



ON CAMPUS

FEATURED STORIES

EcoPledge To Retrieve 2,000 Plates Missing From BC Dining

Composting To Begin in Mac

Mass. Bill Calls for 100% Clean Energy by 2050

Scott Pruitt's Plans for EPA

Environmentalist Spotlight: Derrick Cripps, Manager of Corcoran Commons

OUR TEAM

This newsletter is a monthly publication by EcoPledge of Boston College.

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Eagle graphic courtesy of Zoe Fanning, MCAS '20

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EcoPledge Leads Effort to Recover 2,000 Missing Plates

Who's in Charge? ... The new initiative is led by Daniela Palma, a member of EcoPledge. Palma believes that the problem developed earlier this year when BC Dining's policy was to have students transfer food to to-go containers themselves. Palma's campaign includes a run of flyers posted around dorm buildings and possible door-to-door collections with other EcoPledge members this month.

Why EcoPledge? ... EcoPledge has been passionate about this issue and has stood behind Palma's recovery efforts. When asked about the club's enthusiastic response to this issue, EcoPledge president Bronte Kass referenced the environmental benefits of reusable plateware over disposable alternatives. "Choosing reusable over paper or disposable plates has been found to reduce 44 percent of greenhouse gas emissions, as well as to have incredible benefits for the reduction of water and air pollution," she said. She also noted that the loss of the plates is a financial detriment to BC, and that by returning their plates, students would be showing support for environmental issues.

A Call to Act Responsibly ... Kass hopes to see positive results from EcoPledge's



Photo courtesy of Pixabay

campaign to have students return the missing plates. "By returning reusable plates to dining, BC students will be supporting our school and encouraging the use of these eco-friendly resources available to us." This recovery effort should help students to "make the connection between their actions and the effect on the planet," according to Kass.

How to Return Your Plates ... If you have dining hall plates, you can return to them the plate drop off area at your dining hall. Plates can be returned in any condition, as they will be washed and processed by the dining staff. BC Dining and EcoPledge appreciate the return of any reusable plates from the dining halls.

EVENTS THIS MONTH

March 13 Composting in Mac begins.

March 14 Andrew Light, a professor at George Mason University, will speak at an event titled "The Road from the Paris Climate Agreement" at 6 p.m. in McGuinn 121.

March 20 EcoPledge will hold a general meeting at 7 p.m., room to be determined. All are welcome. Email ecopledge@gmail.com if you are interested in attending.

Mac To Implement Composting Effort on March 13

A New Effort ... BC Dining will implement a new composting effort starting March 13. The bins in the trash area will be fixed with new lids with different shapes for each type of waste. Students from EcoPledge, the Environmental Caucus, and Office of Sustainability will stand by trash bins for the first few days to direct students when they dispose of their waste.

What Bin Takes What? ... The blue bins will be for recyclables, which include bottles, plastic containers, and paper products like coffee cups and paper plates. The plastic utensils in the dining hall are not recyclable and should be put in the trash. The composting bin will be yellow-colored.

The composting bin is meant for food scraps and napkins. Tea bags can also be composted. All other waste should go in the trash bin.

Hoping for Success ... BC Dining hopes that the combination of the new lids and students directing others will make the composting effort successful. If the rate at which non-composting items are placed into the compost bins is low, BC Dining will permanently implement composting.

What Can I Do? ... People in the dining hall should be attentive about sorting their waste properly. Those with questions should ask a dining employee.

Derrick Cripps: A Leader of Sustainability Efforts at BC Dining



Photo courtesy of Derrick Cripps

Derrick Cripps runs the show at Corcoran Commons. As general manager, he oversees the nine managers, 80 full time employees, and 200 student staff. Lower is a lot to handle, feeding 8,000 guests a day, but it's clear that Cripps approaches his work wholeheartedly.

Cripps started his career studying at the New England Culinary Institute in Vermont and has now been at Boston College for 12 years. During his time here, Cripps has aimed to serve the food that students want to eat. BC Dining is ready to respond when students express interest in fresher, healthier choices, he said. As of recent, BC Dining has become involved with "Menus of Change," an initiative by the Culinary Institute of America that promotes high-protein, plant-based dishes. Older projects have already become staples at Lower, such as the yearly farmers' market, a now seven-year tradition promoting local produce.

BC Dining makes it a goal to purchase its food as locally as possible. The image to consider, Cripps said, is a pebble thrown into a pond. Wherever the ripple of water first hits the product, that's where they buy. This sort of policy is great for local suppliers, and it slashes the impact of long distance shipping. Not all products can be sourced locally, however. For example, the honeydew melon offered at the salad bar is only available from South Africa. In addition, many local products are only available seasonally.

OFF CAMPUS

Massachusetts Bill Calls for 100% Clean Energy by 2050

A Pathway to Sustainability ... There is currently a bill (SD 1932) in the Massachusetts state legislature that would lay out a path for Massachusetts to run completely on renewable energy by 2050. This bill lays out a plan for 100 percent renewable electricity generation by 2035 and 100 percent renewable heating and transportation by 2050, according to malegislature.gov.

How Will It Be Done? ... The bill would create a Clean Energy Workforce Development Fund to create jobs in renewable technologies. Part of this fund would be allocated toward shifting fossil fuel workers into clean fuel jobs. "By making Massachusetts the first state to commit to 100 percent renewable energy, we can be a beacon of hope for other states across the country

to follow," said Environmental Massachusetts director Ben Hellerstein in an interview with NowThis News.

Can It Pass? ... The bill has to pass both the House and the Senate of Massachusetts. Fifty-three members of the state legislature—over a quarter of its members—have co-signed the bill, sponsoring it. This kind of support this early on looks promising.

Why Now? ... Senator Jamie Eldridge believes that Massachusetts has been a leader on alternative energy policy for over a decade. With efforts against climate change policy coming from the White House, Eldridge believes it will be up to individual states to protect the environmental and health interests of the public.

Do you want to be involved in promoting sustainable practices on campus? Do you want to join a group of students passionate about the environment?

Join EcoPledge!

To join our listserv and get updates from us, email ecopledge@gmail.com



Pruitt To Put 'Policy Reversals' Into Motion for EPA

Who's Scott Pruitt? ... After being confirmed by the Senate on Feb. 17, Scott Pruitt became the new head of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA has been committed to provide a clean and safe environment for all Americans since its inception.

What are his priorities? ... Pruitt hopes to get the EPA back to its "core mission of protecting air and water," according to a recent article in *Bloomberg*. He plans to set in motion many "policy reversals" from the Obama administration in early March.

Why are there reversals? ... "The previous administration was so focused on climate change and so focused on CO₂, some of those other priorities were left behind," Pruitt said in a speech at the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) on Feb. 25. "I really believe that at the end of eight years, we're going to have better air quality, we're going to have better water quality because it's going to be vested in a



Gage Skidmore

partnership [with states]."

Trump's Take ... These rollbacks are coupled with President Donald Trump's signing of documents in the upcoming months, which will cause the EPA to undo recent regulations including the Clean Power Plan, which limits greenhouse gas emissions from electricity generation, and the Waters of the U.S. rule, which outlines which waterways are subject to pollution regulation. Trump believes these acts and others like it are hurting American business innovation.

FROM THE OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY

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RecycleMania Continues Through April 2nd

The 17th annual RecycleMania competition, managed by the nonprofit organization Keep America Beautiful, continues until April 2. Currently, BC is ranked 66th in the event's formal competition division with a diversion rate of 37%. Students should continue to separate their trash mindfully to help BC climb the ranks! See the schools leading the competition in the column to the right.

RecycleMania Scoreboard:

1. University of Missouri-Kansas City-83.7%
2. Walters State Community College-82.1%
3. Berkshire Community College-82.0%
4. Loyola Marymount University-81.3%
5. Pacific Lutheran University-77.1%
6. Minneapolis College of Art and Design-74.9%
7. Seattle University-72.2%
8. Richland College-70.6%
9. Kendall College of Art and Design-70.3%
10. Macalester College-69.6%

Cripps strives to keep Lower running sustainably in various other ways. He constantly looks for small improvements that cut down on energy use, like upgraded freezers and grill appliances. Cripps also oversees Lower's meticulous waste disposal process. All student waste is sorted behind-the-scenes for recycling or composting, and any food left untouched after dinner is collected by a student volunteer group called Every Bite Counts and sent to a nearby shelter.

"The biggest effort will be helping get the whole BC community on board," Cripps said.

He noted that this is especially the case concerning flatware and silverware, which disappear quickly from the dining hall.

"Having to replace 22,000 [metal forks] a year is not a sustainable practice," he said.

Concerning the general landscape of sustainability in BC Dining, however, Cripps is optimistic. He said that current sustainability projects are going well, and there are improvements made every year.

Lower is a large production to undertake. The amount of food prepared, students served, and waste disposed is massive. Any establishment like Lower runs the risk of committing environmental harm in a number of ways, but Cripps takes care to ensure that the dining hall runs safely and efficiently. Going forward, Cripps hopes to keep serving the food that students enjoy, purchased and prepared with sustainability in mind.

CONSCIOUS CONSUMER TIP

This year, EcoPledge is teaching members of the BC community how to be conscious consumers. Here is a tip to help you become a more educated consumer:

Buy locally!

Port cities around the world experience air pollution as a consequence of freight shipping. Search for shops near you that stock locally-made products or find a grocery store that sponsors local farmers.