

# Campus Conservation Nationals 2015 Case Study

## St. Edward's University Austin, TX

### 1. SCHOOL DEMOGRAPHICS

Private, 4-year institution, 4,686 students (3,587 undergraduates)

### 2. AUTHOR AFFILIATION

Cristina Bordin, Chief of Staff, Liaison to the Board of Trustees and Sustainability Coordinator, Eliza Worrick, Administrative Coordinator, Office of the President



### 3. COMPETITION TYPE & DATES

Competition type: electricity

When: February 3-24, 2015

Timing: It seemed like an appropriate two weeks because it fell before spring break and during a busy time of the semester when a lot of students, staff, and faculty would likely be on campus.

### 4. OVERVIEW

The St. Edward's University campus benefitted from the competition in that it represented to the community what we were capable of by coming together to reduce our energy consumption. It showed us that small steps really do add up to a huge difference, and that this kind of reduction is important for us and for the Austin community at large. Together we saved 42,604.20 kWh, with 10 participating buildings (five academic and five residential). We weren't able to quantify the number of individuals who participated, but through our outreach events we got almost 250 people to sign the Green Pledge to commit to taking actions towards reducing energy consumption in their buildings. With 10 buildings total, we imagine the exact number to be significantly larger than 250. A highlight of our outreach/behavior change campaign included our launch event on the first day of the competition, which engaged students, staff, faculty, the Facilities Department, and our catering department. The signing of the Green Pledge was a major part of this and subsequent events. Another highlight was our posters and other signage, as we worked with our Marketing team to produce some high-quality, eye-catching materials.

**5. GOALS**

- Campus-wide energy reduction goal: 5%
- Increase awareness of energy use habits and reduction among students, faculty, and staff
- Create a stronger sense that our community is doing what’s right for the environment

**6. RESULTS**

Overall % reduction (electricity): 7.4%	Average CCN % reduction (electricity): 2.9%
Electricity saved (kWh): 42,604.2	
Equivalent savings: \$4,260.40	
Equivalent lbs CO2: 62,713.3	

**7. GROUP COMPETITION**

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

**8. PLANNING**

**Competition Organizing Team**

Our Competition Organizing Team (COT) was a blend of students, staff, and faculty members with various sustainability backgrounds. The major players were as follows:

- Cristina Bordin, Chief of Staff, Liaison to the Board of Trustees and Sustainability Coordinator
- Eliza Worrick, Administrative Coordinator, Office of the President
- Christine Lacayo, Sustainability Graduate Assistant
- Mike Peterson, Associate Vice President, Facilities

The COT mainly touched base via email, but Cristina, Eliza, and Christine met face-to-face several times throughout the competition planning period to assign tasks and work out details. We also had a team of student and staff meter readers eight times during the competition period and four times during the baseline period:

- Mike Peterson, Associate Vice President, Facilities
- Christine Lacayo, Sustainability Graduate Assistant
- Erica Joelson, Professional Science Master’s in Environmental Management and Sustainability Program (MSEM) Graduate Student
- Jeremiah Andrew Wetherby, MSEM Graduate Student

The organizing team worked really well due to its small size. Members volunteered to be on the committee. We will not make changes next year because the system/team we had this year worked well.

### **Key Supporters**

- Deans, Resident Advisors, and Department Heads of participating buildings
  - *These folks helped spread the word to their building residents in order to bring awareness to the event before, during, and after the competition.*
- Student Volunteers
  - *These five or so students were present at brainstorming sessions and on campus events to help spread awareness and generate ideas from the student perspective.*
- Bon Appétit Management Company
  - *Their team graciously donated coffee, tea, and lightning bolt-shaped cookies for our launch event, adding extra incentive for people to stop by and learn about the competition.*
- Nicki Clark, Graphic Designer
  - *Nicki assisted us in the design and implementation of our posters, graphics, and other marketing materials.*
- Angel Tazzer, Faculty Support Manager, Instructional Technology
  - *Angel assisted us in getting the Green Pledge online and ready for folks to sign at our events.*

### **Timeline**

The university had already formed its COT before signing the CCN letter of commitment in early October. As soon the commitment was signed, we started ramping up the planning process in mid-November by writing communications to the deans and heads of the participating buildings, deciding when the baseline and competition periods would take place. Our marketing and promotion brainstorming session was held on November 19<sup>th</sup> with a small group of students. It was during this meeting that we discussed competition logos, names, taglines, theme songs, and prizes. Around that same time, we created our BuildingOS account and began familiarizing ourselves with the interface. Mike Peterson, Cristina Bordin and Eliza Worrick were the only ones with access to the account. By the end of December, all meters were online. In early January, Marketing presented us with the materials they had come up with and we chose the logos and posters we felt met our needs most. In mid-January, we began searching for t-shirt vendors in order to have giveaway items at the launch event on February 3<sup>rd</sup>. Beginning on January 20<sup>th</sup>, we began posting blogs and announcements on our sustainability website and in our campus e-newsletters letting people know about the competition and how they could

participate. Towards the end of January, we signed on our meter reading volunteers and presented them with a meter reading guide that we prepared throughout the same month.

### **Funding**

- T-shirts: \$800 (Grant from local grocery store chain)
- Cookie Cutters for Launch Event: \$10 (Department funds)
- Water Bottle Filling Station: \$1,600 (funds from Students for Sustainability, Facilities Department and President's Office/Office of Sustainability)

The t-shirts were a major success as were the cookies. Having a prize that will not only benefit everyone in the building but promote sustainability as well was considered to be a better choice than a party or individual prizes. We might do the same prize next year.

### **Resources**

- Data Collection Guide: *helpful in allowing us to create our own that was specific to our university's meters*
- Behavior Change Guide: *helpful in the brainstorming process for our marketing plan. Screenshots of BuildingOS and other university examples were particularly helpful.*
- Competition Planning Guide: *helpful in planning our timeline and overall process*
- CCN Website: *extremely helpful in providing examples of competitions past, CCN logos, and other helpful materials that we could access quickly and easily.*

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

- We exceeded our 5% goal by 2% with a 7.4% overall reduction across the 10 participating buildings. The mean reduction rate for last year's CCN participants nationwide was 4.5%, so we exceeded that as well. We felt that this was our greatest accomplishment for the 2015 competition, especially considering that it was our first time hosting a CCN competition!
- The St. Edward's community is more aware of the small steps it takes to yield big results in energy usage reduction. We feel that through our awareness events, marketing materials, and the Green Pledge, we were able to educate students, staff, and faculty about our collective power and responsibility.
- The prize was a good incentive. It is unique and something that every building wanted.

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

- Event planning skills
- Skills from creating a promotional campaign

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

### Implementation & Outcomes

- Competition Name: Turn Off For Watt
- Tagline: Lights Out for a Greener Hilltop!
- Prize: Water bottle refilling station for building with the highest overall reduction in energy use
- We encouraged students to visit Building Blocks by setting up a page on our website where they could view them and announcing the page on our blog and e-newsletters. We also promoted it on Facebook and personalized emails to the competing buildings.
- Events:
  - Launch Party: Green pledge, lightning bolt-shaped cookies (donated by Bon Appetit, our campus caterer), free t-shirts promoting the competition given out for signing the Green Pledge. This was our most successful event in terms of the buzz it generated, the high attendance, and the number of people who signed the Green Pledge.
  - Mid-competition energy reduction awareness event: interactive demos, eco-snacks, more shirts in exchange for signing the Green Pledge
- We did not tie this in with other events or involve the local community.

### Effectiveness

N/A

## 12. CHALLENGES

- Not understanding how the baseline worked
- Lack of communication with Facilities personnel to not make any changes to the buildings during the competition. But if there's a problem, how can they avoid fixing it? And if we fix it, will the results be skewed? This is something that we need to be better educated on.
- Lack of interest from some of the people who could participate

## 13. WISDOM & GUIDANCE

- Start planning early and secure your planning team as soon as possible.
- Make use of the CCN tools, templates, and resources.
- Rely on students to come up with tag lines, songs, logos that resonate with them. They are so creative!
- Consistent and constant messaging. Informal meetings relying on personal relationships to gain support also helped.

#### **14. CONTACT**

Cristina Bordin, Chief of Staff, Liaison to the Board of Trustees and Sustainability Coordinator  
512-464-8893

[cristinb@stedwards.edu](mailto:cristinb@stedwards.edu)

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

#### **15. SUSTAINABILITY AT ST. EDWARD'S UNIVERSITY**

St. Edward's recognizes its role in educating the university community about the importance of both individual and institutional environmental responsibility. It also recognizes its responsibility for implementing initiatives towards making a more sustainable and greener campus. From constructing green buildings, to reusing and reducing resources on campus, to offering robust academic programs for sustainability-minded students, St. Edward's consistently demonstrates its commitment to the environment. You can also find our timeline and sustainability campus map here with most significant efforts to date:

[http://think.stedwards.edu/sustainability/sites/think.stedwards.edu.sustainability/files/14-PRES-0210\\_SustainabilityTimeline.pdf](http://think.stedwards.edu/sustainability/sites/think.stedwards.edu.sustainability/files/14-PRES-0210_SustainabilityTimeline.pdf)

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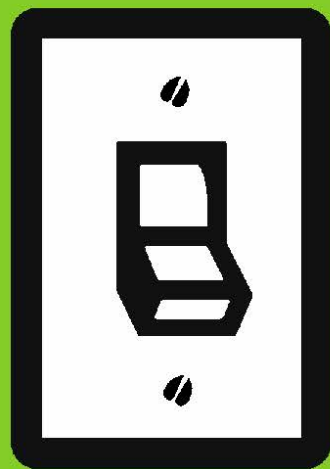
[http://think.stedwards.edu/sustainability/sites/think.stedwards.edu.sustainability/files/13-PRES-0192\\_sustainability\\_map.pdf](http://think.stedwards.edu/sustainability/sites/think.stedwards.edu.sustainability/files/13-PRES-0192_sustainability_map.pdf)

Sustainability Website: <http://think.stedwards.edu/sustainability/>

#### **16. POSTERS, PHOTOS & VIDEOS**

Launch Party video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZfmKH5vdVKM>

# TURN ⚡ OFF



# FOR WATT

Lights out for a greener hilltop

On February 3-24, 2015, St. Edward's University will participate in Campus Conservation Nationals (CCN), the largest electricity reduction competition for colleges and universities around the world.

Learn more at [think.stedwards.edu/sustainability](http://think.stedwards.edu/sustainability)

## LAUNCH PARTY!

Tuesday, February 3, 12:30-1:30

Hunt Hall Cafeteria

Free cookies and coffee

Sign the pledge and get a free t-shirt!



Students for Sustainability



**TURN ⚡ OFF**  
 **FOR**  
**WATT**

Lights out for  
a greener hilltop





Lights out for

a greener hilltop

## Green Pledge

Turn Off for Watt?! For a greener hilltop! Together, we can make huge leaps in reducing electrical usage to make a healthier and more sustainable environment.

**Sign it and get a competition t-shirt!**

I pledge that I will save electricity whenever possible and will not waste limited resources by:

- Unplugging electronics such as laptops, cell phone chargers, and televisions when not in use
- Turning off my computer, TV, PCs, monitors, printers, copiers, and coffee pots when not in use
- Printing double-sided
- Washing only full loads of laundry using cold water
- Turning off any lights not being used and using natural light whenever possible
- Taking the stairs rather than using elevator



Lights out for

a greener hilltop

## Energy Reduction Tips

Now that it's time to "Turn Off For Watt" and reduce our energy consumption for a greener Hilltop, you may be wondering what you can do to participate. Here are some tips to help you reduce energy consumption in your building.

- Unplug electronics such as laptops, cell phone chargers, and televisions when not in use to avoid phantom energy use
- Turn off PCs, monitors, printers, copiers, and coffee pots when not in use or make use of "sleep mode" when possible
- Print double-sided
- Wash only full loads of laundry using cold water
- Turn off any lights not being used and use natural light whenever possible
- Take the stairs rather than the elevator
- Look for Energy Star rated PCs, monitors, and printers
- Use ink-jet printers, which consume less energy than laser ones
- Wear layers instead of using a personal space heater
- Close window shades in cold weather to insulate and open during the day to make it warmer

**For more information on the competition, please visit  
[think.stedwards.edu/sustainability](http://think.stedwards.edu/sustainability)**