

RUTGERS GREEN TEAMS

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A collective framework to promote widespread participation in sustainability at Rutgers



Background

Rutgers is a large institution with a diverse range of tight knit communities, academic disciplines, departments, and organizations. However, discussions of sustainability and environmental justice only engage with a small population of Rutgers despite being an interdisciplinary issue that is critical for our future.

- Population of nearly 100,000 students, faculty, and staff – the size of a small city, spread out over nearly 10 square miles across the state of New Jersey
- More than 1000 buildings, with 29 million square feet of floor space, 42% over 50 years old
- One of the largest dining/food service operations in higher education
- One of the largest residence hall systems (16,000 beds) in the country
- One of the largest campus bus systems in the US (second largest in New Jersey)

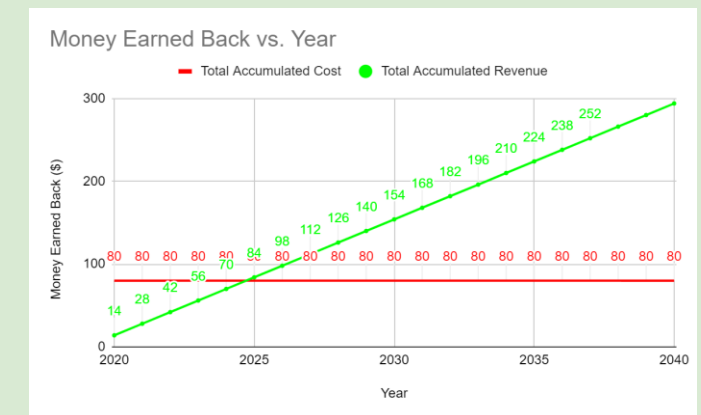
Example Initiatives

- Having different departments integrate sustainability into their academic curriculum
- Educating students early on at new student orientation about the importance of sustainability as a core value of the university
- Move away from Styrofoam and plastic dining hall takeout containers to reusable ones (Dining Hall GT)
- Have Terracycle bins in dorms of Rutgers to reduce waste of hard-to-recycle materials
- Host item swaps or community thrift events to reduce waste disposal



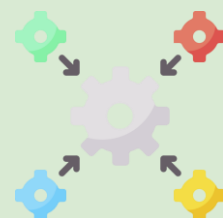
Outcome

- Green Teams can shape sustainability practices at an individual level with long lasting impacts.
- Build channel of communication and mutual skill sharing between students, faculty, staff and Rutgers administration
- Has room to evolve into a bigger framework of incentivizing sustainability by recognizing and rewarding sustainable progress
- Students of Rutgers will be conscious and sustainable changemakers of the future



Solution

Our solution is to provide resources and training for the creation of departmental and organizational Green Teams. These Green Teams would implement cultural and logistical initiatives by communicating with the Climate Task Force. Green Teams encourage students to participate and cultivate a culture of sustainability by integrating actions into existing communities and student networks. We took inspiration from Penn State and their successful Green Team program with over 116 Green Teams that involves all aspects of the university.



Educate

Reduce

Integrate

Orientation, Training and Resources for Green Teams:
Incentivize students, departments, and organizations to create their own Green Teams while facilitating communication with Task Force

A specific potential outcome for the Honors College can make money back in 5 years



- 1 **Climate Task Force works towards Climate Action Plan:** centralized composting, invests in partnership with Terracycle, and communicates with schoolwide departments and organizations
- 2 **Sustainability Education and Community Building:** Sustainability will be integrated into classrooms and clubs, reducing our waste and creating environmentally conscious culture
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