

Green Gang  
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Champlain College

I am an Area Coordinator for Champlain College's Eco-Rep program. Our goal is to empower fellow students to engage in eco-friendly behaviors. In the past, we have focused on residential life, and Eco-Reps had to live in campus housing. To meet the needs of a college during a pandemic, we opened applications to all students and have shifted to mostly online events and outreach. Eco-Reps now host movie nights on Zoom and share messages about sustainability through social media posts.

One of my favorite parts about the Eco-Rep program is its connection to the Swap Shop, the free thrift shop and food pantry on campus. Eco-Reps organize and clean the Swap Shop, helping students who visit find what they need easily. The food pantry is a vital resource for our community; one of the senior Eco-Reps said that she depended on it when she was between apartments. The food pantry is still up and running! Students can arrange a time to visit and pick up a bag filled with whatever they need. I'm so glad there is still a way for people to get the food that they need to nourish themselves. The rest of the Swap Shop will open soon with social distancing and masking requirements!

The Eco-Rep program is one part of Champlain's Center for Service and Sustainability. Our supervisor, Christina Erickson, runs the Center and oversees a large group of student leaders. In addition to Eco-Reps, Christina oversees Waste Management Coordinators and Student Outreach Liaisons who connect to school administration to communicate goals and plan large-scale events/initiatives. Eco-Reps work closely with these groups of students; for example, we planned a sustainable fashion show using items found at the Swap Shop together early last spring.

My personal goal for this semester is to make eco-friendly behavior accessible to all Champlain students. I want to give information and resources to students about what they can do on and off campus to preserve natural resources. One way I'm doing this is by compiling a list of videos, blogs, and influencers that speak about sustainability as well as databases where people can research waste, water, and electricity where they live.

Success is a campus that focuses on sustainability by reducing energy consumption, providing locally/ethically sourced food in the cafeteria, and supporting local plant life. Success is also a student body made up of people who have each made at least one commitment to supporting a safe, clean planet. Eco-Reps mainly focus on the individual student level, but our connections to the Center for Service and Sustainability connects us to the college administration. We can use those connections to share our ideas about environmentalism and, with enough voices, enact structural change.



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## EVERYONE CAN DO SOMETHING

What's your place in the green movement?

- Educating others?
- Unplugging electronics?
- Eating plant-based?

## FIND YOUR GREEN AND LIVE IT



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Just like our ecosystems survive through diversity, the environmental movement will thrive when everyone does what they're best at. You may be able to sort your waste thoroughly so it can be diverted from landfills. You might have an "in" at a big corporation and be able to fight for sustainable practices there. It is my job as an Eco-Rep and an environmentalist to help people identify what they can commit to do for planet earth. What piece of the solution do you hold and how will you use it?

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