Final Report: Green Teams Program  
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Introduction  

The Green Teams Program is one of the few internships that has established longevity in the IU Office of Sustainability. With this longevity comes growth, success, and also challenges. The first two years were spent developing and implementing the Green Teams Program around the IU campus. Now in its third year, the focus has shifted to strengthening, fine-tuning, and expansion. Part of this new direction also involves streamlining the management of the teams and the operational aspects of the program. By focusing on these areas, the Green Teams Program is able to experience more efficient and effective growth in its ultimate goal of making IU a more sustainable campus.

Challenges  

The Green Teams Program has grown substantially since its inception two years ago. With this rapid growth, new challenges have emerged. In order to take the Green Teams Program to the next level, four main issues were identified and addressed this summer. The first was the level of involvement from the teams. With a grassroots project such as the Green Teams headed by volunteers, lack of motivation and consistency are regular obstacles to confront. The Green Teams Coordinator and IUOS must play a pivotal role in providing a broad range of support and resources that enabled the teams to utilize their time more efficiently with more effective results.

The second issue that emerged was a need to strengthen the current program. After establishing a solid program, the challenge to maintain, strengthen, and grow is always present. It is important for a program such as the Green Teams to constantly be developing new practices and evaluating/fine-tuning old practices.

The third challenge identified was the lack of visibility of the Green Teams around the IU campus. In order to expand, people have to know that the Green Teams Program exists and how they can go about utilizing its resources.

Finally, there is the issue of coordinator resource deficiencies. With the Green Teams being such a young program, the majority of the focus to this point has been on establishing a foundation and structure for the teams, which has left limited time for internal development of the Green Teams Coordinator position. At this point in the program, it was essential for a substantial amount internal resource development to be made in order for the coordinator position to one of consistency, confidence, and success.
New Direction

1. **One-on-One Consultations:** As the Green Teams Program evolves, it is important for it to be shaped by the people whom it intends to serve. Individual meetings were set up with team leaders to best achieve team member feedback. These meetings served as a valuable guide in program improvements and resource development.
   
   a. **Consultations:** The one-on-one consultations involved a half an hour to an hour-long discussion with individual Green Team leaders. These discussions varied somewhat depending on the teams' needs, but generally addressed successes, challenges, and goals of the team. The meeting played an important role in strengthening the Green Teams Program in several ways.
      
      i. They enabled me to accurately analyze and assess the individual needs of each Green Team, which helped in developing realistic and effective ways of meeting those needs. As part of the consultation, I develop both a short and long-term plan for each team. This plan involves tasks the teams can work towards on their own, as well as a to-do list composed of specific issues and questions in which I can assist the teams on.

      ii. They provided useful feedback regarding resources to incorporate, and materials/policies to modify within the Green Teams Program.

     iii. They helped create a more personal relationship with the teams, which has added to the overall goal of creating a more cohesive Green Teams community.

   b. **Client files:** The files are a summary of the meetings that took place with the Green Team leaders. These file serve as a valuable resource for both the current coordinator and future coordinators. By creating a file on each team, the coordinator not only has all relevant information about the team in one place, but the information provided also allows the coordinator to develop an individualized plan based on each team's needs. This information can then serve as a valuable reference for future coordinators of the teams past challenges, goals and successes. Future coordinators can utilize this resource to maintain consistency and credibility within the program and the teams.

2. **Coordinator Development:** Early on in the internship, the lack of resource development for the Green Teams Coordinator position created an obstacle affecting all other aspects of the internship. For the Green Teams Program to grow, and achieve future success, the coordinator needs to have greater expertise and knowledge.

   a. **Coordinator’s Guide:** This Summer I started a Coordinator’s Guide that encompasses several resources in various categories that help the Green Teams Coordinator adjust quickly to their new position. This guide helps free up a substantial amount of time normally spent trying to orient one’s self, so
that more program development and expansion can be accomplished in a shorter period of time. The guide also sets the coordinator up for a successful internship by providing information that creates consistency and confidence.

i. **Position overview:** Although each coordinator should bring their own style, creativity, and ideas to this internship, it is also necessary to create consistency within the greater framework of the position. By giving a clear and concise description of the Green Teams Coordinator’s responsibilities, it allows the coordinators to develop their ideas around the structure that already exists.

ii. **Coordinators toolkit:** I design the coordinator’s toolkit as a way to organize the vast amount of resources the coordinators needs during their internship. This resource is similar to the toolkit provided for the teams. However, this toolkit provides more detailed and extensive information. In addition to contacts, links, IU policies, and general information, the toolkit also provides resources more specific to the Green Teams Coordinator position.

iii. **Educational materials:** One role the Green Teams Coordinator plays is that of educator. To create efficiency within the program, I have begun developing educational materials that can be used for promotional and recruiting presentations, utilized by teams leaders at their Green Team meetings, or used as presentations for the lunch and learn sessions.

iv. **Office evaluation form:** I created the office evaluation form to act as a checklist guide when conducting an office walk-through, which is an individualized assessment of a team’s particular office. The form consists of a mixture of items directly from the Green Teams Certification checklist, as well as some new additions. This form can be used for any office evaluation regardless of whether or not they have formed a Green Team.

v. **Organizing resources:** Because the coordinator’s responsibilities increase each year in scope and depth, organization of information and resources is crucial for efficiency within the coordinator position. Until now, there has not been a formal manner in which to organize these resources. Through the creation of Coordinator’s Guide all resources will be available in a concise, user-friendly format for all future interns.

3. **Streamlining the Management of the Green Teams:** As the size of the Green Teams Program increases, thoughtful resource design is imperative to maintaining member interest and recruitment. Throughout the summer I have assessed all current resources including the Certification Program, Office Toolkit, Green Teams Blog, Green Bag Lunches, and the Green Teams Website. I have already modified some
resources and have established plans to complete the remaining modification by the end of the summer.

a. **Certification Program:** The Certification Program implemented in the first year of the Green Teams Program has served as a useful guide and motivator for many teams. However, several teams have communicated that they are frustrated with the vagueness of some requirements, as well as the lack of resources to help them achieve the specific requirements of certification. Based on this feedback, I revised or altered certain requirements and provided direct links to applicable resources within the text of the certification checklist.

b. **Office Toolkit:** Again, based on team member feedback, a much more comprehensive source of information is needed to help assist the teams. In response to such feedback, I expanded the Green Teams toolkit this summer as a resource that will provide a guide of information for the teams to access through the Green Teams website. The toolkit consists of useful tips and links, applicable IU contact information, printable materials, IU policies, how-tos, and FAQs that will help assist teams in their efforts to make their office more sustainable.

c. **Green Teams Website:** One of the consistent comments from team leaders during the consultation sessions was that the Green Teams Website was not very user friendly. One of the most frequent complaints was that people were not able to find and utilize the certification program and the office toolkit. These are two valuable resources for the teams that need to be easily accessible. In response to this feedback, I made a design plan for a revised website. Some revisions have already been made and others are scheduled for completion by the end of the summer.

d. **Replacing Green Bag Lunches with Lunch and learn sessions:** When the Green Bag Lunches were implemented in the first year of the program, the teams were just developing, and there was a greater need for regular meetings that addressed broader issues. However, now in its third year, most of the teams are well established and the need for such a forum has decreased greatly. At this point in the program a focus on individualized services are more useful to the teams. The lunch and learn sessions are opportunities for Green Teams and their coworkers to learn more about the Green Teams Program as well as various sustainable practices they can implement within their office. These sessions are hosted by the team’s office, and presented by the Green Teams Coordinator and the Office of Sustainability.

e. **Green Teams Blog:** The Green Teams blog is a great resource for teams to discuss ideas, ask questions, highlight success stories, get green office tips, and to hear about what is going on at IU and in the Bloomington Community. Feedback determined that blog use by team members had diminished. Through team member input, I made certain adjustments to the blog this
summer to increase usage. The first is more consistency in postings. Team members felt they would utilize the blog more often if there were regular postings. Second, teams wanted a broader range of information. To accommodate this request, I have added three categories to the blog. In addition to Events and Peer institution, is the Office Toolkit, which highlights resources provided in the new Green Teams toolkit, Bright Spot, a place to celebrate teams successes, and Bloomington Beyond IU, a place to write about sustainable efforts in the Bloomington community. My hope is that this inter-team communication will help create more of a community, resulting in a stronger program.

Next Step

4. **Resources:** Resource development and evaluation for both the teams and the coordinator will need to be a priority within the Green Teams Program in order to create and maintain a high level of consistency and efficiency.

   a. **Teams:** In addition to developing new resources, future interns need to devote a reasonable portion of their time to evaluating and updating old resources. I recommend reviewing the resources in the beginning of the internship in order to incorporate any necessary modification into the timeline of the internship.

   b. **Coordinator:** The Coordinator’s Guide that I started this summer will be a work in progress. This guide will serve as a valuable tool to coordinators as the program grows and the position requires a greater amount of knowledge and expertise. To prevent this record keeping from becoming cumbersome, I recommend updating this resource as new information is acquired.

5. **Recruitment:** The recruitment of new Green Teams was put on hold this summer in order to address the more immediate needs of the teams and operations of the program. However, I do feel that focusing on this area of the internship is important in order for the Green Teams Program to operate within the IU campus the way it was intended.

   a. **Advertising:** One of the major challenges of the Green Teams Program is its lack of visibility on the IU campus. There are a number of ways in which this issue can be addressed. First, the coordinator should encourage current teams to speak to other faculty and staff about starting their own teams and perhaps even acting as a mentor for those new teams. Another great resource is the IUOS website where blog postings, the Catalyst, and the IUOS newsletter can serve as advertising forums to reach a broader audience. Finally, making direct contact with administrative heads from each building and inquiring about distributing a Green Teams newsletter to faculty and staff at department meetings.

   b. **Collaboration:** Collaboration with student organizations and other interns would also be a great resource for advertising for the Green Teams Program.
Student organizations on campus could not only spread information about the Green Teams, but possibly play a role as an extension of the program itself. Other interns can also contribute through their perspective internships. This summer I began the collaboration process with several interns including the Energy Challenge, No Waste, and Sustainable Computing interns. Continued development of these relationships is needed as well as creating future opportunities with new interns/internship.

6. **Rewards Program:** Those who join the Green Teams Program voluntarily devote their time and energy to help make the IU campus more sustainable. Through such efforts the university benefits in numerous ways including saving a significant amount of money each year. A number of teams have expressed frustration with wanting to do more, but not having the budget within their own department to fund their office greening plans. Developing a rewards program for the teams would help recognize their efforts and provide them with resources they need. These resources would be reinvested within a team’s office, which would help to contribute to the overall goal of creating a more sustainable campus.

7. **Physical Plants Collaboration:** Attempts were made this summer to collaborate with the Physical Plant’s retro fitting program. However, this collaboration did not fully develop. Since the Physical Plant’s operations intersect with the Green Teams goals on campus, I feel continued efforts to make this collaboration work is important.

**Conclusion**

The Green Teams Program serves as a valuable resource for the university’s Office of Sustainability and for the Indiana University campus in general. The efforts of faculty, staff, and students who volunteer their time and energy to make their offices/buildings more “green” are contributing greatly to the goal of creating a more sustainable campus. As the third intern to pass through the Green Teams Program, I am both impressed and encouraged by what has been accomplished. The Green Teams internship has contributed in important ways to the development, implementation, and success of programs that have made the university a better place to live, work, and learn.