

Departing students decide to donate, not dump

by Shane Arman - Tuesday, May 18, 2010

<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/2739/departing-students-decide-to-donate-not-dump/>

University of Wisconsin Oshkosh students' annual migration out of the dorms May 12 to 14 provided a unique opportunity to raise sustainability awareness and benefit the community.

As thousands of students moved out of the dorms, Residence life, Campus Sustainability and the Student Environmental Action Coalition (SEAC) partnered to divert usable goods that were trash-bound to local charities during an event themed "Donate, don't dump."

"This event is an example of how a sustainability effort can solve multiple problems by reorganizing an annual event that already takes considerable organization," said Michael Lizotte, campus sustainability director.

Students donated their unwanted items by placing them in storage containers dispersed throughout campus, provided at cost by Portable On-Demand Storage (PODS).

Lizotte said the event helped raise students' consciousness of need in the community, prompting students to consider alternatives to disposing of unwanted items.

"We are trying to get students to understand their environmental setting as well as their social setting," Lizotte said.

PODS were available from noon to 8 p.m. May 12 to 14 at five locations near residence halls that were staffed with student volunteers.

Donations included lightly worn clothing, groceries and furniture. Students decided whether to give their goods to St. Vincent DePaul in Oshkosh or to make them available to swap with other students.

"If these items can get a few more uses from someone, we will get more use out of our local landfill," said Maureen Muldoon, a UW Oshkosh geology professor who helped at the event.

Muldoon said the goal of the event was to educate students and also lend a hand to those in need.

"The people at St. Vincent DePaul were very happy about the donations last year," said Muldoon, who also worked with PODS to arrange the pick-up and delivery of the donations.