friendly groups and others.



Eco-Rep Events!

Cider Press

This semester we held two Cider Press events, one out front of Miller and the other Elrod.

During the cider press at Miller, 75 people came. We considered that a large success for our first event of the year. To get the apples for the cider press, we contacted the Great Bear Foundation and went apple picking on a Saturday morning. We acquired the cider press in the same way – just by talking to the Great Bear Foundation. At this event and others, we are able to socialize with residents, teach about the Eco-Rep program, and offer sustainability tips.



Laundry Detergent Making

We wanted to promote the use of environmentally safe laundry detergent so we held events where students could make their own. We hoped to inform students on how easy it can be to make small changes to their lifestyles that foster sustainability. During fall semester, we held a laundry detergent event in the Craig/Duniway/Elrod complex as well as Knowles.

During the first detergent-making event, exactly 30 people showed up and the next around 15. We educated participants on the benefits of making laundry detergent as opposed to buying it – cutting down on packaging, reducing phosphates in the environment, etc. The recipe we used was very basic – one cup of soap flakes and half a cup of washing soda. We plan to offer many more detergent-making parties as the year progresses. Students are constantly doing laundry and will need refills on “green” detergent.

In spring, we hosted a laundry-detergent-making event in Jesse Hall during the Energy Conservation Competition. We set up a table with the supplies (soap flakes and washing soda) and encouraged residents to come make their own detergent. This event was moderately successful, with around ten people participating. Also, having it during the competition increased awareness about saving energy.



Free Cycles Trip

On September 26th, we invited students to come with us to Free Cycles to learn about sustainable transportation and the process of making a free bike. We rode the Mountain Line bus from campus to Free Cycles. We arrived in time for a Bike Well class. This class not only taught us about the layout of the organization's workplace and basic bike maintenance, but it is also the first step required to build a free bike. After the class, participants simply have to volunteer 4 hours and then they can start building! The most enthusiastic in the group came up to the Eco-Reps within a week of this event and said he had already completed his hours and his first bike!



Mt. Sentinel Night Hike

On October 14th at 9pm, we hiked with 8 residents of Miller up the M. It was a beautiful, warm night with very clear air that made the views amazing. Along the way, we discussed issues with light pollution and excessive light use in the residence halls. We told stories from last year about turning off lights constantly in the residence halls. We shared tips and recommendations to make the residence halls more sustainable.



Recycling Box Decorating

We have held multiple recycling box decorating events. The idea is to help students create a personal box to recycle without having to leaving their residence hall room. With the help of resident assistants, we supplied craft materials to make the boxes unique and turn them into something students want to have in their rooms and use.

So far we have had recycling box decorating parties in Knowles, Pantzer, Jesse and the Craig/Duniway/Elrod complex. All were major successes and students really got involved and enjoyed themselves. We have also created a template for RAs, in which they can learn how to plan their own Recycling Box Decorating Event, with our help. Major thanks to Eco-Rep Emily Cohen for supplying the boxes and the RAs for their help in obtaining decorating material.



Water Bottle Decorating Party

To promote the phase-out of plastic water bottle use, we created an event where students could decorate a reusable water bottle. People feel more inclined to fill up a reusable bottle if it is something they care about and like to carry around. We provided over 4000 stickers from both companies in Missoula and much larger corporations around the US and abroad. Local companies included Aerie Backcountry Medicine, Bernice's Bakery and Grizzly Grocery. Outside organizations included clothing manufacturers like Patagonia, sports gear providers like Burton and technology makers like GoPro. Obtaining the stickers required preparation months before the event. We wrote sticker donation requests that explained how a donation would not only contribute to sustainability, but also offer advertising across Missoula and wherever students travel with their water bottle. We handed these to local businesses and emailed them to outside organizations. We were surprised and happy with the amount of donations!



The event itself was a huge success. Within an hour, at least 70 students filtered through the Miller Lobby to decorate a water bottle. From a starting collection of at least 4000 stickers, we concluded with only around 200. People appreciated the event and gave lots of positive feedback. We plan to use the remaining stickers in more ways that promote sustainability at future events

Recycling in Knowles!

One big success for the Eco-Reps during fall was reinstating the recycling program in the Knowles residence hall. With assistance from recycling coordinator, Edi Stan, we placed large blue recycling bins on multiple floors in Knowles. We received training from Stan on how to check and empty the bins. Our hope is to train Knowles residents on emptying the bins to involve them in a great sustainability initiative.



Holiday Party

Our last event for the fall semester was a holiday party on Thursday, Dec 10th. This gave people a break from studying from finals. We provided cookies for residents to decorate, and taught residents how to make gift bags out of recycled newspaper. We also encouraged residents to turn their heat down, to save energy. The event was a success- about 25 people came, and they all left with a handmade gift bag, ready for the holiday season!

This event was especially successful because a few students came from other residence halls that don't have Eco-Reps, so we had the opportunity to teach students about the Eco-Rep program, and what we do.



Energy Competition

The big event of spring was our two-week energy competition in March. The event required monitoring daily energy data for Knowles, Miller, Jesse, and Aber. We monitored for two weeks prior to the competition and then compared energy use during the next two-week period. The winning residence hall would be the one with the greatest percent-reduction in energy use.

UM Eco-Rep Energy Competition											
Miller: 10.248.241.75			Knowles: 10.248.241.19			Aber: 10.248.240.20			Jesse: 10.248.240.200		
Date	Total Energy	Difference SLR	Date	Total Energy	Difference SLR	Date	Total Energy	Difference SLR	Date	Total Energy	Difference SLR
2/12/2015 - 3pm	515987.86	-	2/12/2015 - 3pm	252455.89	-	2/12/2015 - 3pm	-	-	2/12/2015 - 3pm	614966.54	-
2/14/2015 - 4:30pm	519671.29	3683.43	2/14/2015 - 4:30pm	254172.48	1716.59	2/14/2015 - 4:30pm	502726.8	-	2/14/2015 - 4:30pm	618672.18	3705.64
2/17/2015 - 10am	524483.3	4812.01	2/17/2015 - 10am	256577.14	2404.66	2/17/2015 - 10am	506904.59	4177.79	2/17/2015 - 10am	623613.02	4940.84
2/19/2015 - 10am	528137.65	3654.35	2/19/2015 - 10am	258299.77	1722.63	2/19/2015 - 10am	510082.17	3177.58	2/19/2015 - 10am	627290.98	3677.96
2/22/2015 - 8pm	534286.14	6148.49	2/22/2015 - 8pm	261289.94	2990.17	2/22/2015 - 8pm	515424.21	5342.04	2/22/2015 - 8pm	633538.03	6247.05
2/23/2015 - 4:30pm	535822.29	1536.15	2/23/2015 - 4:30pm	262054.6	764.66	2/23/2015 - 4:30pm	516731.1	1306.89	2/23/2015 - 4:30pm	635163.68	1625.65
2/25/2015 - 2pm	539358.93	3536.64	2/25/2015 - 2pm	263777.07	1722.47	2/25/2015 - 2pm	519777.46	3046.36	2/25/2015 - 2pm	638679.01	3515.33
2/26/2015 - 10am	540827.51	1468.58	2/26/2015 - 10am	264493.69	716.62	2/26/2015 - 10am	521078.63	1301.17	2/26/2015 - 10am	640172.6	1493.59
2/28/2015 - 5pm	544974.95	4147.44	2/28/2015 - 5pm	266477.9	1984.21	2/28/2015 - 5pm	524727.45	3648.82	2/28/2015 - 5pm	644289.21	4116.61
3/1/2015 - 6pm	546828.81	-	3/1/2015 - 6pm	267370	-	3/1/2015 - 6pm	526236.91	-	3/1/2015 - 6pm	646213.95	-
3/4/2015 - 1:30pm	551958	5129.19	3/4/2015 - 1:30pm	268950	2480	3/4/2015 - 1:30pm	530673	4436.09	3/4/2015 - 1:30pm	651405	5191.05
3/6/2015 - 11:30am											
3/9/2015 - 9:30pm	561357.53	9399.53	3/9/2015 - 9:30pm	274443.27	4593.27	3/9/2015 - 9:30pm	538846.4	8173.4	3/9/2015 - 9:30pm	661103.31	9698
3/10/2015 -			3/10/2015 -			3/10/2015 -			3/10/2015 -		

To get students excited about the competition, we held kick-off parties in each hall a week prior to the competition. Parties included pizza, ice cream, and root beer floats.



During the competition, we use passive and active advertising to keep students interested. Passive advertising included filling every floor of each hall with various posters reminding students how to save energy and a large social media presence via Facebook.

The winning hall this year was Knowles with a percent reduction of over 2 percent during the two-week period! As a prize, Knowles received bragging rights and a BBQ to celebrate the achievement. We purchased the food from UM Catering and the event was well attended with over 30 people.



Help your hall win a free BBQ from the Eco Reps by reducing your energy usage!

Do your part in the 2015 Energy Conservation Competition

Sustainaganza Tabling

Tabling at Sustainaganza was one of the most successful and enjoyable events of the semester. We made a “Nature Jeopardy” board (one where participants could answer questions for prizes) and advertised the Eco-Rep program. People were very interested in winning stickers and water bottles at our table. The event fostered multiple one-on-one connections with those who were interested about sustainability. This event cemented our presence on campus as a sustainable organization because many students and faculty passed by and asked questions about the program or simply chatted about sustainability. It was impressive how interested participants were.



Local Food BBQ

We held a Local Foods BBQ to kick off Earth Day Celebrations. The burgers, veggie burgers, and sides were all from local growers. We partnered with UM Dining and Residence Life. Rebecca Wade from UM Dining and Isabelle Jeffries from Residence Life talked about their department's sustainability efforts, and we talked about the Eco-Rep program. About sixty people attended and learned about our local foods!



Bird Walk

On April 25th and May 3rd, we lead 2 Birdwalks at 9 and 10 am down to Greenough Park. Each walk only had 1-2 people show up. We walked down to the park in search of the great horned owl nest that is on the river trail. For the future, we would suggest advertising for this a few weeks in advance and maybe doing an afternoon or evening walk instead of a morning walk.



Meet the 2014-2015 EcoReps!

Kathleen Stone

Kathleen hails from Salt Lake City, Utah and is a sophomore at UM majoring in journalism with minors in Spanish and climate change studies. She is passionate about local food and wants to incorporate food and agricultural issues into her work as an Eco Rep by working with students and members of the Missoula community to make our western Montana food system stronger. In her spare time, Kathleen enjoys running, climbing, and skiing. She also gets pumped about coffee and honeybees. Kathleen will be an Eco Rep in Pantzer Hall.



Neil Moore

Neil grew up in San Francisco, California and left the Bay for the wilderness and weather of Montana to pursue his interest in wildlife biology. At the University of Montana, Neil is a wildlife biology major and climate change



studies minor. He spends his time climbing, surfing, backpacking, and doing anything fun in the outdoors. Neil also works at the Campus Recreation Outdoor Program at UM and can often be found on shift at the climbing wall. He is stoked to be an Eco Rep for the 2014/15 and looks forward to working with the entire campus to help build a greener community.

Emily Cohen

Emily is a junior at UM studying cultural anthropology and gender studies. She grew up in Salmon, Idaho (insanely beautiful, if you haven't checked it out) on a 6 acre organic farm and was home schooled until her senior year of high school. For 9 years, Emily helped her mother run a bird of prey rehabilitation facility, no doubt contributing to her love of birds. Emily's heroes include: Dr. Jane Goodall, Jeff Corwin, Steve Irwin, Dr. Lindsey Doe, and Neil deGrasse Tyson. She loves bird watching, dancing, reading, watching the Griz marching band, and talking with her boyfriend via Skype.



Tommy Colligan

Tommy is one of this year's enthusiastic Eco Reps for Duniway Hall and is ready to help UM reach its carbon neutrality goals! Originally from Seattle, Washington, Tommy enjoys almost every outdoor activity, including climbing, mountain biking, canoeing, and backpacking. A sophomore at UM, Tommy is



majoring in geology and minoring in anthropology. He is passionate about sustainability and is eager to answer students' questions about sustainability issues so that he may deepen his understanding of these issues at the same time.

Brianna Grace

Brianna grew up loving the sea and forests along the northern California coast. She grew up in Berkeley and El Cerrito, California and ventured to Montana to explore the wildlife biology



program. She enjoys hiking, biking, reading, and writing in nature. Bri wants to direct her education toward educating others to care about the natural world as her heroes, Jane Goodall and Rachel Carson, have done. Bri is excited to be an Eco Rep in Knowles Hall, to connect with other students who also wish to make a change in the way we treat the environment, and to learn the steps together of how to take action.