



Creating Change with Green Ambassadors

Alameda County Sustainability

2013 Climate Symposium: sharing success

Background

Summary

In order to reach Alameda County's broad 9000-person employee base, an enthusiastic pilot group of 25 employees from 10 divisions were trained in opportunities to be green at work. They shared these opportunities with colleagues during the course of their regular work and through focused campaigns every other month.

Project Objective 1: Make Change

- Create official role to promote green habits
- Teach how to help coworkers do all possible to protect the environment
- Make it fun and "in" to be green

Project Objective 2: Provide Support

- Teach effective techniques to raise coworkers' awareness
- Connect like-minded people

Why This Approach?

- Person-to-person role modeling and encouragement is one of the most effective ways to get the word out to employees on the simple things they can do each day
- The network creates action, builds leadership, and multiplies impact

CCBA Member Role

- Recruited Green Ambassadors
- Developed community based social marketing campaigns
- Created outreach materials, encouraged Green Ambassadors to share materials to promote campaigns, and tracked outcomes

Supporters

- Climate Executive Committee consisting of the County Administrator and agency directors
- Audubon's Toyota TogetherGreen grant provided lunches for the Green Ambassadors and prizes for their coworkers

Timeline



10 County divisions are represented in the Green Ambassadors Network



Green Ambassadors at County electric vehicle charging station

Results

Recycled Content Office Supplies Campaign

- Met with 57 people about ordering recycled content products
- 22 people entered recycled office supply photo contest
- Total people reached = 1649

Smart Printing Campaign

- 66 people participated in contest to avoid printing & share tips
- 5345 pages were not printed due to contest
- 145 people attended smart printing workshops
- Total people reached = 3310

Clean Commuting Campaign

- Recruited 1/3 of Clean Commute Fair attendees
- 109 people attended clean commute brown-bags
- 223 people tracked commute online
- Total people reached = 1110



Recycled content office supply photo contest winner



Green Ambassadors and colleagues visit bike repair stand at Clean Commute Fair



Smart Printing Campaign poster

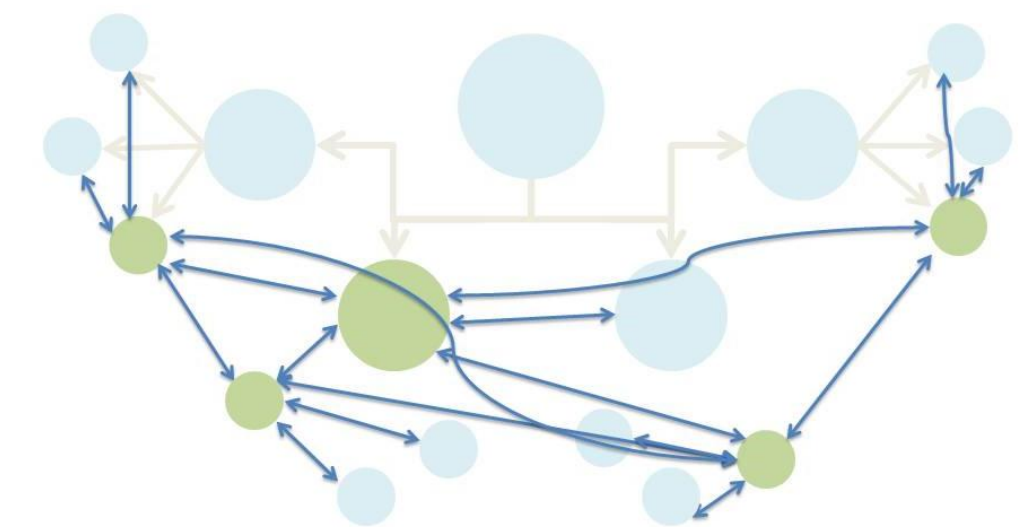
Key Takeaways

Effective Grassroots Approach

- Program achieved targeted behavior changes and employees enjoyed participating in the campaigns
- Green Ambassadors appreciated connecting with like-minded people
- Many Green Ambassadors would like to continue and build the network so they can make even more change in their departments

Recommendations to Make Network More Sustainable Going Forward

- Quarterly campaigns instead of bimonthly to accommodate work schedules
- Make campaigns more interactive so participants can give feedback
- More communication among the Green Ambassadors, such as tag-teaming or sharing how other Green Ambassadors are progressing through the campaigns
- Increased support from executives and directors to pair department-wide goals with grassroots effort



The network of peer educators interacts across the formal organization



Nicole received a B.S. in Environmental Economics, Policy, and Management from Oregon State University and a M.S. in Environmental Management from the University of San Francisco. Nicole's service as a CCBA member has reinforced her passion for sustainable communities and strategies that both reduce environmental impacts and increase social good. She is seeking opportunities in organizations that works on sustainability, green/affordable housing, land use/transportation, or intersections among them.

Nicole would like to thank her supervisor, Emily Sadigh, for her guidance and the Green Ambassadors for their work and energy throughout this project.

Nicole Powell

