

UC SANTA BARBARA

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UCSB Goes for the Green in RecycleMania Contest

Forget about the BCS, and the debate over who should be the NCAA football champion. For UC Santa Barbara's sustainability team, winning the RecycleMania national title is an exciting goal for the Gaucho family in 2009.

For the first time ever, UCSB will be competing in RecycleMania, a 10-week contest in which universities and colleges around the country will get down and dirty to compare their trash and recycling rates.

The university's Office of Sustainability and Ryan Kintz, the acting Associated Students recycling program coordinator, are guiding the campus's strategy for the contest, which starts Jan. 18 and ends March 28. "Our goal for this competition is to increase the awareness of the current recycling programs we already have on campus," Kintz said. "We want to have a fair and friendly competition -- but we do want to win."

RecycleMania is actually five contests in one, and UCSB will enter all five. The categories are:

Grand Champion: Trash and recycled items are documented over 10 weeks, and that number is divided by the campus population -- including students, faculty, and staff -- to determine a campus's recycling rate as a percentage of its overall waste generation.

Stephen K. Gaski Per Capita Classic: the largest combined amount of paper, cardboard and bottles and cans per person.

Waste Minimization: the least amount of municipal solid waste (both recyclables and trash) per person.

Gorilla Prize: the highest gross tonnage of municipal solid waste (both recyclables and trash).

Targeted Materials: four targeted material categories including Paper, Corrugated Cardboard, Bottles and Cans, and Food Service Organics. UCSB will compete in the office paper category.

The winning campuses will be awarded a trophy for each category, and receive special recognition during the NCAA Final Four basketball tournament April 4-6 in Detroit.

UCSB's current recycling programs will play a starring role in the competition, Kintz said. The outdoor recycling clusters and the indoor office recycling, including the comingled recycling at all residence halls, will remain in place. Students, faculty, and staff will see additional recycle bins scattered around campus, especially in high-traffic areas such as the University Center and the area between the Davidson Library and The Arbor.

In addition, there will be more outreach education about recycling and sustainability. Associated Students will have tables set up at the UCen to provide information about the recycling and other sustainability programs at UCSB.

Sustainability groups at UCSB have also put together an impressive list of special events during the 10-week contest. They include a concert at The Hub in the UCen, on Jan. 24; a Surplus Lab Flea Market, Jan. 21; a Sustainability Fund-Raiser at Giovanni's Pizza, Feb. 6; film shows; composting workshops; zero waste workshops; and a RecycleMania Fun Run and Beach cleanup, March 1. For a full list of events scheduled at UCSB during RecycleMania, go to

<http://www.as.ucsb.edu/recycling/pages/recyclemania.php>.

"Our goal is to increase recycling on campus, but we also want to raise awareness about what we're using and reusing and then get the campus to 100 percent recycling by 2020," Kintz said. "The UCOP sustainability goal is: 75 percent by 2012,

and 100 percent by 2020. We were at 65 percent last year, so hopefully we'll be at 100 percent before 2020."

While the competition is designed to get everyone at colleges and universities to think more about recycling and their own impact on the environment, it's also an attempt to change behavior.

"Though recycling is important, waste reduction is the primary behavior we are targeting during RecycleMania," said Jill Richardson, campus sustainability coordinator. "Our hope is that once people get the hang of reducing their waste, it will carry over into reduction in their energy and water use, as well. Modifying behaviors that reduce resource consumption will ultimately help the UCSB campus during these tough economic times."

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† Top photo: Assembling recycling bins that will be used during RecycleMania are, from left, Ryan Kintz, the acting Associated Students recycling program coordinator; Jill Richardson and Katie Maynard, campus sustainability coordinators; and Eli Krispi, student representative on the chancellor's sustainability committee.

Photo by George Foulsham, UCSB Public Affairs

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