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Adam Amato Emerald

Student employees use these trucks, parked outside the Campus Recycling Center, to collect and transport recyclable materials.

Choose the right bin: recycle

■ Campus Recycling has been working hard for the past decade to save forests and money

By Anne LeChevallier for the Emerald

A newspaper, thrown into a trashcan on 13th Avenue, ends up in a landfill.

But another newspaper, thrown into a nearby recycling bin, will pass across the globe in its path to

becoming a new product.

Karyn Kaplan, the Campus Recycling Program Manager at the University, explained that students and staff who choose to recycle participate in a world-wide effort to conserve natural resources and move toward an economically sustainable future.

Whether or not students and staff regularly choose to recycle, Campus Recycling, the program that handles all recyclable materials, is at least consistent. Like a garbage collector, it does not stop for breaks or summer vacation. Day after day, week after week, student employees cross campus to pour newspapers and other recyclable materials into collection bags. After filling their bags, students dump them in barrels at the EMU collection site.

At the recycling warehouse on Franklin Boulevard, the employees empty trucks of these barrels. Pouring the barrels into large bins, they remove improperly sorted contaminants. Then, they transfer half-ton bins of separated papers weekly to a local processing plant, where the recyclables are sold to a market. Whether the paper stays local or goes overseas, it is re-pulped and manufactured as newspaper, flower pots or other products.

By recycling paper, Campus Recycling conserves forests and creates income, according to Kaplan. She explained that other funds come from a cooperative agreement with the ASUO, the University administration and University Housing. When demand is low, Campus Recycling actually pays companies to take the recyclables. However, because the recycling fee is still less than the cost of sending the materials to the dump, Campus Recycling has saved the University hundreds of thousands of dollars. Thus, a recycler's split-second decision to throw a newspaper into the correct bin made an economic and environmental impact that he or she

probably never realized. Last year, according to statistics compiled by Campus Recycling, such decisions saved the University approximately \$160,000 in waste collection fees.

When the program was founded in 1991, the staff recovered 10 percent of University waste. Eight years later, 10 years and 600 student employees later, Campus Recycling saves 44 percent of University waste from heading to the landfill. Kay Coats, a member of the Environmental Issues Committee, said that the program's recovery rate is restrained by the market. She explained that even if it collects different types of plastics, Campus Recycling must still have a vendor to accept the materials.

Although the statistics show the strides students and staff have made, Kaplan believes they still can improve. Operations Recycling Coordinator Jim Fleck emphasized that students and staff should focus on recycling better. When people do not properly sort recycling, Campus Recycling devotes time and financial resources to keep contaminants out of the wrong bins.

"No matter how noble [recycling] seems," he said, "We still have to pull transparencies off paper."

Kaplan and Fleck agree that people must change their attitudes and behaviors if they want to make an environmental impact. For example, Kaplan says people see a recycling bin as another garbage can. She wants people to help the entire process by purchasing products that have been or can be recycled.

Fleck hopes people are conservative when they produce.

"Don't cut down a tree to make a poster about a conference if you already sent out e-mails," he said. "If you hold this [poster] up to a tree, it doesn't make sense. You can't replace a tree in five years."

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Symposium searches for business solutions

GUEST COMMENTARY

Robyn Scofield

The Sustainable Business Symposium, an ASUO student group, holds a conference every year to provide a unique forum in which business and community leaders can talk about ways to operate with maximum environmental responsibility

and at the same time build profitable businesses.

Business and sustainability

For some people, the words business and sustainability are contradictory, but finding the relationship between these two words may be the key to saving the environment. Mike Russo, a business professor and SBS faculty adviser, said, "Businesses are

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