

## **The Road to a Campus-Wide Compost System: Institutionalizing In-House Compost at Cal**

**Compost Alliance Coordinators: Anna Szendrenyi and Annie Gorden (Fall 2012), Evelyn Hammid and Amanda Atkinson (Spring 2013)**

TGIF funded, transitioning to a Campus Recycling and Refuse Services group

4a) Compost Alliance is a student group founded in Fall 2010 in response to UC Berkeley's plan to reach Zero Waste by 2020. It seeks to establish a campus-wide composting program to divert the large amount of organic materials from the landfill waste stream. It began by implementing pilot composting systems in several campus buildings, and with the help of a TGIF grant in the 2011-12 school year, expanded composting to 15 buildings. Compost Alliance's primary goal, however, is to institutionalize a composting system that is collected by Campus Recycling and Refuse Services (CRRS) and financially and operationally supported by the campus administration rather than primarily through students and grants. This is the second and final year of Compost Alliance's TGIF grant, so we are in the process of transitioning into a CRRS supported group. This will help secure the movement towards composting within an established campus department.

b) This year we have focused on supporting existing composting programs in campus buildings. We have conducted surges in which we updated bins and signage, ensuring that the established waste streams are clearly labeled and being used properly. We created newsletters, updating buildings on their compost systems. We conducted educational outreach through tabling and PowerPoint presentations. We also wrote and delivered a letter to the Chancellor with the help of building managers requesting campus-wide support for composting, thus opening up communication between Compost Alliance and the campus administration.

We also rolled out composting at the Energy Biosciences Institute, providing 17 new compost bins; Hearst Gym and Hearst Annex, providing 8 new compost bins; Peet's Coffee at Crossroads Dining Commons, providing one new compost bin; and International House, transforming 59 existing bins into paper towel compost bins.

c) Compost Alliance has faced significant difficulty completing our project this year. We

have been unable to implement composting in new buildings because the university is in the process of hiring a permanent Senior Associate Director of Operations. The interim Director of Operations has been unwilling to expand composting due to his temporary position in Physical Plant - Campus Services (PPCS).

In November, Compost Alliance wrote and delivered a letter to the Chancellor requesting the administration's financial and operational support of composting. In early April, we received a response from the Vice Chancellor of Facilities Services indicating that PPCS does not have the money to support composting at the moment, but will be revisiting the idea periodically in coming years. We are currently drafting a response to this letter requesting further elaboration on the costs of composting with the help of building managers and other campus stakeholders who support composting. We will also be meeting with Associate Vice Chancellor Chris Christofferson after July 1 to determine the possibilities of expanding composting in next year's budget.

Another challenge we are facing is educating the campus community about the four waste streams. Despite our educational outreach and clear signage, people continue to contaminate compost and recycling bins and throw compostables in the landfill. Many people are still confused about what items go in which bins, and many people are uninterested and do not want to learn how to separate their waste.

d) TGIF has been very supportive of Compost Alliance. Katherine has given great suggestions on who to contact to further the cause and has connected volunteers to our program.

e) Actual Timeline

June 2012: Implemented composting in Stanley Hall

July 2012: Received news that implementing composting in additional buildings will not be possible until the Senior Associate Director of Operations position is filled

August 2012: Continued to support existing composting programs, remained in contact with building managers interested in implementing composting

September 2012: Hired and trained two Program Assistants: Evelyn Hammid and Aspen Flynn, conducted a surge of University Hall

October 2012: Rolled out composting at Richmond Field Station headquarters, conducted surges of Barrows Hall and Haas School of Business

November 2012: Created and distributed newsletters in buildings with composting, tabled in Wurster and Barrows, delivered a letter of support for composting to the Chancellor, began conducting regular walkthroughs of Crossroads, conducted surges of Goldman School of Public Policy, began training Aspen and Evelyn to become coordinators

December 2012: Rolled out composting at the Crossroads Peet's, Anna Szendrenyi and Annie Gorden left Compost Alliance

January 2013: Met with custodial supervisors, tabled in Wurster, Evelyn continued coordinator training with CRRS staff, Aspen left Compost Alliance

February 2013: Rolled out composting at Energy Biosciences Institute, hosted a food waste reduction event at Crossroads in collaboration with Cal Dining Sustainability Team and BareAbundance, presented on composting at California Hall, began preparing for Hearst Gym and Annex rollout

March 2013: Rolled out paper towel composting at International House with GO! Team, presented on Compost Alliance at the ESOC DeCal, supported Energy Biosciences Institute with its new composting system, conducted a surge of Stanley Hall, recruited and interviewed candidates for Compost Alliance staff positions

April 2013: Selected and trained new staff (Amanda Atkinson, Sarah Atkinson, Allison Loux and Pamela Durr), assigned new staff to buildings with composting, rolled out composting at Hearst Gym and Annex, prepared letter in response to Vice Chancellor Denton's letter that postponed campuswide support for composting, tabled at Cal Day

May 2013: Presented at Wurster and Crossroads on waste streams, began preparing for summer rollouts at Warren Hall and Cory Hall and follow-up rollouts in Wurster, Haas and Lawrence Hall of Science

Throughout the year: Provided support as needed and upon request to building managers and custodial services for existing composting programs, collaborated with other CRRS Zero Waste student groups

5) Compost Alliance's continued support of buildings with composting has diverted over 35 tons of waste from landfills between June 2012 and March 2013. This has saved the campus over \$4,550 and has reduced campus carbon dioxide emissions by over 5,110 kilograms. Compost

Alliance's current buildings will continue to divert over 3.6 tons of organic waste from landfills every month as long as they continue to compost, resulting in monthly savings of over \$468 and reducing carbon dioxide emissions by over 525.6 kilograms monthly. Through our educational outreach we have informed many members of the campus community about the benefits of composting and how to compost and recycle properly. These people can then inform those around them on how to sort and reduce their waste in their daily interactions.

- 6) Visibility, Outreach, Photos: Original documents attached to email



*A new waste bin setup at the Peet's at Crossroads*



*A kitchenette waste bin set at Energy Biosciences Institute*

*Elegant stainless steel bins at Wurster Hall*



*Max-R cabinet bins that use toter bins directly in Wurster. No liners needed!*

*Allie Loux*





*and Sarah Atkinson tabling in Wurster to promote the new bins*

7) Compost Alliance will continue to operate as a CRRS student group, working alongside the many other student groups on the Zero Waste by 2020 initiative. Composting is an essential part of reaching Zero Waste, so the campus must eventually support composting in order to meet its goal. Although we are facing a serious challenge to institutionalising composting right now, we will continue to support existing composting programs and advocate for the expansion of composting until the campus allows us to move forward. We still have TGIF funding which we will continue to use, but once that has run out we will be operating on CRRS's recycling revenues.

We have recently received news that during the summer we will be able to implement and expand composting in five buildings. Warren Hall and Cory Hall currently do not have composting or adequate recycling, and Haas School of Business, Wurster Hall and Lawrence Hall of Science have some composting but we will be able to expand these programs.

8) Grant amount: \$40,270      Funds spent: \$14,863.13      Amount remaining: \$25,406.87

Compost Alliance TGIF Final Report 7

<b>Student Worker Name</b>	<b>Position and Rate</b>	<b>Hours Worked</b>	<b>Total Labor Expenditures</b>
Annie Gorden	Coordinator, \$12	121	\$1,452
Anna Szendrenyi	Coordinator, \$12	207.5	\$2,490
Aspen Flynn	Assistant, \$11	68	\$748
Evelyn Hammid	Assistant, \$11	257	\$2,827
		Total	\$6,723.93
<b>Building Name</b>	<b>Ongoing Costs Cover</b>	<b>Work Order Number</b>	<b>Total Cover</b>
Barrows	50%	2232	\$1,404 (thru 3/29)
GSPP	50%	2060	\$2,114.40 (thru 3/29)
Mulford	50%	2052	\$3,202.53 (thru 4/9)
		Total	
<b>Purchases</b>		<b>Date</b>	<b>Amount Spent</b>
Green compost lids		5/14/2013	\$622.20
<b>Total Spent</b>			<b>\$14,863.13</b>