



earth day **2010**

STUDENT OUTREACH GUIDE

www.earthday.org

Earth Day University - Microcosms of the Movement

Dynamic and aggressive action has the power to capture the attention of peers and leaders, and is most powerful when its purpose is clear. Earth Day 2010's campaign message is simple: the American people demand that the United States Congress pass a bold and comprehensive climate bill in 2010. It is time to stop protecting polluters and enact climate legislation that will create American jobs, cap carbon emissions and ensure national security and a healthy environment for future generations.

April 17-18 - Global Days of Service

April 22 - Earth Day

April 25 - Rally on the National Mall in Washington DC

**Earth Day.
You Matter. It Works.**

Rallying for a Sustainable Future

This coming Earth Day, college campuses have an opportunity to stand together and demand sustainable policy changes at their schools. Many schools already have an annual tradition of organizing Earth Day events ranging from forums and rallies to recycling events and service projects, however, as the strength of the movement grows, more and more schools are eager to be part of this moment. Earth Day Network has created guides that will help student organizers whether they are already planning their events, or just starting to plan their schools very first event. The purpose of this guide is to offer well-established Earth Day events a plan to broaden the participation amongst different groups within the student body.

These guidelines are aimed at **uniting** campuses around a common theme, and expanding how the student population looks at the environmental movement. This strategy is modeled after the Earth Day 2010 global campaign which targets interest groups ranging from environmental NGOs to religious communities, justice groups, labor unions, artists, athletes, international leaders and many more, Earth Day University wants equivalent campus student groups to work together and create a new face for the environmental movement...one that shows environmentalism is about far more than saving the trees. This is a movement to ensure our future.

Earth Day events can take many forms, and there are many ways to deliver a strong message to both attendees and school administrations. Depending on what is already being organized, the participation of the various student groups could include hosting a forum segment, speaking at a rally, or tabling an event. The hope is to show how sustainability intersects with the concerns of each group. Earth Day Network hopes that representatives from each organization will demand that their peers and leaders (administrations and town officials) recognize the impacts of climate change and the power of sustainability and the green economy. With each group bringing a unique perspective, these messages can address social injustice, renewable energy resources, and climate protection. The ultimate goal is to show how a green future is important to everyone. At these events, school administrators and professors should be asked to join students at to offer their thoughts on what needs to be done, and propose a plan to achieve success. The events present an opportunity to draw massive numbers of students into the movement, and publicly call on school officials to make changes on the campuses they control.

Student Group Research

The first step to recruiting the participation of other students groups is to decide which groups should be targeted to be a part of the events.

To get started, organizers should make a chart of the various student organizations they want to approach, and add what the main goals of each group. There are many different kinds of groups, and some will have a more clear connection to the environment than others, however, we believe there is a way to reach out to *anyone* - the connection just needs to be made. Here are examples of possible groups to target, and how to approach them.

Cause groups will have a clear foundation, but its connection to the environmental movement may not be evident.

For example, the key goals of some anti-genocide groups are raising awareness and funds on behalf of Darfur. The environmental connection would be the serious water contamination and desertification in the region, which is intensifying the violence as people fight for the resources to live. This is an organization that should be approached on the message of water conservation and sustainable farming practices. Someone from their group might want to join the rally to discuss how fragile eco-systems contribute to violence and the ways to address and prevent further resource destruction.

Justice and Culture groups might be celebrating an identity, or possibly bringing attention to discrimination against this identity.

Certain communities, more so than the general population, have been disproportionately affected by industrial poisoning and these groups may want to discuss how it affects their population. Latino, African-American and Native American communities are the focus of the Environmental Justice movement, which seeks fairness for minority groups whose concerns are ignored in favor of big-business. These groups may want to speak about local areas where their community is being recklessly contaminated and what needs to be done to stop this degradation.

Activity Groups may not have a shared collective identity, but may still want to be part of the movement.

Groups like Science based clubs and College Radio may not be able to speak to any cause affecting their daily lives, however, individuals in these groups may have a personal interest in the environment, and a willingness to recruit their club to be a part of the rally or service events. While College Radio could be of service by promoting the event on the air, the involvement of Science Clubs could bring an approach from a concerned student not usually associated with the environmental movement.

Student Group Outreach

The outreach team needs to use the information found during research to form a compelling overall message and targeted supporting messaging that will motivate partnership development. Organizers to align the target groups' priorities into the demand they are asking on campus. All participating student groups need to feel that they are speaking as much about their concerns as it relates to sustainability and to the environmental movement itself.

Earth Day Network's global campaign has partnerships with many national and international organizations and mentioning this connection can provide leverage and legitimacy in approaching some groups. Organizers can see what groups we have standing relationships with by visiting earthday.org/community. By researching the groups we're partnered with, students will be able to form their own strategies on how to approach other student groups on campus.

Campus Policy Research

To incorporate the messages of the various groups approached on campus into a call-to-action for the school, organizers need to determine their school's commitment to sustainability. Some schools may already be making their buildings more efficient, purchasing green energy, serving local and organic food in the cafeteria, and offering environmental education programs. Keep in mind that unless a school is already carbon neutral, administrations can be pressured continue developing green policies.

If the school has a sustainability director, then they are the first person with whom to speak. Otherwise, school deans and professors in environmental sciences may be able to help point you in the direction of campus environmental policies. When approaching these figures on campus, students should find out the school's stance on the following topics: Energy Usage, Building Efficiency, Reducing Consumption, Food on Campus, and classes incorporating sustainability issues.

Two great resources for ideas and case studies on environmental projects are AASHE's Campus Profiles and Campus Ecology's sustainability yearbook.

AASHE: <http://www.aashe.org/resources/profiles/profiles.php>

Campus Ecology: <http://www.nwf.org/campusecology/resources/yearbook/>

Working with the Administration

While speaking with the school regarding their commitment to the environment, students can gauge how much cooperation or resistance they are going to get from the school in terms of making a hard-line demand. Some school officials will be eager to address their commitment to the environment, and be a part of a movement that unites so many different groups on campus, however, schools that are avoiding a commitment to sustainability may be less eager. In order to have a chance for real impact, it's important that the school is a part of the action.

If any commitment is going to be made by the school, then the administration needs to be part of the events. Someone from the school administration needs to be able to respond to student demands. Ideally, the college President will take the matter seriously enough to speak on behalf of the campus, however, that might not always be possible. Organizers should try to collaborate with the highest level representative possible - someone who can be held accountable for any promises.

Working with Professors

Professors can be a useful ally against a resisting administration and help provide further support to a cooperative administration. Professors in the environmental sciences community will attest to the reality of climate change. Professors in other departments can speak about topics such as the economic impacts of a green economy, public health implications, industrial pollution, etc. Working with professors will also help outreach to other student groups by further legitimizing the activities and showing that this is a cause that extends beyond just the perceived environmental community. Professors can also contribute to the effort by connecting organizers with active students interested in topics that can be incorporated into a message for sustainability.

Organize Online

Earth Day has launched a powerful new Web site, at earthday.org/action, to enable organizers to create dynamic pages capable of hosting media ranging from videos and photos to discussions. The site also incorporates a social media platform that allows organizers to invite students to join events, send them updates, and to search for other events to coordinate efforts and recruit communities to campus events. The first step for any organizer should be to register their event on the website (action.earthday.org/campaigns/drive-campus-action) within the Campus Leaders Campaign - this enables organizers to receive updates from the Earth Day University staff, and make sure their event is counted in our tracking system. The movement will only be taken seriously if we are able to quantify our actions. The Web site is the most important tool for accomplishing this.

Service and Billion Acts of Green

As part of Earth Day 2010, students can also participate in service activities as part of Earth Day Network's Billion Acts of Green™ initiative at www.billionactsofgreen.org, an effort that will mobilize one billion people around climate action. The massive collection of service commitments will send a powerful message and drive efforts for solving climate change that everyone can understand. In conjunction with community organizations, national, regional and local governments worldwide, actions will be counted toward a Billion Acts of Green. Global service activities have already begun, but a major series of service projects will be held the weekend before Earth Day: 17-18 April 2010.

Rally on the National Mall - April 25

In addition to events on campus, Earth Day Network is asking students along the East Coast and in the Midwest to mobilize for a rally on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. on April 25. While many students will have made a decision to come to Washington, D.C. before Earth Day, on-campus events provide an opportunity to recruit and mobilize last-minute supporters. A separate mobilization guide will be available on the Drive Campus Action campaign page (action.earthday.org/campaigns/drive-campus-action) that will help leaders coordinate these efforts. This rally on the National Mall is the focal point of the Earth Day 2010 campaign and will unite not just campus groups, but also groups from every organization that Earth Day Network reaches. Campus events will be a powerful opportunity to demand action at colleges and universities; however the rally on the National Mall will be the moment that ensures Earth Day 2010 will be remembered for changing the course of the environmental movement, and forcing Congress to pass the necessary climate legislation the American people deserve.

Wrapping up the Event

After the event is finished, it is important for campus leaders to follow up with the groups that participated to collect feedback about the event. There is no reason that this broad level of participation can't be replicated every year, however, to ensure strong relationships, it is necessary that each group feel as though their involvement is appreciated, and their input is included. Ideally, organizers should also continue to act as a liaison between the different groups fostering continued cooperation between them throughout the year. If each group joins together every year, the bond that unites them will only grow stronger, enabling the Earth Day moment to have significant influence on how school administrations respond to student sustainability demands.