

Gaines Fellowship Jury Project Proposal

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Background:

From a young age I have been interested in helping the environment in any way possible. It was simply part of my upbringing. Although I did not conceive of this project as a child, this information is necessary in understanding the deep-rooted conviction which led me to develop it. As far as the project itself is concerned, the lack of public recycling bins on campus and in the downtown Lexington area was what initially sparked my interest. While there certainly is a strong recycling program in the dormitories and in many of the academic buildings on campus, and while there is a decent recycling program in the residential areas of Lexington, there is a deficit of public recycling bins outdoors. While I commend the University of Kentucky and the city of Lexington for their efforts, I feel that there is plenty of room for improvement. My project, though not all-inclusive, would be a step toward the betterment of UK's recycling program as well as that of the city of Lexington. Unfortunately, this project is still in its infancy. As of yet, the only work that has been done is the contact of several individuals involved with recycling programs at UK, and a few individuals involved with city recycling. Also, a pilot project for UK's campus is currently being developed by myself in conjunction with the head of UK's recycling department. As more meetings are held and more information is gathered, the project will be able to continue to move forward.

Proposed Project:

The project will consist of an increase in the number of recycling bins on campus, and within the downtown area of Lexington. Hopefully an increase in public awareness of recycling and what is recyclable will accompany this increase in available public recycling sites. The end goal of this project is to provide students and the general public with a recycling bin next to almost every public trash can. Though this may seem like an extensive and costly project, the benefits should far outweigh the expenditures. In addition to a massive increase in public recycling bins, I would also like to send out a periodic publication – on campus and off – which would educate the general public on what can be recycled and what cannot be recycled. This publication could possibly be included with the current LFUCG newsletter.

This project will affect the community in which it will occur both directly and indirectly. With respect to the indirect benefits, recycling may seem to be of minimal importance to the individual, though it is much more important on a larger scale. By increasing the amount of waste that is recycled rather than simply discarded with the regular trash, the project will be able to decrease the amount of waste that is introduced to landfills every year as well as decrease the need for new, rather than recycled, materials. In addition to the general global benefit that an increase in recycling brings, there is also the possibility that the number of jobs on campus and in the city could increase – this would be due to the additional labor needed to relocate the recyclable material from the bins to the recycling plants. The project would also directly benefit the community by bringing both the University of Kentucky and the city of Lexington up to par with the leaders in

recycling in the United States and around the world. On a list of the top 200 green US cities, Lexington ranked 128th. Though this is the highest ranking Kentucky city, an increase in recycling could move it even further toward the top of the list. Though a large numerical list of green colleges could not be found, descriptions of some of the top green colleges were located. Having read these, there is much that UK must accomplish to catch up to these leaders. Though this project will not accomplish this alone, hopefully it will spur other changes that could make Kentucky's flagship college a green leader.

Schedule:

At this moment the project does not require a highly specific schedule, though this will surely change as more groups and organizations are contacted and worked with to bring this project to fruition. At the current stage, the schedule for this project is thus:

- First, the sites for UK's pilot run as well as the particular receptacle to be used need to be finalized. This will involve periodic meetings with the head of UK's recycling program.
- Second, meetings with the head of LFUCG recycling must be held and a specific schedule for the Lexington portion of this project must be developed.
- Third, meetings with the appropriate people to organize a periodic, educational publication regarding recycling must be set up and the publication discussed and designed.

There should be no reason why these steps cannot be completed by January of 2009. A more specific schedule will be developed in coordination with the appropriate individuals as the project continues to progress.

Budget:

At this stage a specific budget has yet to be organized. However, certain expenditures have been taken into consideration. Such expenditures include the cost of the recycling bins themselves, as well as the cost of the increased labor required for the additional waste pick-up. These costs should eventually be covered by the University's budget – for the UK portion of this project – and the city of Lexington's budget – for the downtown portion of this project – though getting the University and the City to approve these increases in expenditures will be nothing short of a monumental task. In addition to these costs, which are directly related to the project and its longevity, there will undoubtedly be costs involved in the planning process itself, for instance the cost of a pilot run on UK's campus. Though other specific costs are not known at this time, allocations for unexpected costs will be made.

Sources:

http://www.citymayors.com/environment/us_greencities.html

– A list of the top ten greenest cities in the US and what they do to maintain their status.

<http://blog.ratestogo.com/top-20-green-cities-in-the-world-i/>

– A list of the top twenty greenest cities in the world and a description of their programs.

http://www.countryhome.com/greencities/greencities1_100.html ;

– A list of the top 100 green cities in the United States.

http://www.countryhome.com/greencities/greencities101_200.html

– A continuation of the above list of the top green US cities; numbers 101-200

<http://grist.org/news/maindish/2007/08/10/colleges/>

– A list of some of the top green colleges in the world.