

UVM Eco-Reps Annual Report 2021-2022



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WHO ARE ECO-REPS?

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 behavior 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.

UVM's sustainability metrics include the energy use of residence halls, the type of food served in dining halls, and the volume of waste generated in each. The individual choices that the ~5,000 on-campus students make about these things each day add up to a big collective impact! Residents are also 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 formative years can stick with them for a lifetime!

Many UVM programs already exist to make it easy for students to build more sustainable lifestyles. Eco-Reps help communicate these programs and encourage other environmentally responsible behaviors. This can help to improve sustainability performance 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 already has (2022 survey).

DEFINITIONS

The Eco-Reps are divided into five **Community Teams (CT)** with one assigned to each of the main residential areas. Each CT has four Eco-Reps (one Manager and three Change Agents).

The five Eco-Rep **Managers** each work on a specialty area and supervise three **Change Agents (CA)**. The fifteen CAs live on campus and carry out most Eco-Rep programming.

Eco-Reps work with four sustainability topics throughout the year and create programming related to each one for seven weeks. These topics and the associated programming make up a **campaign**. Each campaign incorporates Community Team specific and campus wide programming.

Campus-wide programs are events or outreach designed to reach the whole student body. There is usually one Campus-wide Program per campaign and it is focused on students but also open to staff, faculty and visitors. Managers take the lead in these, and Change Agents contribute.

A **Community Team program** is an event or behavior change strategy designed by one CT that is specifically for and targeted to their residential learning community. There are usually 5-15 of these programs per campaign. Change agents take the lead on these and Managers support them.

An **engagement** is any level of interaction with the Eco-Reps program by the target audience, whether direct or indirect.

Direct engagement indicates an interaction that an Eco-Rep sensed and self-reported was meaningful. These interactions feel productive and like they could have a lasting impact. Examples of this are 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 the year survey showed that Eco-Reps perceived this year as a success and had valuable experiences in the program.

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100% OF ECO-REPS AGREE:

- they better understand campus sustainability.
- they are now better at event planning.
- they have stronger connections to staff/ departments engaged in sustainability work on campus.
- they felt empowered to carry out campaigns creatively and effectively.

subject matter experts presented to Eco-Reps throughout the year

"I love the opportunities to go to campus events and speakers that are environmentally related! They've been super fun and interesting! It's really awesome that this program exists, especially the opportunity to design our own project with lots of resources available to us."— Eco-Rep

Professional Development

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Eco-Reps attended the UMass Lowell Student Sustainability Leadership Symposium

All

Eco-Reps attended the UVM Inclusive Excellence Symposium

REACH

OVERALL ENGAGEMENT: 5,469

Direct: 1,713

Indirect: 3,756



ALIGNMENT

- 100% of ResLife Learning Communities served by residents
- \$1,095 in funding and in-kind support from campus partners
- \$4,000 Sustainable Campus Fund award for a Passion Project

MEDIA

- 1,863 people are subscribed to our monthly newsletter
- 150 new Instagram followers for a total of 1,552
- 47 new followers on TikTok for a total of 76 followers

CAMPAIGN IMPACT

Transportation

1,432 ENGAGEMENTS | \$539.72 spent

The goal of this campaign was to promote sustainable transportation options available at UVM and locally and encourage the student population to think about the ways in which transportation impacts humans and the environment.

"[It] got a lot of students to think about taking the bus as an option/ that there are more sustainable transportation options." — Eco-Rep

5 Community Team Programs

184 Directly Engaged

248 Indirectly Engaged

The Trinity community team put on a Bike Fest. Where they educated students about all things bikes! Other teams focused on bike registration and bus ridership.



1 Campus-wide Program

700 Directly Engaged

300 Indirectly Engaged



To showcase sustainable transportation options, Eco-Reps put on a fair featuring UVM Bikes, CarShare Vermont, Transportation and Parking Services, Chittenden Area Transportation Management Association, and others. Our pedal-powered smoothie bike also made an appearance!

CAMPAIGN IMPACT

Food

3,582 ENGAGEMENTS | \$521.85 spent

This campaign focused on personal food values, sustainable food options and understanding our local food system. Eco-Reps heard from campus and community partners like UVM Dining, Rally Cat's Cupboard, and Food Not Bombs, Northeast Organic Farming Association, and more.

"I thought the food campaign was a very well done program with lots of engaging programs such as weigh the waste!" — Eco-Rep

5 Community Team Programs
135 Directly Engaged
190 Indirectly Engaged

To address the issue of food insecurity one team collected food for donation and shared resources about food access on and beyond campus. Another team held a local food tasting event and led conversations about the impact of eating locally.



2 Campus-wide Programs
366 Directly Engaged
2,891 Indirectly Engaged

Many of these engagements can be attributed to Weigh the Waste, an annual event held at Redstone Dining in Simpson Hall, in which food waste is collected and weighed, which can then be compared to food waste measures from years past. Eco-Reps staff this event and engage with students, directing them in where to discard the remaining portions of their meals.

CAMPAIGN IMPACT

WASTE

455 ENGAGEMENTS | \$453.32 spent

This campaign lasted a full semester. Our meetings covered waste systems, consumerism, environmental privileges, composting, clothing repair, and more. The beginning of this campaign focused on letting the campus community know about changes to the EcoWare to-go container program and what items are compostable on campus. After awareness was built on those topics we switched our focus to fast fashion and sustainable move out.

“This campaign was the most fun out of all of them!” - Eco-Rep

5 Community Team Programs

296 Directly Engaged

60 Indirectly Engaged

Each team did a clothing swap for their programming, which were very popular and easy to get good attendance at. Clothing was collected in bins placed within the residential halls. At these events, attendees were able to take home clothing and be informed about fast fashion and consumerism.



4 Campus-wide Programs

32 Directly Engaged

67 Indirectly Engaged

Green Out the Gut took place in January at the Gutterson Rink. Eco-Reps educated those in attendance about composting changes in Chittenden County that had just gone into effect.

Because the EcoWare system changed to require a token as proof of membership, Eco-Reps spent the first three weeks of the semester issuing new memberships and explaining the changes to students.

PASSION PROJECTS

Each Change Agent completes a “Passion Project” of their choosing over the course of the year. The fall semester is spent planning and the project is executed in the spring. Here are some highlights from this year’s passion projects:

“It was great to be able to partner with Dining and broaden my circle of contacts on campus.” — Eco-Rep

A survey was run to get feedback on the experiences of vegetarian and vegan students in the dining halls. The results of this survey were taken into account in the creation of a vegetarian and vegan guide.

Because there was limited awareness about where dining hall food was sourced from, food sourcing awareness was promoted through local and BIPOC producer highlight handouts, tabling, and digital signage.

A guide called Chow Down in Chittenden County was designed to highlight BIPOC-owned restaurants that incorporate sustainability into their practices. The guide also served as a way to educate readers on environmental justice.

To encourage food waste mindfulness, “Clean Plate Club” posters and stickers were distributed around Redstone Campus.

An electric cargo bike was used to pilot compost pick up routes across campus to reduce reliance on fossil fuel burning trucks.

An informative video about waste sorting was created to run on screens in the Davis Center in hopes of reducing recycling contamination.

PASSION PROJECTS

Continued..

A “Swap Shelf” was installed in Wing Davis Wilks, encouraging students to donate new or used items that would then be available to others in this residence hall.

In order to address unequal access to sustainable hygiene products, a laundry detergent sheet dispenser was approved to be placed in the Davis Center offering free memberships to low income and first generation students. Over 300 menstrual cups were given out for free to promote this program and get student input.

An analysis of scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions reporting at UVM and other comparable campuses was conducted to understand best practices on emissions reporting.

Informational signs about Green Mountain Transit buses were created and placed on campus to make it easier for students to know how to access popular destinations by bus from campus.



Eco-Reps tabling for passion project survey

ECO-REPS TEAM

2021-2022

CHANGE AGENTS

Abbie Engrassia
Aidan McDougall
Alissa Frame
Angelica Golbin
Calvin Szulc
Camille Jacoby
David Brantley
Dennis Koryukin
Emily Engelhart
Evelyn Seidner
Grace Lafromboise
Julia Grant
LC Whiteman
Lily Messmer
Maura Taylor
Montana Bailey
Navily Zhen
Nerida Williams
Olivia Galluzzo
Ryan Chaia
Savannah Parker

MANAGERS

Ali Drew
Annie Selle
Ayanna McDaniel
Lauren Waibel
Nora Looney
Sam Joyner

DAVIS CENTER ECO-REPS

Nick Bishop
Sean Magnifico

COORDINATORS

Caylin McCamp
Holly Pedrini



Eco Rep Managers



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