

New student sustainability group poised to grow

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Being part of a new venture can be very exciting and rewarding, especially when you're committed to the cause. For a group of students inspired to make the Syracuse University campus and the world more eco-friendly, their time and energy spent throughout the fall have them geared up to grow their organization this semester.

Eco-Reps at Syracuse University is a relatively new student group seeking to increase sustainability and environmental consciousness across campus. Zach Goldberg, sophomore in *The College of Arts and Sciences*, started the group last March under the guidance of SU's Sustainability Division. Eco-Reps became a Division of Student Affairs-recognized student organization shortly after the fall semester began.

"We started the semester by mainly focusing on getting our name out there," says Goldberg. "We pushed our Facebook page, got email sign-ups and started to look into ways to get more members involved."

Eco-Reps currently has 12 core members plus other involved students. Its membership includes students from many of SU's academic schools and colleges. They feel that this diverse representation brings lots of valuable ideas, skills and connections to the group, which will help boost future outreach and awareness efforts.

"We're looking forward to making a big splash with member recruiting and promoting sustainability on campus this semester," says Goldberg. "We'll be creating fun events that are inviting so students can easily get involved and make a difference. Look for us to hold a documentary screening, promote campuswide recycling and staff a table in Schine Student Center for new member recruiting."

The group's many plans for the upcoming semester can be credited to all of their hard work throughout the fall. They held short, regular weekly meetings—usually around 30-40 minutes each—without expecting students to attend every week. This flexibility gave interested students more opportunities to get involved, and allowed members to keep projects moving forward. Eco-Reps also benefited from a mid-semester merger with the TWIST student sustainability club, which launched during the fall 2011 semester under the name SU Sustainability Club.

"As the Eco-Reps became more established as a group, they also found time to get involved in campus events," says Melissa Cadwell, marketing manager for SU's Sustainability Division and the Eco-Reps' professional staff advisor. "They did new member recruiting at the Apple Fest event and at Bill McKibben's University Lecture, and ran a water taste test station at our sustainability carnival in November for freshman VPA students."

Eco-Reps started up its regular weekly meeting schedule this semester, with its first meeting held on Jan. 16 in Hall of Languages 201. Weekly meetings will continue at this location every Wednesday at 7 p.m. through the spring semester.

For more information on Eco-Reps at Syracuse University, and on joining the organization, visit the group's Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/EcoRepsAtSyracuseUniversity?fref=pb> or email them at suecoreps@gmail.com.