



# UVM Eco-Reps Annual Report 2023-2024



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# ABOUT US

UVM Eco-Reps are student leaders who offer education and outreach about campus sustainability to their peers.

The UVM Eco-Reps Program is one of the oldest and most well-respected Eco-Reps programs in the country. It began in 2004 as a pilot project to connect the overarching environmental commitment of the institution with individual student behavior and campus culture. Today the program is a partnership between Residential Life, which pays the wages of the Eco-Reps, and the Office of Sustainability, whose staff runs the program.

The Eco-Rep approach draws from the idea that sustainable behavioral change is most effective when it involves direct contact with people and is carried out at the community level. The community level that Eco-Reps focuses on is the residential student population.

The individual choices that the ~5,000 on-campus students make each day add up to a big collective impact! Campus residents are usually first or second year students who are learning how to live on their own for the first time. Major life events are the time people are most likely to change their behaviors, and the habits people adopt in their first years on campus can stick with them for a lifetime!

UVM has many transportation, food and waste programs that make it easy for students to build more sustainable lifestyles. Eco-Reps help communicate these programs and encourage participation in them along with other environmentally responsible behaviors. This can help to improve sustainability outcomes and possibly result in financial savings from resource conservation and efficiency. Organized education and outreach efforts also build a culture of sustainability, which 76.5% of UVM students agreed the campus has (2022 survey).

# DEFINITIONS

The Eco-Reps are divided into three teams for the year: Food, Waste and Transportation. Each team is led by a student **Team Lead** and a staff **Topic Lead** who is the campus expert in that topic.

Each team has a **\$1000 budget** for the year to organize outreach, events and initiatives that pertain to their topic.

This report measures our engagement as one of our impact metrics. **Engagement** is any level of interaction between Eco-Reps and our target audience, whether direct or indirect.

**Direct engagement** indicates an interaction that an Eco-Rep self determined and reported was meaningful. These interactions feel productive and like they could have a lasting impact. Examples of this include students asking questions or making comments, engaging in an educational game or challenge, making a pledge, or completing a survey.

**Indirect engagement** indicates someone was exposed to Eco-Reps but did not have a direct interaction. Examples include viewing a social media post or attending a large event where Eco-Reps are present but not the focus.



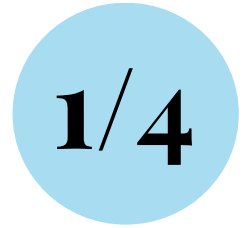
# EXPERIENCE

## What Eco-Reps Say

Our end-of-year survey showed that Eco-Reps perceived this year as a success and had valuable experiences in the program.

### 100% OF ECO-REPS AGREE:

- Eco-Reps make a difference on campus
- They felt empowered to carry out events creatively and effectively
- They are better at event planning, marketing, teamwork, and communication as a result of the program
- They gained a better understand campus sustainability initiatives



of full team meetings focused on climate justice topics

“I think the dividing into topic teams was really successful. It allowed people to focus on topics they were interested in. The education on environmental issues is also very helpful because it allows Eco-Reps to be more informed and knowledgeable about topics they might otherwise not know much about.”—Eco-Rep

## Professional Development

Eco-Reps attended the Alumni Career Panel and heard advice from three former Eco-Reps

Five Eco-Reps attended the Sustainability Student Leaders Symposium in Boston, MA

# OUR REACH

From the 36+ events Eco-Reps hosted...

**OVERALL ENGAGEMENT: 3,783**

Direct: 2,049 | Indirect: 1,734



**3,809** lbs  
of compost  
collected by  
ebike/EV

**33,970**  
meals  
served in  
EcoWare

**231**  
students joined  
rideshare  
board

## ALIGNMENT

- 75% of Learning Communities served by Eco-Rep residents
- Our topic teams align with UVM's Comprehensive Sustainability Plan

## MEDIA

- 1,877 people are subscribed to our monthly newsletter
- Gained 92 Instagram followers for a total of 1,746

# Transportation Team

## 389 ENGAGEMENTS

The goal of this team was to promote sustainable transportation options available around Burlington and encourage the student population to think about the ways in which transportation impacts humans and the environment.

“I really enjoyed everyone I worked with and had a good time on this team.” – Transportation Team Eco-Rep

### Fall Highlight Lock N Learn

This event was an educational seminar that taught students and employees about bike safety in Burlington. With the support of Local Motion, both bike lights and U-locks were given away to more than 80 students after the presentation.



### Spring Highlight Winter Bike to Work Day

This event promoted commuting to campus by bike. Participants could enter a raffle and enjoy a free breakfast. The event celebrates bike commuters, especially those biking through winter, builds community among them, highlights the new UVM Bikes! location and services, and provides an extra incentive for commuters to try biking.

# Food Team

## 531 ENGAGEMENTS

Our team focused on preventing food waste on campus, supported efforts to reduce student food insecurity, and helped educate students about local and sustainable food choices. Eco-Reps worked with UVM Dining to help develop campus-wide solutions to increase student utilization of waste-reduction programs.

"Everyone is really nice and helpful on the team, and I like that it is a small team because it makes it easier to coordinate events and get to know everyone." — Food Team Eco-Rep

### Fall Highlight

#### Weigh the Waste

We led the Weigh the Waste campaign at Redstone Dining Hall to collect and weigh plate waste generated at dinner over four days. The goal of the event was to educate students about the impacts of food waste, and how they can minimize the amount of waste they are generating by only taking the food they will eat.



### Spring Highlight

#### Eco Fair

We collaborated with the UVM Greenhouse to plan an event for Eco Fair where students could plant their own herb start in a recycled container. Students were able to plant basil, dill, or cilantro, and we prepared recipe cards and care instructions for each herb. We also collaborated with the transportation team for the Bike to Breakfast event where we featured our beloved smoothie bike!





# Waste Team

## 191 ENGAGEMENTS

Our team focused on how to divert waste around campus and bolster participation in composting in residence halls. We collected data on campus wide sustainable waste habits so we can strengthen the program where it is needed. At meetings we discussed ways to reach people via social media to promote sustainable waste habits.

“Everyone had so many different ideas for projects our team could engage in this year and with hard work and organization they brought their ideas to life!” – Waste Team Eco-Rep

### Fall Highlight Waste Survey

We gathered data on waste sorting habits and how we can improve our program. We found the majority of the waste is generated at Howe and the Davis Center and 83% of participants reporting that paper was their biggest source of waste. On average, respondents rated UVM’s compost and recycling programs 4/5!



### Spring Highlight Compost Team

Our compost team this year has never been so busy! This year Eco-Reps waste team piloted a program to put composting bins in the upper halls of MAT, Mercy, and McAuley residential halls. With the electric bike Scrappy, the team reported collecting 200 lbs of compost in one route! Members of the bike team report the most compost is generated at U Heights North.

# EARTH WEEK

>1,500 ENGAGEMENTS

While some teams organized their own smaller events during Earth Week, all three topic teams combined their interests to bring you one big event: **Eco Fair!**

This fair focused on waste, transportation and food, providing sustainability information and resources at interactive tables including a repair café with mending, darning and bike repair demos. Awesome giveaways included bike helmets, herb starts and stickers.



CSWD engaged students with their prize wheel



Local artist StreetFairy with her upcycled streetwear brand



Students with herb starts from the Food Team



## Eco-Anxiety Walk n Talk

Eco-Rep Klara Whalley hosted a pilot event that discusses eco-anxiety while connecting students with nature in Centennial Woods.

# ECO-REPS TEAM

## WASTE TEAM

**Corey Berman**

*Erika Seaman*

*Cy Stavros*

*Emily Eisenman*

*Kellie Brunner*

*Jada Fleiss*

*Maeve Dewey*

*Sarah O'Leary*

*Klara Whalley*

## FOOD TEAM

**Nicole Reilly**

*Grace Kaufman*

*Bella Scholl*

*Margo Jackson*

*Caitlin Derby*

*Isabella Loconte*

## PROGRAM COORDINATORS

**Caylin McCamp**

*Angelica Golbin*

## TRANSPORTATION TEAM

**Abby Bleything**

*Alex Harrop*

*William Crozier*

*Amelia Schwarz*

*Josslin Muto*

*Alannah Fleming*





UVM Eco-Reps  
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