

Office of Sustainability @ Orientation 2021

Each year the Office of Sustainability reaches out to as many incoming students as possible to teach them about Tufts sustainability commitments, sustainable waste management practices at Tufts, sustainable commuting options and related topics. In addition, we manage the diversion of recyclables and organic waste from the waste stream during Move-In and Zero Waste Events. This orientation season allowed for a lot more in-person events than we had in 2020 and we either had direct interaction or sent virtual resources to incoming students in all programs at Tufts. Here is a summary of our accomplishments this year:

Live presentations (Zoom or in-person) to:

1. New faculty and staff – Around 40 faculty and 120 staff
2. Cummings School programs: DVM, MCM, MAPP, MS-IDGH – Estimated 160 students
3. Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences – Around 50 students
4. Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning – Presented to 20 students
5. Sustainability and Environmental Programs Open House – 17 first year students
6. FIT Fair – Estimated 100 first year students
7. CREATE pre-orientation group– 97 first year students
8. FOCUS pre-orientation group– 40 first year students

TOTAL: 484 students, 160 employees

Programs that received our virtual resources and videos:

1. Dental School
2. Master's in Biomedical Sciences
3. Friedman School
4. Graduate School of Arts, Sciences, and Engineering
5. Fletcher School
6. Ex-College
7. All first-year students
8. All new RAs on the Medford campus
9. SQUAD pre-orientation group
10. TWO pre-orientation group

Students that met us during tabling events:

1. MD
2. MPH
3. Graduate School of Engineering
4. First year students' scavenger hunt

5. First year students outside Campus Center
6. First year students' A Cappella Show

Social media, newsletter, and online resources

Our websites and social media channels were sent out to students in most of the above programs. From this type of outreach, as well as other orientation events, we saw:

- 78 new Instagram followers between early August and mid-September
- 308 new monthly newsletter subscribers between early August and mid-September
- 241 hits on go.tufts.edu/ecomap webpage between 8/21 – 9/13
- 72 Hits on go.tufts.edu/oosnewsletter webpage between 8/21 - 9/13
- Advertised the [Tufts Student Sustainability Training](#) as well as a brief [Recycling Training](#). These trainings each had around 45 students participate during Orientation season.

WASTE DIVERSION 2021

The Recycling Team coordinated waste diversion for move-in and a handful of food events. We hired 21 on-call workers to act as the Recycling Team during move-in and orientation zero waste events. Collectively, the team worked 268 hours to ensure proper recycling and waste reduction. While some events, such as Matriculation Lunch, were not held due to COVID restrictions, the University was still able to conduct more events than last year. The following are the events the OOS Recycling Team staffed and the subsequent accomplishments.

Move-In (August 28 – September 1)

During Move -In, the Recycling Team and 20 Eco-Reps educated residents moving in and sorted recycling, trash, and plastic film. The Recycling Team monitored outdoor dumpsters and helped residents sort their waste inside residence halls. Their efforts led to the diversion of 375 lbs of plastic film from the landfill and from contaminating recycling containers.

The Fletcher Orientation Lunches (August 30 – September 1)

Fletcher Orientation consisted of three lunches. Each day the lunches were split into two waves and the Recycling Team helped the 70 first year Fletcher graduate students sort their compost, recycling, and trash. 106 pounds of food waste was diverted from the landfill during this event. We also ensured that the 20 pounds of recycling produced was clean and uncontaminated.

Freshman Food Crawl (September 3)

Two-hour event of food samples and fun for all first-year students. The event was a Zero Waste Event and 6 on-call workers staffed 5 zero waste stations throughout campus for students to sort their waste. This event was very successful because not only did we divert 377 lbs of food scraps from the landfill, it was a great educational opportunity for all first-year students to see how important Tufts considers sustainability. Furthermore, we have anecdotal evidence that our instructions work because Tina saw a few students on campus that night emptying their drinks into the grass before recycling them!

Back to School Sale (September 6)

Two-hour event for FIRST Center-affiliated students (first generation, low income, and undocumented students) during which donated items collected during move-out were available for students to take for free. During this event we were able to divert over 2400 lbs of items from the landfill including 311 lbs of school supplies, 122 lbs of PPE, and 107 lbs of personal care items. This event was a great opportunity to improve the environmental sustainability of move-out at Tufts and provide a service to incoming first year students that saves them time and money.

Graduate Student BBQ (September 14)

Three-hour event for AS&E graduate students. The event was a Low Waste Event and 4 workers staffed 2 waste stations at the event. The event was successful. We were able to divert over 150 lbs of food scraps from the landfill, and, because of our communications with Catering, bottled drinks were not poured into cups, preventing the unnecessary use of hundreds of single-use plastic cups at this event.