

4. Education and Awareness – How to Get the Word Out!

If your goal is to educate the campus community about plastics reduction and recycling, please review the following tips when developing your action plan:

- Start with easy ways to reduce plastic usage and easy ways to recycle plastic trash. Then introduce more intensive level actions.
- Highlight the impacts of plastic pollution to wildlife and humans. You never know what is going to make an impression and what will encourage people to act.
- Bring It Home - Where is your closest river or other body of water? Plastic and other pollution sometimes ends up in our freshwater and marine systems. It's important to discard trash responsibly and recycle when possible. Create a map to the nearest pond, lake, river, or sea coast. Then post it on campus and title it "This is where your trash could end up. Recycle and discard your trash responsibly."



Rice University, Texas

- Know your audience and how they stay in the loop:
 - Email
 - Campus websites and calendars
 - Facebook
 - Instagram
 - Twitter
 - WhatsApp
 - TikTok
 - Posters in student unions
 - Campus newspaper
 - Sidewalk-chalking
 - Fliers in bathrooms
 - Table tents
 - Student orientation packets
 - Regular student bulletins

Artist Quinn Forrester-Wamsley, 2018 Endangered Species Day College Student Art Contest



Syracuse University, New York

- Ensure your communications are:
 - Simple and straightforward
 - Fun
 - Creative
 - Include engagement opportunities
 - Include information on how to learn more and ask questions
- Develop an education, communication and recognition plan in coordination with the marketing/communications department and/or the arts department to help with the creativity and visuals!
- Make a list of campus groups that might be interested in getting involved:
 - Incoming freshmen (share this guide with freshmen centers and student activities for freshmen orientation and/or freshmen 101 classes)
 - Dorm residents (share this guide with housing and residence life and resident advisors [RAs])
 - Student government
 - Environmentally related clubs
 - Dining facilities





IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION

A college and university waste
reduction and recycling competition

The bad news...



Globally, only **9%** of
**recyclable plastic is
actually recycled**

(National Geographic)

Trash kills wildlife >

It's estimated that
ingestion of plastic kills
1 million marine birds
and 100,000 marine
animals each year

(One Green Planet)



Trash harms habitat >

5.25 trillion plastic
particles in the ocean
from food and beverage
containers, microbeads
from personal care items,
etc.

(One Green Planet)



The good news...

In 2019, RecycleMania campuses:



Cut out **300 million** single-
use plastic containers

Recycled and
composted **69.5
million pounds** of
waste



Prevented the release of
**99,254 metric tons of
carbon** dioxide equivalent
(MTCO₂E) into the
atmosphere, equivalent to
preventing annual emissions
from **20,895 cars**



Make the connection to wildlife and habitat -
Highlight the harmful impacts that plastics and other trash can have on the natural environment,
and how campus actions to reduce waste and increase recycling can make a difference.