Introduction

The Ecolympics intern is charged with both facilitating the smooth running of Ecolympics, such as taking care of planning, room reservations, finding funding, and generally everything that is needed to run events, as well as working with event planners to bring really awesome stuff to campus. This means a lot of more abstract planning in the Fall – what we want Ecolympics to look like, how many events, maybe big speakers that we have to contact in advance, and a lot of specific planning in the Spring – working with student groups, reserving rooms, requesting checks, and advertising.

Accomplishments

- **Planned Events**: I planned and implemented several of the Ecolympics events, including bringing speakers and a band, a hair recycling event, conservation projects in the arboretum, film screenings, a DIY project, and several other events.
- **Found Funding**: I secured funding from Co-ops and student groups to put on our events, and made sure that funding was allocated and distributed to the correct people – making sure OES received funds, speakers got checks, and contracts were signed.
- **Advertising**: I made and distributed posters, both for Ecolympics as a whole, and for specific events. I also added events to the college calendar. I worked with the Communications Intern to ensure all events were added to the Environmental Events calendar and facebook as well.
- **Ran Events**: I attended and worked on making sure that many of the Ecolympics events ran smoothly. I ran raffles, including distributing and collecting tickets during events, coordinating last minute details, such as late arrivals, room changes, and anything that came up at the last minute.
- **Hosted Visitors**: I hosted our guest speakers and bands when they were here – I also located housing and food for them.
- **Oversaw ENVS 101 Groups working on Ecolympics**: Met with ENVS 101 groups with Bridget, and helped them develop project ideas, connect with potential partners on projects, and made sure that any events they planned were able to happen (especially in terms of supplies and room reservations – make sure people thing about all of this in the groups).
Challenges

The major challenges in this position were ensuring that people, particularly students, who are running events are fully prepared to do the necessary preparation work. The person with this position definitely has to be prepared to do things very last minute, as planners of events might overlook small details (such as reserving a space, not getting rights for a movie, etc.), and it will often fall on the Ecolympics Intern to fix these mistakes.

Additionally, there will be little free time during the actual Ecolympics competition, and the week before it – I highly recommend trying to get a head start on papers or anything due during Ecolympics over Spring Break if you can. I did not do that, and ended up with a minimal amount of sleep for too many days in a row (though it was a ton of fun). Balancing academic work with this work during Ecolympics itself can be difficult.

Key Stakeholders

- John Petersen, john.petersen@oberlin.edu
- The Dashboard, dashboard@oberlin.edu
- The RCT, recycle@oberlin.edu
- Sharon Pearson, Oberlin Project, spearson@oberlin.edu
- Sean Hayes, AJLC Building Manager, shayes@oberlin.edu
- The GreenEDGE Fund, edgefund@oberlin.edu
- Bridget Flynn, Sustainability Coordinator, bflynn@oberlin.edu
- Environmental Studies, environmentalstudies@oberlin.edu
- Keith Watkins, Director of FacOps, kwatkins@oberlin.edu
- Becky Mosely, ResEd, rmosely@oberlin.edu
- Dani Clark, ResEd, dmclark@oberlin.edu

Deliverables

Ecolympics Future Planning Spreadsheets (internal document)

Recommendations

Most of my recommendations that are specific are in the Future Planning Spreadsheets, but here are a few:

- Start reserving rooms and contacting speakers and other visitors early. If you are requesting funding through an ad hoc with SFC, do it early in the Spring Semester – ideally the first week of ad hocs, which will be posted on their website. Emphasize why your event is different than other things happening on campus. It is also helpful to have student groups without much funding as cosponsors for these events. To get funding from co-ops – go to their money nights
with specific events in mind. Try to avoid going when someone else is asking for money. If co-ops still have money at the very end of the Fall semester, this is the ideal time to ask, as otherwise they will lose those funds.

- Become super friendly with ResEd – they are really helpful with sending out emails to all residents, etc. Try to send them weekly email updates with schedules for the week, leaders, etc. Becky would like to have these by Thursday, so it can be sent out by Friday for the following week.

- Become really friendly with FacOps – they oversee a lot! From grounds to art installations to anything involving infrastructure on campus. Also don’t ask stuff of them (i.e. union employee time) without checking in on whether or not you have an account to pay for it. Bridget is really knowledgeable on this stuff.

- Work with the RCT a lot – they will often gladly provide personpower for projects as they can get paid to work on Ecolympics and they are really excited about everything! This includes putting up posters, volunteering at events, etc. They are great!

**Unanswered Questions**

I wonder a lot about how to integrate the two aspects of Ecolympics – the reduction competition and the educational events – more thoroughly. It would be really cool to tie the two together really well, as I think that people on campus don’t associate them especially strongly. It might also help motivate people for the competition if they were tied together well.

**Conclusion**

This job is really fun, and is definitely a great way to learn a lot of skills – particularly working with departments within the school and coordinating large numbers of people in really complicated ways. I also feel as though I developed relationships with a lot of people in FacOps and other departments that students don’t usually know, which is great, as there are lots of cool staff members, and they are very helpful for getting stuff done!