



UVM Eco-Reps Annual Report

2024-2025



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written by Erika Seaman '25

ABOUT US

UVM Eco-Reps are student leaders who offer education and outreach about campus sustainability to their peers.

The UVM Eco-Reps Program is one of the oldest and most well-respected Eco-Reps programs in the country. It began in 2004 as a pilot project to connect the overarching environmental commitment of the institution with individual student behavior and campus culture. Today the program is a partnership between Residential Life, which pays the wages of the Eco-Reps, and the Office of Sustainability, whose staff runs the program.

The Eco-Rep approach draws from the idea that sustainable behavioral change is most effective when it involves direct contact with people and is carried out at the community level. The community level that Eco-Reps focuses on is the residential student population.

The individual choices that the ~5,000 on-campus students make each day add up to a big collective impact! Campus residents are usually first or second year students who are learning how to live on their own for the first time. Major life events are the time people are most likely to change their behaviors, and the habits people adopt in their first years on campus can stick with them for a lifetime!

UVM has many transportation, food and waste programs that make it easy for students to build more sustainable lifestyles. Eco-Reps help communicate these programs and encourage participation in them along with other environmentally responsible behaviors. This can help to improve sustainability outcomes and possibly result in financial savings from resource conservation and efficiency. Organized education and outreach efforts also build a culture of sustainability, which 76.5% of UVM students agreed the campus has (2022 survey).

DEFINITIONS

The Eco-Reps are divided into three teams for the year: Food, Waste and Transportation. Each team is led by a student **Team Lead** and a staff **Topic Lead** who is the campus expert in that topic.

Each team has a **\$1000 budget** for the year to organize outreach, events and initiatives that pertain to their topic.

This report measures our engagement as one of our impact metrics. **Engagement** is any level of interaction between Eco-Reps and our target audience, whether direct or indirect.

Direct engagement indicates an interaction that an Eco-Rep self determined and reported was meaningful. These interactions feel productive and like they could have a lasting impact. Examples of this include students asking questions or making comments, engaging in an educational game or challenge, making a pledge, or completing a survey.

Indirect engagement indicates someone was exposed to Eco-Reps but did not have a direct interaction. Examples include viewing a social media post or attending a large event where Eco-Reps are present but not the focus.



EXPERIENCE

What Eco-Reps Say

Our end-of-year survey showed that Eco-Reps perceived this year as a success and had valuable experiences in the program.

100% OF ECO-REPS AGREE:

- Eco-Reps make a difference on campus
- They felt empowered to carry out events creatively and effectively
- They are better at event planning, marketing, teamwork, and communication as a result of the program
- They gained a better understand campus sustainability initiatives



25%

of Eco-Reps
participated
in flood
relief
volunteer
work

“It’s been so great getting so much information about sustainability at UVM—inclusive of our successes as well as our shortcomings. Getting an in-depth, honest look at what we do as a university and as a community is so so cool and exactly what I was hoping to get when I joined the team.”—Eco-Rep

Professional Development

Eco-Reps found our Resume Building Workshop to be useful and engaging

4 Eco-Reps attended RSENR & PLHC’s full day *Healthy Students, Healthy Planet Teach-In*

OUR REACH

From the 40+ events Eco-Reps hosted...

OVERALL ENGAGEMENT:

Direct: 2,948 | Indirect: 5,287



4,365.25 lbs
of compost
collected by
ebike/EV

51,815
meals
served in
EcoWare

539
members on
rideshare
board

COLLABS

- All three teams worked together on 18 events representing 3,243 engagements

- Eco-Reps held a Planetary Health-themed Eco-Fair

MEDIA

- 40% open rate on our monthly newsletter

- Gained 189 Instagram followers for a total of 1,935

Transportation Team

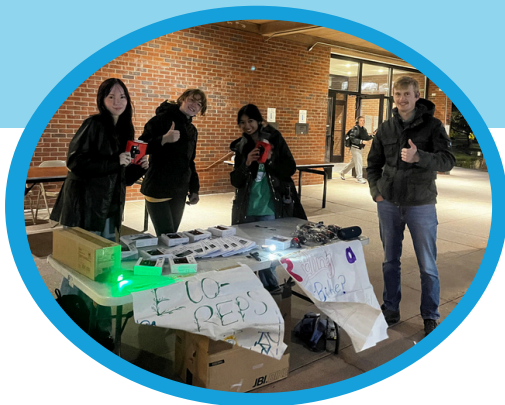
876 ENGAGEMENTS

The goal of our team was to promote sustainable transportation options available around Burlington and encourage the student population to think about the ways in which transportation impacts humans and the environment.

“Absolutely loved being on the transportation team, so grateful for this group of people!” — Transportation Team Eco-Rep

Fall Highlight Light Up the Night

Did you know its the law in Burlington to have lights on your bike when biking at night? We spent an evening giving away bike lights to passing bikes to increase safe biking practices. With the support of Local Motion, bike lights were installed on more than 50 students' bikes!



Spring Highlight Claim the Lane Screening

We collaborated We PRISM Center, WAGE, UVM Bikes!, and Trans+ Students of Vermont to host the inaugural screening of *Claim the Lane: Becoming Roxy*. This event highlighted that the foundations of sustainability require well-being of both people and the planet to thrive. The UVM Community enjoyed pizza while watching the film and engaging in lively Q&A.

Food Team

3,130 ENGAGEMENTS

The goal of our team is to help make our campus food system more sustainable. We work to increase utilization of reusable to go containers, and promote sustainable food options like locally sourced products and plant based meals.

I truly loved my experience + am motivated to continue as an Eco-rep :)
-Food Team Eco-Rep

Fall Highlight Launching ReUse Pass

UVM Dining launched the ReUse Pass app for checking Eco-Ware in and out. We helped sign students up and explain the importance of reducing container waste. Eco-Ware had >38,370 uses this year with a 98.4% return rate. This is an incredible increase from last year!



Spring Highlight Upcycled Herb Planters

We repurposed over 100 used containers into planters for our plant giveaway at the Eco Fair. Students who took the planetary health survey could select a dill, basil, or cilantro start to plant in one of our recycled planters. We also prepared recipe cards and care instructions for each herb. This year we gave away over 200 plants!



Waste Team

1,015 ENGAGEMENTS

The goal of our team is to promote the residence hall compost program and educate peers on proper waste disposal and sustainability through social media, signage, and events. We collected data on recycling and composting habits to identify areas for improvement and expanded the program through targeted research and outreach.

“I had such a good time getting to know everyone, this was a very valuable experience and motivated me to get more involved with sustainability on campus” — Waste Team Eco-Rep

Fall Highlight

America Recycles Day (ARD)

To celebrate ARD, we organized a Zero Waste Fair featuring campus and community partners. The event included educational tabling, a swap shop, a clothing drive, and the promotion of our recycling and composting survey, which received nearly 200 responses. We engaged with over 350 individuals and raffled off three local, sustainable prizes. To top it all off, we were joined by a special guest, Rally Cat!



Spring Highlight

Compost Team

We collected compost from residence halls with help from Scrappy, the bike! In the fall, we collected 2,386lbs, followed by 1,978lbs in the spring. In late October, we hit a weekly high of 312.10 lbs. Throughout both semesters, UHN generated the most compost overall. We also continued our pilot program by placing compost bins on every floor in MAT, Mercy, and McAuley.

EARTH WEEK

14 EVENTS | 1,215 ENGAGEMENTS

In addition to organizing dedicated topic team events during Earth Week and all teams came together to coordinate our annual Eco Fair! This year's focus was on UVM's Planetary Health Initiative (PHI). Participants could test their knowledge with PHI themed Jeopardy questions, take a PHI survey, and make a PHI pledge! The fair also featured sustainability information and resources from our campus and community partners. Awesome giveaways included block prints, herb starts, bike helmets, local gift cards and stickers.



Students enjoying the New England Dairy milk stand



Planetary Health pledges and block printing at Eco Fair



Bike to Breakfast was a huge hit with the smoothie bike



RSEN Climate Activism Panel

We partnered on a event where local activists (including two Eco-Rep alumni!) spoke about their activism journeys and how students can make a difference

ECO-REPS TEAM

WASTE TEAM

Corey Berman

Sarah O'Leary

Jada Fleiss

Klara Whalley

Liz Stokes

Leah Silovovsky

Tekla Peterson

Khadija Shashbaz

Fiona Shaw

TRANSPORTATION TEAM

Abby Bleything

Abby Goldman

Meredith Loney

Allie Chan

Lindsay Maschler

Naia Zengotitadeng

Sarah Johnsen

FOOD TEAM

Nicole Reilly

Caitlin Derby

Drea Falar

Lily Ohlam

Amelia Klaus

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PROGRAM COORDINATORS

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