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Small changes lead to huge differences. Xavier University of Louisiana's Sustainability Office awarded two grants for recycling awareness and sustainability efforts

New Orleans, LA - Xavier University of Louisiana's Office of Facility Planning and Management (FPM) Sustainability Office, XULA Green, has again received an \$8,000 Healthy Communities grant for recycling awareness and initiatives from the Keep Louisiana Beautiful Foundation (KLB). XULA Green also received a \$5,000 grant to turn Xavier's Katharine Drexel Residential Hall "green."

This year's KLB grants will enable Xavier to educate students about waste reduction and the dangers of pollution; increase current campus recycling capacity to reduce campus litter and waste; fund activities focused on the purpose of recycling, reducing and reusing; and teach students and the general public about environmental issues caused by waste pollution.

"We are always grateful for any funding that will aid us in improving the university's sustainability efforts," said **Helena Robinson, director of sustainability and quality control at Xavier University of Louisiana**. "These grants will allow us to make small changes on campus that will make huge differences for the lives of students and a major impact on our on-campus environment."

The Xavier sustainability office, XULA Green, is dedicated to supporting Xavierites as the University works to reduce its carbon footprint and build a more equitable society by developing sustainable infrastructure, cultivating environmental stewardship, and advocating for climate justice on and around campus.

"We have conquered the easy part by creating recycling programming; now it's time to tackle the hard part, which is to create engagement and awareness around recycling so Xavierites know they are doing their part in reducing our campus waste," said Robinson.

With the aid of these grants, XULA Green has developed a variety of waste reduction and sustainability efforts, including a cardboard baling program, a water bottle refilling station, new interior and exterior recycling sorters, and several renewable energy sources and green buildings on campus. Within the first year of its establishment at Xavier, XULA Green worked to ensure that Xavier's waste management system would be reinvented and created a comprehensive campus recycling program.

In addition to new sustainability tools, the new KLB grants will allow the University's sustainability office to purchase a utility golf cart to increase waste and cardboard collection efficiency as well as event setup and engagement needs.

In addition to educating students and providing resources, XULA Green also hosts campus events, including Earth Week Celebrations, Global Recycling Day, Recycling Awareness Month, Bike to Work Day, and World Climate Teach-in. In XULA Green's second year in the Campus Race to Zero Waste competition, Xavier was the only school in Louisiana to participate, and they ranked 39th out of 126 schools nationwide.

"Your college campus look and feel make up your learning environment. A healthy, positive learning environment is critical for students' overall success," **said Lauren Walton, student leader in XULA Geaux Green, the University's student-led sustainability group.** "We all know how and why it's important to make sure that Xavier looks good on the outside, but it's also important to us that we do our part to keep the community beautiful and sustainable for the Xavierites that will come to receive an education here after us. We are constantly asking ourselves how and what we can do to improve."

XULA Geaux Green has received an abundance of support and have collected clothing donations through on-campus events. XULA Geaux Green, XULA Green, and XULA Fashion Society successfully hosted their first collaborative event, "XU Yard Thrift," where Xavier students donated and provided free clothing to promote eco-friendly, sustainable fashion.

"You can expect there to be more intriguing, sustainable campus events. It has been a pleasure to serve at such a capacity and be a part of the change here at my dear HBCU," said Walton.

XULA Green strives to connect environmental initiatives at Xavier and in New Orleans to create comprehensive programming and long-lasting, impactful change. XULA Green is also dedicated to decreasing campus landfill waste, creating a stormwater management infrastructure, and developing a bike share program.

For more information about XULA Green and campus initiatives, contact Helena Robinson at hrobins4@xula.edu or visit www.xula.edu/facility/xula-green.

About Xavier University of Louisiana

Xavier University of Louisiana, America's only historically Black and Catholic University, is ranked among the top three HBCUs (historically Black colleges and universities) in the nation. Recognized as a national leader in STEM and health sciences, Xavier produces more African American students who graduate from medical schools each year than any other university in the United States. Additionally, Xavier's College of Pharmacy is also among the top producers of African American pharmacists in the country.

Established in 1925, by Saint Katharine Drexel and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament as a place for African American and Native Americans to receive quality education, Xavier has since expanded its programs in art, business, education, biological sciences, chemistry, pharmacy and political science. More recent additions in robotics, bioinformatics, engineering, data science, neuroscience and genetics, in addition to new STEM-based master's programs, have provided Xavier students (2815 undergraduates and 787 graduates) an unbeatable combination of traditional classroom study, hands-on research, service-learning opportunities and life experiences. Xavier students collaborate with world-renowned faculty, who are experts in their fields, to produce award-winning research and notable work. The winning Xavier formula is to

provide students with a well-balanced curriculum and an environment that nurtures their intellect and feeds their souls, thereby facilitating a more just and humane society for all. For more information about Xavier University of Louisiana, visit us online at www.xula.edu or contact Regi Reyes at (504) 520-5240 or rreyes@xula.edu

About XULA Green

XULA Green, is managed through the Office of Facility Planning and Management. XULA Green's mission is to reduce our carbon footprint, improve the overall health of our environment, increase student knowledge on recycling, environmental protection initiatives, and eco-career opportunities.

About Keep Louisiana Beautiful

Keep Louisiana Beautiful, Inc. is a non-profit organization dedicated to achieving a cleaner, greener Louisiana through litter reduction and beautification initiatives. To learn about our network of Community and University Affiliates, grant opportunities, educational programs, and ways to get involved, please visit keeplouisianabeautiful.org. Keep Louisiana Beautiful is an Affiliate of Keep America Beautiful.

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