

Pomona College, Claremont, California

Campus Conservation Nationals 2014 Case Study



WHAT TYPE OF COMPETITION DID YOU DO?

Both electricity and water

DID YOU PARTICIPATE IN A GROUP COMPETITION?

Competing against the Claremont Colleges undergraduate schools: Harvey Mudd College, Pitzer College, Scripps College, Claremont McKenna, & Pomona College

SCHOOL

Pomona College is a private, liberal arts 4-year college of 1,600 students in Claremont, California in far-east L.A. County.

ABSTRACT

The Claremont Colleges Campus Conservation Nationals 2014 campaign was titled “Power Down/ Get Water Wise”. Pomona College had 14 residence halls competing, with 20% of the student body and 4% of faculty/staff pledged to participate. The entire Claremont Colleges competition had 930 community members who pledged participation. Pomona placed in the top five colleges nationwide in water reduction, saving 65,904 gallons, or 5.4% over a baseline measure, and 1.4% overall in electricity. Within the Pomona campus, Lyon Court won both categories of the dorm competition by reducing water use 15.4% and energy use 6.2%.

GOALS AND OUTCOMES

Goals

Our goals for the competition period were twofold: to see energy and water savings in the ballpark of a 6% reduction, and to educate the campus in the meantime on tips to conserve energy and water in ways that would promote lifestyle changes in the long run.

Accomplishments and Outcomes

It was encouraging to end up as a top five national water reducer. We also had a lot of positive feedback about the GIFs we emailed from the CCN resources. Students really liked those and feedback on who was in the lead each day.

Challenges and Responses

We found our overall energy savings to be rather disappointing. Factors were compounded by our baseline period being measured two weeks prior to the competition, with the heat ramping up outside during the competition, and buildings with A/C seeing a dramatic jump in energy use. Keeping the campus engaged was challenging, but visual cues and graphs placed in dining halls and daily email gifs were great ways to keep momentum up for three long weeks. Fatigue was a big challenge. Students also felt disengaged from being able to control the HVAC systems in their residence halls. Next year we’d like to work more with Facilities to see if A/C can be reset to different set points and scheduling during the competition.

Commentary and Reflection

We would like to focus on having whole building electricity and gas reductions be involved in the competition – lowering the A/C set points, hot water, etc. We also would like to ramp up our feedback to the individuals in dorms and work actively with EcoReps to boost participation rates and energy around the competition. Closer connections with Residence Hall Staff will be an improvement for next year.

ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

Leaders and Supporters

Our core organizing team consisted of our Sustainability Director, Energy Manager, EcoReps, and other students serving in Dorm Captain positions. We had a biweekly planning meeting that was Claremont Colleges wide that had attendance from Communications Offices and faculty as well as the core teams from each campus. This collaboration was very helpful and supportive.

Funding and Resources

We had the necessary financial support, although it wasn't from a specific budget solely for the CCN competition. It was pieced together from the Sustainability Integration Office event budget and different supporting student club budgets. It involved funding for Power Down t-shirts for the core organizing team, giveaways at tabling booths at the Dining Halls, and 3 large events that were hosted as part of Power Down. Printing and office supplies were all part of the Sustainability Integration Office operating budget.

Education and Community Outreach

We called our competition Power Down/ Get Water Wise. We put up posters in residence halls and at the campus center with daily updates on the top three reducing residence halls. We did daily emails with a tip, top 3 reducers, and a CCN GIF. We offered an ice cream sundae party to the winning dorm and the Green Cup to the winning Claremont college.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Contacts

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MORE ABOUT YOUR SCHOOL

Campus Sustainability History

Sustainability at Pomona has been institutionalized since 2003 and the Sustainability Integration Office has an eight year history. Many infrastructural improvements, educational campaigns, and living learning opportunities have occurred in these years. Read more at www.pomona.edu/sustainability.