Eco-Reps Passion Projects
2021
The Problem

• Before I was an Eco-Rep myself, I didn't know anything about the program
  • Including programming, events, even Eco-Ware
  • Asking my friends and peers after becoming an Eco-Rep what they knew about the program (if anything) yielded dismal results

• Goal: To promote Eco-Reps and our programs to a wider audience

• As an active Her-Campus writer and editor as well as being on the events committee I thought it was a great vehicle to use for my project to spread awareness of Environmental issues and the Eco-Rep program itself
The Project

Articles

• What- Eco-Rep guest writers for Her-Campus
• When- Earth Week
• Why- To raise awareness for issues or ideas our change agents are passionate about and promote the Eco-Rep program to the Her-Campus audience

Livestream

• Asking Lauren questions about the Eco-Rep program, what we do, how we do it, etc.
• Discussion on some topics Eco-Reps have focused on (Just Sustainability, making sustainability convenient for on-campus college students)
Results

Livestream

- What went well: I thought the questions were good, Lauren answered them extremely well and the posted livestream has over 200 views!
- What could have gone better: If I could do it again, I think I would have split it into a Q&A portion and then more of a discussion portion instead of a full interview style

Articles

- 6 AMAZING articles were written by Eco-Reps
- A huge thank you to all the writers!
- https://www.hercampus.com/school/uvm
Althea's Article: A Coffee Cup is Not Just a Coffee Cup
Sam's Article: Sustainability in The Classroom: From the Perspective of a Teacher in Training
Ali's Article: Return Your EcoWare!
Sean's Article: Hydrogen Storage Rising Through the Ranks
Cate's Article: Green Options Vs. Easy Options
Nora's Article: Make Your Hygiene Routine More Sustainable
Lab Waste
The Problem

How many of us have taken a lab science here at UVM?
Most UVM students will at some point!

Lab waste was being mishandled and grossly neglected by the students. This led to the fire in the basement of innovation during the Fall of 2019. That event led to a massive shut down and the potential for a large chemical explosion

While that was a massive danger to the entire UVM community, what other risks are there?
Report: Wyle Labs may have mishandled toxic waste at SoCal testing site

Monday, July 14, 2003

RIVERSIDE, Calif. -- Wyle Laboratories may have mishandled toxic waste at a military and nuclear test site, while government regulators failed to properly monitor environmental contamination in the area, despite complaints from sick residents and former Wyle employees, according to a newspaper report.

Post Beirut Explosion - Evaluating Your Hazardous Waste Program

POSTED BY TED DUBIEL DECEMBER 3, 2020

On August 4th, the city of Beirut suffered an extremely deadly and devastating explosion. What was the cause? Improper storage of high hazardous chemicals. At 6pm, "the roof of the warehouse caught alight and there was a large initial explosion, followed by a series of smaller explosions [...]. About 30 seconds later, there was a colossal explosion that sent a mushroom cloud into the air and a supersonic blast wave radiating through the city" (BBC, 2020). More than 200 people were tragically killed and over 500 injured. Lebanon's Prime Minister would soon blame the chemical detonation on 2,750 tons of ammonium nitrate that had been unsafely and improperly stored. "Ammonium nitrate has been associated with deadly industrial accidents. In 1947, a ship carrying 2,000 tons of the chemical exploded in Texas, killing 581 people" (BBC, 2020). Previous to this explosion in Beirut there had been multiple written warnings about the danger posed by the stored ammonium nitrate, unfortunately, the requests for removal were repeatedly ignored.

How does biomedical waste impact the environment?

Improper segregation of biomedical waste and different medical waste streams from the point of origin can trigger a domino-like effect on the environment that incurs dangers to people, animals, or soil and water sources.

Improper segregation and disposal of biomedical waste has the potential to contaminate groundwater sources, which in turn may infect humans and animals alike. From a hospital's waste and storage receptacles to landfills, biomedical waste needs to be properly contained to keep it away from birds, rodents, and stray animals (as well as humans). This enhances packaging and labeling of contaminants and helps prevent the spread of illness through human and animal populations – by air, land, or water.

If not properly contained, segregated, and incinerated through on-site or off-site incineration, environmental hazards associated with improper healthcare waste management can contaminate the air we breathe through dangerous airborne particles. Radioactive particles produced with diagnostic technologies have the potential to reach a landfill or other areas of the environment, especially air. Air pollutants disseminated over huge areas of inhabited land have the potential to trigger a number of illnesses.
What I created

Where does my waste go?
This is a larger poster that is put up in the science labs to increase the amount of education on lab waste.
Main goal: Spread awareness of how UVM is treating its waste and why students need to be more mindful about how they treat it.

Where should my waste go?
These are smaller stickers for the inside of the lab notebooks. They are meant to act as a reminder and source that the separation of waste matters.
Main goal: an “all knowing” resource for students with a link to a comprehensive PDF for the location of all waste.
How I got there!

Victoria Halsey
- UVM Chem Safety Coordinator
- Was immensely helpful in collecting information

Bruce Lickey and Ben Rose
- These were my TA’s who acted as my main points of contact with the Chem Department

Caylin McCamp
- Helped a lot with planning and seeing the process through
- Instrumental in getting everything printed

Alexander Wurthmann and Severin Schneebeli
- My Chemistry Professors during this process that also helped with contacts and getting the information spread

Everyone Here!
- For helping me plan out my next steps, which are to hopefully continue this into next year!
Waste Watchers

KC Johnson
The Purpose of Waste Watchers

- My interest:
  - Privilege of being conscious of my single use waste day-to-day → always been a priority of mine
  - Curious about the difference between the perception of waste and the reality of waste for a college student

- "The purpose of this project is to draw individual attention to the impact of single use waste products in a day-to-day context. We all fall victim to the "out-of-sight, out-of-mind" phenomena and this short commitment aims to overcome this to get a true understanding of how we view our waste. This series will consist of two surveys, the first to get an idea of where participants think most of their waste comes from, and the second to get real, raw data of waste consumption over the course of 3 days."

- Justice:
  - Most single use trash is disposed of in landfills that are in predominantly low-income areas and the negative effects on health that come with contaminated water, unclean air, and lack of access to green spaces disproportionately impacts BIPOC communities
  - It’s a privilege to be able to live zero waste → this project was not designed to shame people for their waste generation, only to raise personal awareness and hopefully give people the resources to make changes that are reasonable for them
The Plan

• Pair of Surveys
  • First Survey: “Which category do you believe is the largest contributor to your single use waste?”
    • Food waste, Ex. Coffee cups, drink bottles, food wrappers, straws, napkins, etc.
    • Stationary waste, Ex. Scrap paper, sticky notes, pens, pencils, etc.
    • Retail waste, Ex. Tags, receipts, paper/plastic bags, packaging, etc.
    • Hygiene waste, Ex. Floss, cotton pads, cotton swabs, tissues, makeup wipes, etc.
  • Data collection for 3 days recording the number of individual single use waste products per category
  • Second Survey
    • Report number of waste products per category
    • “On-Campus or Off-Campus”
    • “Did the largest number of single use waste products match your prediction at the beginning from the first survey?”
The Results!

40 participants signed up with 29 individuals completing the second survey

- 703 pieces of single use waste over the course of 3 days
- Largest category: food waste \( \rightarrow 51.9\% \)
COVID Impacts & The future of Waste Watchers

- Big thanks to Caylin for all of her help coordinating the prize and helping plan this project 😊!
- Project concluded with an Instagram slideshow and a reflection blog post
- COVID impacts
  - Always would have been an online, individual participation challenge
  - Very COVID friendly project
  - Most likely would have run the same regardless
- The Future of Waste Watchers
  - Timeless project
  - Very easy to implement using Google surveys
  - Would be interesting to see how the numbers change after COVID considering the increase in single use waste items for food
Thrifting Reviews

Amanda Minsk
Problem: Do UVM students know about all the local thrift and secondhand stores in Burlington, and nearby surrounding towns?

I have become interested in learning more about fast fashion and creative upcycling options because some of my friends introduced me to thrifting last year. Over quarantine, I got creative with seeing beyond a piece of clothing to what the potential was instead of what its current state looked like.

I wanted to educate and inform students that thrift stores do have trendy clothing and there is other places to shop other than Urban, American Eagle, Pac Sun, Carhartt etc.

**Audience:** UVM students
The Overview:

**Budget:** No Budget needed

**How I reviewed:** Based on cleanliness, prices, location, staff presence, product desirability

**Stakeholders:** Lauren helped me adjust the Instagram captions based on what she knows about marketing and social media engagement

**Marketing Tactics:** Each caption used various emojis and shorter captions because big paragraphs are not as enticing to viewers and they are more likely to read shorter, concise, captions
Results

Total Likes based on Total Posts: 172

I would consider this to be a success based on the engagement we get on other Eco Reps posts, the average likes per thrift post was 57, and on other posts based on the past 10 posts excluding the thrift posts, the average likes was 35.5

I learned that thrift stores have a lot more to offer than just clothing, and they are great options for upcycling and trendy clothing especially because vintage is very popular right now. I feel like thrift stores are great for college students because they are cost effective and a great sustainable option.

EXAMPLE POST:
Next Steps

1. There are many more thrift stores around Burlington that can get reviewed and posted

2. Building off the reviews I have already done, there could be a document or drive that has all of the stores so students can see all of them in one place and don't have to look through the Instagram posts to find different places

I could have gone to more stores for reviews but I got miss rona so that put a halt to that

There is definitely an opportunity for another Change Agent to continue where I left off
Can and Bottle Redemption Program

Nick Bishop
The Basics

• The idea was brought to me by Anna Hand (MSH Area coordinator)
  • Easy way to raise money for local cause?
• Goal: weekly fill-ups with drop offs every few weeks
• Worded simply: turn students beer money into something for the greater good
Methods Used

- First step: acquire boxes for waste rooms
- Emphasis on marketing from beginning
  - How to maximize resident participation?
- Collection can be confusing
  - How to make it as simple as possible?
- Had to be cautious with outright asking for alcoholic containers

What beverages ARE covered under the Bottle Bill Law?
When purchased in Vermont:

- Beer, wine coolers, and other malt beverages
- Carbonated non-alcoholic beverages, including sodas, sparkling waters and juices, and carbonated sports and energy drinks
- Liquor and spirits

What beverages ARE NOT covered under the Bottle Bill Law?

- Wine and hard cider
- Non-carbonated non-alcoholic beverages, including water, milk, juice, sports and energy drinks
- Beverages purchased out of state
Results / Reflection

- 1st semester trial run = Success!
- Boxes kept getting moved to strange places, not filling up like I was expecting
- Not great initial response
  - Added QR code
  - Hard to stay motivated

- Keep the Passion in Passion Project
  - Settled on idea because it had support and seemed exciting

- Lessons:
  1. Know your audience
  2. Know your limits (mentally and physically)
     14 flights of stairs + Ecoware collection
Can and Bottle Redemption

Jane Burton
Overview

- Collect redeemable cans and bottles in Uheights South trash rooms to take to redemption center and donate money to Old North End Mutual Aid Fund
- Worked with Nick and learned from his successes and used the same poster designs
- Initial difficulty in organizing and setting up project but is now running smoothly
- Empty collection bins twice a week
- Used boxes from book store for collection bins
**Budget**: no budget needed

**Stakeholders**: Uheights custodial staff, Old North End Mutual Aid Fund

**Marketing Tactics**: Signs up in all trash rooms in tower 2
Results and Reflection

• Have raised $25 so far
• It is difficult to raise lots of money at redemption centers
• Confusion about what is and is not redeemable
• Could have had better marketing for project and expanded to other buildings
• Overall I found this project to be a success and hopefully something that will be continued by eco reps in the future!
Book Reuse Pilot Program

Sean Magnifico

The University of Vermont
What It's All About

- The big idea: A method of reliably redistributing books to incoming freshman from upper classes who no longer need them

- Why this program?
  - The honors college buys incoming freshman a new book every year for HCOL 085 summer reading assignment
  - This amounts to 250+ of $26 books which, in all likelihood, will only be read once and then discarded
  - If this book reuse trial run is expanded upon, the honors college would save thousands of dollars every year, and it could serve as a model for other learning communities across campus with similar freshman courses

- Who stands to benefit?
  - Everybody! Learning communities can put their savings back into their learning communities how they see fit. Mental health services/programming, kitchen supplies, even sustainability (switching to LED lighting would be pretty nice).
The Process: Communication is Key

  - Lots of coordination between different Honors College figures and Reslife
- Problem solving
  - How/When would books be redistributed after collection?
  - Where can they be stored?
- Getting the word out & book collection
- And, of course, there's always a wrench thrown in...
  - Changing curriculum
Current Status & Looking Ahead

- A work in progress

- Measuring Success
  - Number of books collected
  - Replicable?

- Identifying challenges:
  - Curriculum changes
  - Book collection – Fall vs Spring
  - Viable for other learning communities?

- Expansion:
  - It would be great to see this project expanded upon (depth and breadth!)
  - Bigger campaigns to collect more books, extension into other learning communities
BIPOC Quilt

Ayanna McDaniel
My Quilt

• I wanted my passion project to be centered around highlighting and celebrating BIPOC clubs/orgs
  • Black Student Union
  • BLM (not a club)
  • Jazbaa
  • Women of Color Coalition
  • People of Color Outdoors
  • Sisters of Color
  • Indigenous Peoples Collective (center)

• I also wanted to create dialogue between Eco Reps and identity/affinity clubs at UVM

• Cost
  • $50 for solid fabrics and thread
  • Patterned fabrics: free from OoS

• Results
  • Very happy with how it came out
  • Working with clubs on campus was difficult
    • Reached out to a lot of clubs, many did not respond
      • One club never submitted design, I chose to include BLM
    • Best way to contact- Instagram
Close Ups of the Panels
Next Steps + What I Learned

• Next Steps
  • I hope to get the quilt displayed somewhere on campus, so next step for my quilt would be outreach!
    • Hopefully the Davis Center!
  • Did not finish the back panel for the quilt
    • Use fabric scraps from OoS to create one large panel

• Continuity of my project
  • It would be great to see future change agents work with identity clubs on campus + explore the intersection between sustainability and justice

• What I Learned
  • Clubs are difficult to get in contact, and remain in contact with
  • PATIENCE!
    • Quilting is a long and very precise process, so having patience and learning to trust the process was difficult
Q/A
Energy Literacy: Audit and Education

Camille Jacoby
The Problem/Opportunity

• Found myself in several conversations about energy conservation
  • Energy is something that I take for granted in my daily life and in COVID times, energy powers my whole education, social life and much of my leisure life so I wanted to dig into that privilege a bit more to acknowledge and learn about because I know it's not readily accessible to everyone
  • First step to action is awareness and understanding
  • I wanted to start with my pretty immediate community so I decided to do an audit of mainly Harris Millis but was open to other people beyond my building’s answers as well
Methods

• Made a survey to see what people understand about energy in their dorms and daily lives
• Postered, advertised, sent around
• Incentivized
• 47 responses
Which of these appliances uses the most energy?

- Fridge: -32 (68.1%)
- Microwave: -2 (4.3%)
- Laptop charger: -6 (12.8%)
- Video Game console: -6 (12.8%)
- I am not sure but probably the fridge: -1 (2.1%)

Where does your heat get generated?

- Hydro Quebec: -1 (2.2%)
- McNeil Generating Station: -5 (10.9%)
- Vermont Gas: 20 (43.5%)
- UVM Central Plant: -14 (30.4%)
- UVM Central Heating and Cooling Plant: -6 (13%)

What energy sources are used to generate your heat? Check all that apply:

- Farm methane: 18 (39.1%)
- Landfill methane: 12 (25.5%)
- Natural Gas: 35 (78.3%)
- Solar: 17 (37.1%)
- Wind: 17 (37.1%)
- Biomass: 19 (41.3%)
- Geothermal: 12 (25.5%)
- Propane: 15 (32.6%)
- Oil: 17 (37.1%)

What's the primary source of energy for electricity in the Northeast?

- Wind: 3 (7.9%)
- Solar: 0 (0%)
- Hydro (Water): 3 (7.9%)
- Fossil Fuels: 17 (44.7%)
- Natural Gas: 13 (34.2%)
- Biomass: -2 (5.3%)

Where does your dorm electricity come from?

- Vermont: 35 (76.1%)
- Maine: 0 (0%)
- Quebec (Canada): -10 (21.7%)
- New York: 1 (2.2%)
- New Hampshire: 0 (0%)
What are the best ways you can conserve electricity within your dorm?
What are the best ways you can conserve heat within your dorm?
• 32 people signed into my table
• Raffled off power strip and lightbulbs
• Had good conversations about energy in the dorms
• Quizzed people
Many thanks to...

- Caylin
  - Supported and led me through whole process
  - Helped me in handling prizes
- Gioia
  - Helped in my research process and compiling the survey
- Lulé and Liv
  - Helped me with learning community outreach
- Renato Martinez
  - Helping me coordinate tabling in Harris Millis
Outcomes

• Qualitative vs. Quantitative

• Challenges
  • Balance
  • I thought engagement would be a challenge

• Directing the trajectory of the project
  • Empowering

• Next Steps
  • Audit vs. Education
  • Infographic work and use
  • Pledge
  • Event
Bike Guide to Burlington

Cate Kreider
Bike Guide to Burlington- An Introduction

- There are a lot of students who feel they can't access/can't explore Burlington without a car, this guide is a quick intro to awesome places within bussing/biking distance
  - Inspiration: I want to help others overcome the obstacles that I faced before finding these awesome places and getting comfortable on the roads
  - Audience: This is aimed at first years and it is meant to limit the unknowns in planning for a ride around an unfamiliar city
  - Justice: This guide promotes local businesses and ultimately reduces cars/emissions and educates on bike infrastructure

- How you went about it
  - No defined budget but this booklet might eventually be printed. All it really needed was my time to ride out and organize the info and Maya's ingenious design skills and assistance.
  - Big shout out to Maya who knows how to use design software and also make something look sophisticated and organized. She also picked up some slack for me when I was struggling this semester and helped gather some of the info based off of my plans. Thanks so much : )
  - Aimed to make sustainable behavior accessible and less scary/labor intensive. The guide includes resources for acquiring a bike and using the local bus system. It'll also engage students in the community.

Spear Street is a flat road with a wide bike lane and moderate traffic. It has beautiful views and runs right through campus!
So How Did That Go?

- Engagement can be measured by how many people pick up paper copies at tabling if we take that route. Also, am considering a social media tag so that people who use it can share their experiences with the eco reps pages.

- I learned that even if you're excited about something, get to work on it and calculate it as tasks! And follow your schedule.
  - I was excited to do some aspects and got them done fairly quickly but follow up was slower because those first pieces had been so simple and fun! I hit a roadblock or two when I actually got to work, and a tough spring semester sealed the deal and put me way behind schedule.
Any Wrong Turns? Where to Next?

- I wish I met some of my earlier deadlines so I could have a more complete product to share now.
- It would have been great to partner with the people who reached out to me with similar ideas and projects but somehow something always came up and I never connected with anyone.
  - Also, I really wanted to ride to the causeway and add it to the trip list but I never made it out there and couldn't include it.
- I think this can be used as a resource for future projects and programs and perhaps there could be a sequel? With different destinations or ways to get around (student's bus guide to Burlington?) but mostly I think that this is fully developed.
UVM’s Commitment to Real Food

• What is the Real Food Challenge? / What is real food?
  • Organization founded by student activists in 2007
  • Goal was to shift 20% of university food budgets from industrial farms to community-based, fair, ecologically sound, and humane food sources
  • Criteria for the local / fair / ecologically sound / humane were specifically laid out by the RFC.

• In 2017, UVM met the goal of achieving 20% Real Food in the dining halls. A new goal was set to reach 25% Real Food by 2020.
• Our goal was to find the percentage of Real Food at the UVM bookstore (Catpause and Henderson’s) and to offer alternatives to some of the current products.
Why are the principles of the RFC important?

• Industrial farms often exploit undocumented immigrants; the employees are usually extremely underpaid, do not get benefits, and endure terrible working conditions.

• Supporting companies which obtain food from large industrial farms without addressing labor issues perpetuates the injustices against these workers.

• Industrial farming generally uses excessive pesticides and other environmentally detrimental practices

• Industrial farming may have inhumane conditions for animals

• Often times, large industrial farms are far from the locations in which their products are sold. Packaging and transport of the products is a large contributor to carbon emissions and other pollutants.

• Supporting local farms in the area is good for distributing wealth within a community
How it connect to UVM

- UVM Bookstore, Cat Pause, and Henderson's are very commonly used, as they are in convenient high traffic areas.
- Because these locations are not technically part of UVM dining, they are not accounted for in reaching the goals set by the Real Food Challenge at UVM.
- Switching to Real Food at these locations can make a large impact on the money put towards Real Food.
  - "Vote with your dollar" idea
- Taking the Real Food into account at these locations has the potential to higher the percentage of Real Food at UVM.
- Vermont has many small, local farms, which can benefit from being part of this.
- Promotes justice for farmworkers locally.
Calculating the Real Food Percentage

- Our first step was to obtain and look at the Bookstore inventories for July, October, and February
  - Due to COVID-19 the Davis Center was closed during July, so there were no invoices. As a result, the invoices for October were larger than usual
  - When re-opening, there was an emphasis on stocking the store with local products
- Scanning the invoices and transferring the scans into google drive
- Putting all of the information into an excel spreadsheet
- Going through the products and determining which qualified as Real Food
- Finding some alternative products and suggesting them to the Catpause and Henderson’s managers
Results

• Overall, we found 39.9% Real Food at the bookstore
  • 2016: 31.1% real food
  • The bookstore is spending $17,367 on RFC products compared to $13,722 in 2016
• Distribution:
  • Beverages make up a large number of RFC purchases: Kombucha, Kevita, Starbucks drinks, etc.
  • Overall, about 1/5th of grocery items was real food
• Popular real food products:
  • Monument farms milk, Kevita, Yerba, Kombucha (of all sorts), many VT artisan coffees, and CLIF bars are all popular and match the criteria
Challenges

• The data entry was very time consuming

• Determining whether or not a product qualified in one of the categories of Real Food was difficult for certain items
  • Specifically, this was difficult for some of the smaller vendors that don’t have websites or many accessible ways to see how products are sourced.
Next Steps

- Push for Real Food products in bookstore, discuss products with the managers of Catpause and Henderson’s
- Look for items which meet the criteria for Menus for Change - UVM’s next commitment
- Continuously look for better alternatives for products
- Bulk in Catpause?
- Future change agents can go through the process to keep monitoring the percentage of Real Food/food which counts towards achieving goals set by Menus for Change
Improving Campus Move-Out Program

Julia Grant
How I got here

- Upon research, interest in the concept of a "green move-out"
- Learned about UVM's current moveout program- existing elements of green move out
- Landed on trying to improve the current situation by focusing on a big issue regarding past move outs

**UVM's current system:**

- Donation bins in lobby of every res hall with the categories: food, clothing, and household goods
- Donations are then collected and consolidated by Corey Berman and team; items are sorted as much as possible, and then distributed to various local donation centers (Goodwill, ReStore, Salvation Army, etc.)
The Problem:

Though UVM successfully collects a lot of donations as students are moving out, the sorting and distributing process of these items is challenging, time consuming, and it can be difficult to get donation centers to take the quantity of items we have. Due to lack of storage options, this can result in many donations ending up in the landfill—contrary to the goal of the program.

**GOAL:** Find a way to redistribute donations collected from move-out in a way that minimizes waste and improves overall efficiency.
Path taken

1. Contacted people from Champlain and Saint Mike’s who are involved in either their move-out program or their sustainability office

2. Held a zoom conference call with representatives from all three schools

3. Learned about a great partnership Saint Mike’s has with ReSource that has solved a lot of issues they’ve had in the past with move-outs, get contact info for ReSource point person

4. Video call with representatives from UVM, Champlain, and ReSource, learn about how their organization could help us

5. Form unofficial partnership w/ ReSource and plan for move out program changes to occur as early as this spring!
Problem:

- Not enough help and time to sort all donations to the desired degree of many donation centers
- Difficulty redistributing the large quantity of received donations
- No storage options for left over donations - end up in landfill

ReSource Solution:

- Will take donations with no sorting required
- Will take ALL donations we bring them, prepared for any quantity

Bonus!
- ReSource can take toiletries as well, a category previously not collected for lack of outlet
Additional Info

**Budget/cost:** none

**Audience:** UVM students living on campus

**Stakeholders:** UVM recycling and waste management center, local colleges, local donation centers

**Measurement/success:** See how first move-out using this system goes; more efficient + less waste = success

**Challenges/lessons learned:** Getting email responses, scheduling discussions with many people with different schedules, didn’t expect my project to end up the way it did I ended up spending a good amount of time doing things that I wouldn’t end up needing

**Next steps:** See how first move-out using this system goes, make changes and adjustments as necessary
MWBE Classification and Communication

Nora Looney
Nerida Williams
MWBE Classification: Introduction

• MWBE: Minority/Women-Owned Business Enterprise
  • Qualifications
    • At least 51% unconditionally and directly owned by Women/Veterans/Minorities/Disabled persons who are U.S. citizens
    • Said persons must hold highest officer position in the company
    • Minority = an individual that is at least 25% African American, Asian, Hispanic, or Native American.
    • Must be for-profit enterprise, nonprofit companies do not qualify.
  • Purpose: Promote awareness of the types of businesses UVM is supporting. Bring attention to the underrepresentation of these groups in business.

• 1-3% MWBE is a typical starting point for organizations that haven't made a MWBE commitment. We wanted to see how UVM compares.

• Identification is a first step. Change won't happen automatically, it has to be intentional. Match UVM stated values with actions.
The Process

• Stakeholders
  • Caylin and Marie Bouffard: Purchasing & Contracting Specialist
  • Both Caylin and Marie were immensely helpful in providing us with direction throughout this entire process.

• Research
  • We were presented with 828 companies.
  • We investigated each company and determined whether they fell under the classification of minority/women owned.

• Complications
  • The process included a great deal of uncertainty.
  • Time consuming
The Results

- Found a total of 42 businesses with one or more qualifications
- 76 businesses we were unsure about (9.18%)
- Featured Qualified Vendors
  - JA Morrisey – Vermont local woman owned construction company
  - Yuba Group – woman + minority owned investment service company
  - Zagros Robotics – minority owned robotics company
  - New England Woodcraft – veteran owned wood crafting company
  - Priority One Services Incorporated – minority owned biotechnology company

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Moving Forward

• What we would have done differently:
  • Set a schedule to stay on top of the research process
  • Utilized a different, more accurate approach (ex. Directly reaching out to businesses, requesting self-identification of MWBE)
  • Follow up with Y? And N? Vendors (email or paper mailing)

• Next Steps
  • How to maintain this classification as our vendor list grows
  • Advertising qualified vendors
  • Growing number of qualified vendors
  • Future Eco-Reps passion projects
  • Setting a goal for MWBE spend. Traditionally 20-30% growth will happen in years 1-5 after a commitment is made.