

# Campus Conservation Nationals 2015 Case Study

## Northwest Missouri State University Maryville, MO

### 1. SCHOOL DEMOGRAPHICS

Public 4-year institution, home to over 2,000 of the 6,720 full time students.



### 2. AUTHOR AFFILIATION

John Viau, Sustainability Coordinator, Facility Services, Advisor to Bearcats Going Green

### 3. COMPETITION TYPE & DATES

Our electricity competition, “Flip The Switch...Reduce Your Paw Print” ran from February 28th through March 20<sup>th</sup>. That is a tough time of year in Northwest Missouri because temperatures vary so greatly, even during a few short weeks. Because we are on a trimester system, we had to choose a time that didn’t overlap with Spring Break and gave students a good chance to participate. We have found that right before a break is a good time to get people’s attention for conservation. Students have already received instructions for preparing their rooms for break, are pretty enthusiastic, and it’s generally a great time to capitalize on the building’s community spirit.

### 4. OVERVIEW

Our competition within the competition tied directly into RHA’s well-established “Deck the Halls” holiday lighting contest. Our competition was called Blackout. With the same idea in mind, each building was challenged to turn out the lights everywhere they could for a two hour period while judges came around to each hall for judging. Because not all buildings have the ability to control common area lighting, the judging was based on residence hall rooms only. The CCN team took a six-passenger golf cart tour of the exterior of the residence halls, taking pictures and counting the number of room lights that were left on. Once a count and photo were taken at every possible vantage point at each facility, the team adjourned to Facility Services where they consulted building plans to make sure the count only reflected student rooms. Our participation ran from a low of 27% (we found out later about the sorority hall’s date dash that night), to 70% in our winning hall. The second place came in at 56%, and third place at 45%. 40% was the average for the rest of the halls.

**5. GOALS**

Our goal is always to make sure that we are providing every student the opportunity to participate in sustainability. We want to show the value of making a difference where and when you can. Financially, we set our sights on saving twice as much as we give away in prizes, or limiting prizes to one half of our total savings. We fell just short of covering our projected \$2K in prizes, but we realized some savings on our bottle fill station prize since pricing has come down quite a bit from just three years ago.

**6. RESULTS**

Overall % reduction (electricity): 19.04%	Average CCN % reduction (electricity): 2.9%
Electricity saved (kWh): 65,706	
Equivalent savings: \$3,942	
Equivalent lbs CO2: 123,593	

**7. GROUP COMPETITION**

Competition name: N/A  
Participating schools: N/A

**8. PLANNING**

**Competition Organizing Team**

Our team was from two student organizations, The Residence Hall Association and Bearcats Going Green. We also had assistance from our Facilities Energy Manager, Director of Residential Life, and the RHA professional Staff Advisors. We met once a week with Bearcats Going Green, and the RHA President.

**Key Supporters**

Our Residence Hall directors, student staff, and support staff were crucial to this program’s success. Facilities management, Auxiliary Services, and even Dining Services made important contributions to getting the word out to students.

**Timeline**

We started organizing in the Fall to establish support in the halls, and make sure Facilities was ready to support the program. Outreach began immediately at the start of Spring semester. We had all publicity and promotions up in the halls by Feb. 14, along with weekly reports and recruiting efforts with RHA building reps and hall councils.

**Funding**

All funding came from the sustainability office, based on ½ of our projected energy savings during the contest. \$1,000 Bottle Fill station for overall winner, \$500 Hall improvement for

1<sup>st</sup> in Blackout, \$300 for 2<sup>nd</sup>, \$200 for 3<sup>rd</sup> to be used for finals/ and end of year events in those Halls. Money very well spent. Support for the residence halls always has a positive return.

### **Resources**

I was able to direct the team to the CCN website, and when we met to figure out our plan, everyone brought something to the table either directly or indirectly as the result of the CCN site.

### **9. OUTCOMES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS - OVERALL**

We consider our participation an overall success for a couple of important reasons:

- The quantifiable savings has resulted, over the past three years, in a continuing investment by the energy program in metering all of our residence halls. We are working on developing control systems in the older residence halls to match those in our newer facilities.
- With close to 40% of our students residing on campus, their willingness to participate in this program emphasizes to Facilities the importance of their inclusion in energy policy and their ability to make a conscious effort to conserve.

### **10. OUTCOMES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS – STUDENT LEADERSHIP**

This program has allowed a group of new students to work with the leadership and advisors of the Residence Hall Association, a fully-funded and long-standing student leadership organization. It has also allowed students a glimpse into the workings of the University Administration, and the opportunity to directly connect with Facilities, University Relations, Student Media, and Auxiliary Services.

### **11. OUTCOMES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS - MARKETING, EDUCATION, & BEHAVIOR CHANGE**

#### **Implementation & Outcomes**

Our marketing campaign consisted of weekly promotions with RHA and Hall Councils, the development of signage for our Blackout program, Posting general CCN and RecycleMania Posters starting at the beginning of the semester, posting electronic signage with links on Residence Life and Aux. Services electronic lobby displays, and distributing our “Flip the Switch” floor signage through RHA hall council reps.

Educationally, students are talking. They are encouraging other students to think about turning on a light the same way they think about printing. “Think before you print...only if you absolutely have to”

#### **Effectiveness**

I believe the best gauge of the effectiveness of this program will be an increased level of participation in the Halls next year, as well as the promotion of building conservation programs throughout the year. Success is recognition of the program and the passing on of that information to new students by our established student leaders.

## **12. CHALLENGES**

Our number one challenge for conservation programs is always recognition/participation. There are always so many levels of and avenues for buy-in with a diverse campus community. Hall pride is a great boost, but can also work against you when there are issues within that community. Maintaining the cool factor, and appealing to the values and interests of established student leaders.

## **13. WISDOM & GUIDANCE**

Know your audience, and most importantly know how much time your volunteer organizations really have to contribute. Getting financial support is much easier when you have a sound estimate for potential savings going in. We try to get the best prizes we can for half of the savings returned. Make sure the prizes make sense for the students and facilities. (Bottle fill stations, Hall Improvements, Building-Wide Community Builders)

## **14. CONTACT**

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*\*Open to being contacted by other schools for questions and further information*

## **15. SUSTAINABILITY AT NORTHWEST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY**

Operationally, Northwest must maximize resource outcomes across all operations to ensure that allocated resources best serve our mission. Through careful planning and communication we will economize without compromising the ability to change and adapt to future challenges. As a leader in the community, region, and nation we are obligated to operate in an economically, socially, and environmentally responsible way. Taking every opportunity to innovate and educate, Northwest will work to incorporate “Green” learning across all disciplines through student engagement and community outreach. As we address the myriad sustainability issues facing Higher Education today, we will work to ensure current environmental practices permit Northwest to seek “Green Development” funding and do not impede its ability to comply with current or future regulatory or funding requirements.

<http://www.nwmissouri.edu/services/sustainability/index.htm>

16. POSTERS, PHOTOS & VIDEOS

# BLACKOUT NIGHT



## Wednesday March 18th 7-9 PM



WHAT WILL YOU DO FOR AN HOUR IN THE DARK 😊



Americans use a plastic shopping

The Wall Street Journal

**“REDUC  
PAW P**

Less than 5 per  
bags are recycl

Environmental Protection Agency.

