

SU Begins 2018 RecycleMania Collegiate Recycling Competition

Friday, February 2, 2018, *By News Staff*



Beginning on Sunday, Feb. 4, the Syracuse University community will participate in RecycleMania, the eight-week national recycling and waste reduction competition with colleges across the United States and Canada. In the spirit of the competition and to improve the University's overall recycling efforts, Sustainability Management will have a Spin the Wheel event, "To Recycle or Not to Recycle," on Feb. 14 in the Schine Student Center atrium from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The first 120 participants to test their recycling knowledge will receive a cookie for playing the game. A second event called "Trash or Not" will be held on Feb. 28 in the Schine atrium.

Syracuse University has placed high against other Atlantic Coast Conference schools during the past few years. Last year just three ACC schools (Boston College, University of Louisville and the University of Pittsburgh) outperformed Syracuse in their waste reduction efforts.

"With the University community's help, not only will we beat out our fierce competition, but we also have the opportunity to win the competition for 2018," says Melissa Cadwell, sustainability coordinator of Sustainability Management. "Syracuse University could very easily increase in the national ranking, while continuing to improve recycling efforts on campus."

The University community could improve its rankings or even take first place specifically for Total Recycling, Per Capita and Organics. Last year nationally only 11 colleges and universities out-recycled Syracuse University for Total Recycling.

This year the University will compete in the Classic Tournament, which involves three main categories: Stephan K Gaski Per Capita Classic, Diversion (formally Grand Champion) and Food Organics, all based on the weight of recyclables, trash and food organics. The University will submit actual weights, collected each week by the University's Sustainability Management unit, to be ranked against the other competing schools. The competition runs through April 4, and the results will be announced April 16.

In last year's competition, Syracuse University ranked 12th in the Bragging Rights Category for Total Recycling against 214 competing schools with 901,280 pounds of recyclables. Out of the New York State colleges and universities, Syracuse University ranked first out of 19 participating in this category. This category recognizes schools with the highest gross tonnage of combined paper, cardboard, and bottles and cans.

The Stephan K Gaski Per Capita Classic measures the weight of recyclables divided by the campus population. Last year, with 23.78 pounds recycled per person, the University ranked 31st in the country out of 245 colleges and universities. In New York State, Syracuse University ranked second out of the 19 participating schools.

In 2017 in the Diversion Category, with a recycling rate of 47.1 percent, Syracuse University ranked 52 out of 190 colleges and universities that participated nationally and third out of the 18 in New York State. This category combines trash, recyclables and food organics to determine the schools recycling rate as a percentage of overall waste.

The University also competes in the Food Organics category, last year coming in 32nd place out of 134 colleges and universities with 9.886 pounds of organics per capita sent to the Onondaga Country Resource Recovery's Compost site.

Last year's RecycleMania featured 320 schools participating from 46 states in the United States and Canada. More than 4.1 million students and staff recycled and composted 69.9 million pounds of recyclables and food organics.

The University complies with the Onondaga County Source Separation Law and has on-campus recycling bins for mandatory recyclables, such as paper, cardboard and cans/bottles. SU also recycles specialized items, including batteries, electronics, polystyrene cold shipping boxes, fluorescent light bulbs, scrap metal, compostable yard waste and construction debris. In addition, the University's dining centers compost pre- and post-consumer scraps and donate leftover food to the *SU/ESF Food Recovery Network*, a student movement that uses donated leftovers to reduce food waste while feeding those in need.

Sustainability Management can provide further information on sustainability and recycling efforts. Visit the *SU Sustainability website*, follow @SustainableSU on Twitter and Instagram, and check out the *Syracuse University Sustainability* Facebook page.

To learn more about RecycleMania, visit <http://recyclemania.org/>.