

UH Sustainability Newsletter

Informing the UH community of the latest green events and initiatives on campus, spanning from recycling to research

HEADLINES

HRM GREEN TEAM, UC ULTIMATE RECYCLERS WIN RECYCLEMANIA

Houston, April 8, 2011 – RecycleMania teams came out in full force this year, exceeding all expectations and bringing in record numbers of recyclables. Student organizations and faculty/staff groups competed against their peers to win catering credits from UH Dining Services and the trophy for the team bringing in the most recyclables. This year, HRM Green Team beat out the other student organizations, and the UC Ultimate Recyclers took the top prize among faculty/staff groups.

Participation in UH's recycling team contest tripled for 2011 with 30 teams participating this year. Overall, the RecycleMania team competition participants brought in 35,975 pounds of recycling! That's a major improvement over last year's weight of over 23,000 pounds. HRM Green Team recycled the most ever by a team, with 7,391 pounds of recycling.

"It feels great to win!" said Leslye Dodd, member of the HRM Green Team. "It is good to show that we can make a difference with a small group of people and some dedication and persistence. It is our goal to grow the recycling efforts at The Conrad N. Hilton College and motivate other colleges to initiate change. Recycling can be a new life's lesson to take with us to the professional world. The key to our success was persistence and networking with the organizational clubs. It was affirming to our efforts to have the support of the Dean's office and the faculty members."

The UC Ultimate Recyclers brought in 6,158 pounds to lead the faculty/staff teams and reclaim their title after coming up short in 2010.

"I've been involved in RecycleMania since 2009 (as first place winner) and it's just the thing to do!" said Beverly Garcia, member of the UC Ultimate Recyclers. "Personally, I recycle in my house and I've always encouraged people to recycle. I'm excited that the University is becoming more aware, and I'll continue to be a part of RecycleMania as long as it continues!"

For the student teams, Accounting Society came in second with 3,985 pounds turned in to win \$100 in catering credits followed by Psi Chi receiving a \$50 credit for coming in third with 2,283 pounds of recycling. For the faculty/staff teams, second place was awarded to Admissions Processing followed by Green DOR in third.

Each week, teams would collect and turn in bags of plastic, aluminum, cardboard and paper to weigh in and tally their totals from January 31 until April 1. The team contest was hosted by Green UH in order to raise awareness about recycling as part of the national RecycleMania competition.

"I feel it was important, and still is, to rally everyone together to recycle because it helps the world we live in," said Cali Smith, member of the HRM Green Team. "This is our earth and we need to help preserve it for future generations. It's a great thing that helps our planet and our communities."

For more information on green initiatives on campus, visit www.uh.edu/green.

-Lindsay Marshall
University Services
Communications Coordinator



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New additions to the Campus Community Garden

- New cages were built for the recently planted plump red tomatoes
- Delicious snap peas were harvested
- Cilantro, lettuce and dandelion greens were harvested with more to come
- Beds were fertilized for spring crops
- Corn was added to the garden
- Watermelon and cantaloupe seeds will be planted soon

RecycleMania results for UH:

- Waste minimization category: Third statewide, 25th overall
- Actual weight recycled category: Fourth statewide, 100th overall

OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL IN THE PRACTICE OF GOING GREEN

Houston, March 29, 2011 – Not only are the legal minds in our Office of General Counsel brilliant, they are also conscientious. They have shown their commitment to green initiatives through their everyday practices in the office and now with a donation to Green UH. Over 300 binders are up for grabs to student, faculty and staff thanks to the Office of General Counsel.

“In these budgetary and eco-conscious times, throwing them away just wasn’t an option. So, we reached out to Green UH to find them a home,” said Leslie Pruski, Executive Administrative Assistant in the Office of General Counsel.

Green UH will have the binders on hand at the Earth Week Carnival on April 21 in Butler Plaza. Pruski said the binders contained documents, literature and other materials that were no longer needed. They decided to free up the office space by shredding the paper to be

recycled, leaving the binders available to be reused.



The Office of General Counsel is taking steps to eliminate long term storage by converting files to electronic files. They scan all documents, contracts, letter, memos and other documents to decrease the need for paper.

Pruski said all the employees in the office have an interest in recycling as well. A recycling receptacle can be

found in the kitchen area as well as at every desk or office.

“Like other offices and departments committed to recycling, we welcome the opportunity to play a vital role in building and maintaining a healthy and beautiful environment for current and future Cougars. One staff member who has a young son frequently says, ‘Thank you for saving the Earth for my son,’ when she sees someone adding to the kitchen recycling bin,” Pruski said.

To follow the example of the Office of General Counsel in supporting green initiatives and learn about sustainable practices on campus, visit www.uh.edu/green.

-Lindsay Marshall

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C.L.A.S.P. HOSTS FIRST COMMUNITY GARDEN SUMMIT

Houston, March 24, 2011 – University community gardeners from across the nation come together for the first time at the University of Houston for the Annual National University and College Community Garden Summit on April 8 and 9. UH’s Community Learning Agricultural Sustainability Program (C.L.A.S.P.) invited schools to the summit to discuss different aspects of running a community garden and meet their peers.

“The purpose of the summit is to share best practices, share solutions and answers to problems and questions and grow together as a community,” said Leah Wolfthal, C.L.A.S.P. Coordinator.

Eleven schools will be attending the summit sessions held in the multi purpose rooms in Calhoun Lofts. Friday evening, participants will be given a tour of the Houston area community gardens

and a moonlit walk through Memorial Park. Guests will have the option of organic, local dining at either SNAP Kitchen or Field of Greens.

The next morning, participants will have the option to rise early for Relaxation Garden Yoga followed by check-in and breakfast. Six sessions will explore topics such as the basics of starting a garden, student involvement, marketing your garden, fiscal sustainability and gardening for health.

One session will discuss composting, rooftop aquaponic gardening practices and ways to conserve water and energy.

The last session will explore options for connecting the academic or outside community to the garden.

“We hope schools will leave with relationships they can rely on for when they need help in the future and to also share their successes with,” Wolfthal said.

For more information on the summit and the Campus Community Garden, visit the [C.L.A.S.P. Facebook page](#).

-Lindsay Marshall

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LIGHTS OUT FOR A CAUSE: HILTON PARTICIPATES IN EARTH HOUR

Houston, March 30, 2011 – Across the world, people switched off the lights to take a stand against climate change. University of Houston's Hilton College joined companies from around the world in participating in Earth Hour, a movement organized by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), and turned off the lights for one hour beginning at 8:30 p.m. on Saturday, March 26.

WWF, one of the world's largest and most well known independent conservation organizations, began Earth Hour in 2007 in Sydney, Australia with 2.2 million individuals and more than 2,000 businesses. It has since grown to become a world-wide event with the participation of such landmarks as Sydney Harbor Bridge, Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco and Rome's Coliseum.

Hilton Worldwide has participated in the event from the beginning and encourages their businesses around the world to take part in the movement. The University of Houston's Hilton College turned off their non-essential lights throughout the hotel for one hour. Lights such as chandeliers, the outside onyx wall and track lighting around the hotel were shut down.

"We felt that it is important to bring awareness to our team members and our guests of the impact they can have when it comes to sustainable behaviors at home, work and their travels," said John Trujillo, Director of Leadership Development at the Hilton College. "Many times, we may be at home, an office or a guest room and have lights or appliances operating in areas that are unoccupied. By participating in Earth Hour, our guests and team members took notice of the lights that were out and it prompted questions that allowed us to share the importance of sustainable practice."

The movement seems to have worked. Trujillo said it has inspired his team members to turn off lights in areas that are not in use. Also, one guest even mentioned their need to put their porch light at home on a timer in order to conserve energy. This year during Earth Hour, Hilton College chose to use LED flashlights/glow sticks instead of candlelight to eliminate carbon by-products resulting in burning candles and the excess heat.



"This allowed us to be creative and put a unique and colorful spin on Earth Hour at the Hilton University of Houston," Trujillo said.

Trujillo himself has incorporated sustainable practices in both his home and office life as well.

"Honestly I never recycled, but a few years ago, I decided to try it. I found that it was just a lifestyle change and you have to get used to the behavior," said Trujillo. "The interesting thing is that when I go back home to New Mexico or visit friends that may not be recycling, I find myself separating and rinsing items; it's just a habit that you develop."

"I have three windows in my office, so in the afternoons, it is common to

come into my office and see that I am working at my computer with the lights out. No one is telling me to do it; I just take advantage of the natural resources that are available."

Hilton Worldwide has pledged a five year commitment for direct operations (2009 – 2014) to reduce energy consumption, CO2 emissions and waste output by 20 percent and reduce water consumption by 10 percent. The company encourages the advancement of renewable energy and the advancement of sustainable buildings and operations. The company has also implemented a performance measure for their businesses. LightStay is a proprietary system that analyzes and reports sustainability performance at each property.

Trujillo follows the lead of his employer and expressed his own interest in green initiatives in sustaining our planet for future generations.

"Personally, I feel that it is important for us to start looking at opportunities to implement sustainable practices," he said. "Growing up in the mountains of northern New Mexico, as a child I was able to enjoy hiking, riding my bicycle and playing in the streams. Unfortunately, today we see disregard for the environment, and children can't enjoy these outdoor activities that I once enjoyed. If we don't start to take steps to preserve our environment, who will?"

For more information on sustainable practices at the University of Houston, visit www.uh.edu/green.

-Lindsay Marshall

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INTERNSHIP NOW OFFERED WITH NEW GREEN MOUNTAIN ENERGY PARTNERSHIP

Houston, April 22, 2011 – An exciting new partnership also brings a new opportunity for one UH undergraduate student. Green Mountain Energy and the University of Houston announced the Solar Energy Internship, a paid internship that will be provided on an academic year basis.

The new internship will pay \$1,000 per semester and will be funded from the savings generated as a result of the new solar array that is planned for installation at the Central Utility Plant.

The intern will be responsible for keeping track of the performance of the solar array and providing weekly

updates to a web page specifically dedicated to the solar array. Each semester, the intern will also plan, publicize and execute an educational event on solar energy.

Applications for the 2011-2012 academic year were handed out at the Green Mountain Energy tent during the Earth Day Carnival on April 21. The applications are also available [online](#). Applicants must include a written essay of no more than 500 words with the Solar Internship Application. All applications and essays must be hand delivered to E. Cullen 226 by 5 p.m. on May 30, 2011.

The Campus Sustainability Task Force and Green Mountain Energy will make the selection and notify the intern by June 30, 2011.



-Lindsay Marshall

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SUSTAINABLE SPOTLIGHT

Liza Jascolt



It was the summer of 2010 when a group led by the Hilton College of Hotel & Restaurant Management professor, Liza Jascolt, made a commitment to educate and implement sustainable programs for the Hilton College.

During her summer 2010 course “Leadership in the Hospitality Industry”, she assigned her class a project to develop green initiatives that the Hilton College could execute. The students suggested that recycling and student engagement should be the two major focuses. Jascolt, along with Lydia Westbrook, John Trujillo, Lisa Funk, Sebastian Hansen, Stephen Barth, Carlos Cuellar, Leslye Dodd and Cuellar, Leslye Dodd and

Daniel Green established the HRM Green Team.

The HRM Green Team was not the first time Jascolt implemented eco-friendly practices in an organization. She also conceptualized and headed the Green Team at Caesar’s Palace, Las Vegas, while working there as the Assistant Hotel Manager.

The establishment of the HRM Green Team was the beginning of great things to come. The Hilton College became the first college in the university to have recycling

accessibility in every classroom, an education exhibit in the lobby of the Hilton and a student led pick-up process for recycling.

The Hilton College also recently won the student division of the UH Recycling Contest by engaging the whole College and all affiliated student organizations to recycle 7,391 pounds. Jascolt’s leadership and passion along with the HRM Green Team has developed into a great model for other colleges within the university.

Want more information on Green UH?

Website: www.uh.edu/green

[Facebook](#)

Email: gogreenuh@gmail.com

Blog: uhsustainability.blogspot.com