



# CRC's GREEN SCENE

A bimonthly newsletter of the Sustainability Committee at Cosumnes River College

Photo by Jim West

September/October 2014  
Volume 7, Issue 1

*In This Issue:*

- 1 **Students for a Sustainable Future Roll Out Initiatives**
- 2 **Student Profile: Jaime Gonzalez Wants to Transform CRC Community**
- 3 **Innovate! 2014 a Zero-Waste Event**
- 4 **2014-15 Campus OneBook Officially Launched**
- 5 **Green Apple Awards**
- 5 **News in Brief: Winn Center Water Station Remains Popular**

Photo above:  
Every drop counts—a reminder that California is in the midst of a severe drought.

## Students For A Sustainable Future Roll Out Initiatives for 2014-15

*Jaime Gonzalez reports...*

Students For A Sustainable Future (SSF) club members wasted no time this summer getting to work on new sustainability efforts for Cosumnes River College. Brainstorming began soon after the end of the spring semester and culminated in a set of initiatives the club hopes to implement fully by the end of Spring 2015.

The club's first initiative aims to reduce paper-towel waste in campus restroom facilities. The average person uses 2400-3000 paper towels every year, most of which ends up in landfills. To reduce this number, the club will be placing awareness stickers on every paper-towel dispenser on campus. Statistically, these stickers have been shown to save as much as 100 lbs of



CRC President Debbie Travis and students Jaime Gonzalez and César Aguirre unveil one of the new water filling stations.

paper per dispenser per year. (Source: <http://peopletowels.com/aboutpt/WageWarOnWaste>)

The waste reduction efforts continue as club members turn their attention to the CRC cafeteria. Currently, waste bins there enable students and staff to separate items bound for landfill,

(see SSF, Page 2)



## SSF Aims to Discourage Plastic Water Bottle Use

(From Page 1)

recycling, or composting. However, repeated studies have shown that these bins are ineffective in diverting landfill waste, a problem that has been attributed to a lack of proper signage. The club plans on making bright, new signs to help students and staff do a better job of separating their waste and thus improve overall landfill diversion on campus.

The club's final and most ambitious initiative aims to make CRC the first college campus in the Sacramento area to eliminate the sale of plastic one-time-use water bottles. 76% of plastic bottles in the United States end up in landfills or in the ocean and other waterways. The club has come up with a campaign strategy to provide sustainable alternatives

to plastic one-time-use bottles and has already begun serious talks to this end with the college administration.

The Students for a Sustainable Future club has a lot of work ahead of it, but it's safe to say that the club is getting CRC headed in a much greener direction. Stay tuned for news of SSF's progress! ♦

# Student Profile

## Jaime Gonzalez Wants to Transform CRC Community



Jaime Gonzalez snaps a selfie last summer during a hike on an SSF trip to Muir Woods, just north of the Golden Gate Bridge.

*Editor's Note: In this series, we spotlight CRC students with an interest in sustainability issues.*

While most high school students focus on finding the career that will land them the biggest paycheck, Jaime Gonzalez wanted to play music and change the world. As an avid musician, Jaime spent his first few semesters at CRC pursuing his passion in music production before deciding to shift his academic focus towards his other passion—sustainability.

Jaime's interest in sustainability was first sparked in high school, where he majored in environmental architecture. In 2008, he led a group of classmates in the Canon Envirothon, a nationwide sustainability competition for high school

students. Later, Jaime put this experience to use as a member of the Jr. ACE program, a non-profit educational outreach program for middle school students. For four years, he worked in the program as an after-school educator, teaching principles of sustainability.

Jaime is currently working on his last year of classes at CRC prior to transferring into the Environmental Studies program at CSU Sacramento. He is proudly serving CRC as president of the Students for a Sustainable Future club, through whose efforts he hopes to transform CRC and our community. It's evident from this issue of the *Green Scene* that he has already made an impressive start. ♦

## Innovate! 2014 a Zero-Waste Event

*Christina Ocrant reports...*

Cosumnes River College and the Sustainability Committee put their own green stamp on the third annual Los Rios Innovate! conference by making it a zero-waste event.

On May 22 and 23, 150 faculty, staff, and administrators from across the district converged on the Winn Center to share, learn, question, connect, and embrace innovative technology that supports student success. As part of the conference welcome, John Ellis, architecture professor, shared the vision and planning process behind the Winn Center during his presentation, “Buildings that Teach.”

**“The story about the students’ interest and involvement in the planning and development of the building was pretty inspiring!”**

For two days, conference attendees contemplated technology in education in sessions that included “Google Drive for Beginners,” “Screencasting Lectures using the iPad,” and “Flipping without Flipping Out.” Amongst the randomly awarded door prizes were solar charging kits for electronic devices.

**“The team did a great job! I loved the recycle concept and efforts put forth for that.”**

Attendees enjoyed a zero-waste breakfast and lunch service, which included sandwiches wrapped in wax paper (compostable), condiment dispensers (instead of plastic packets of ketchup and mustard), and refillable cups (compostable). Atlas Disposal delivered, at no cost, a two-yard food-waste bin to accommodate compost material,

and attendees were encouraged to bring their own reusable water bottles.

Professor Sharkey and her students manned the waste receptacles and enthusiastically explained which items were recyclable, which compostable. At the end of each day, they weighed the waste. The total waste for the entire conference was 68.7 lbs. Of that, 54.4 lbs was compostable and 12.3 lbs recyclable, leaving only 2 lbs of trash to send to the landfill. The Sustainability Committee was hoping for at least 90% waste diversion, but Innovate! 2014 achieved 97.1%—a thoroughly satisfying green stamp on the conference. ♦

**Interested in organizing a successful zero-waste event like this? Contact the Sustainability Committee for help.**



Architecture professor John Ellis presents “Buildings that Teach,” explaining the goals and vision of the Winn Center.



Geography professor Debra Sharkey displays the 2 lbs of landfill trash from the event and demonstrates a tear test on one of the paper cups. Tearing the cup to see if the lining is plastic (trash) or wax (compostable) allows proper sorting of waste.



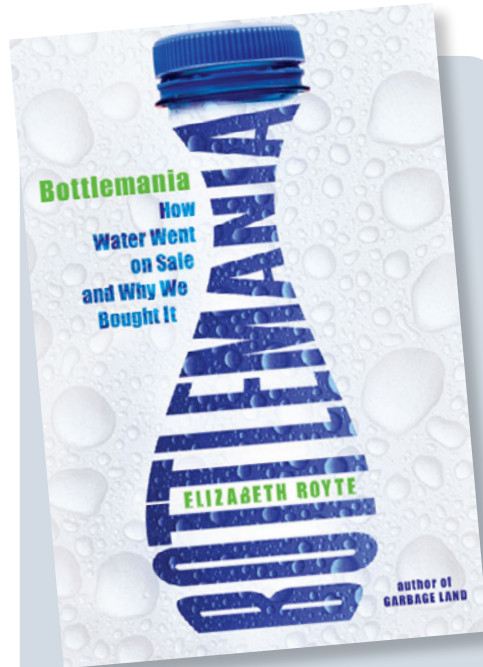
## 2014-15 Campus OneBook Officially Launched

Thursday, September 11 saw the official launch of the 2014-15 Campus OneBook, *Bottlemania: How Water Went on Sale and Why We Bought It*, by Elizabeth Royte. This eye-opening book explores the history of bottled water as a commodity as well as the social, economic, and environmental implications associated with the privatization of community water supplies by corporations such as Nestlé, Inc.

Rhonda Farley, ESL professor, kicked off the event on behalf of the OneBook Committee. Debra Sharkey, geography professor, followed with a presentation titled “Bottled Water: The Consequences of Convenience,” focusing on the growth and size of the bottled-water industry and comparing the huge difference in cost and regulation (for health and safety purposes) of bottled and tap water, as well as the negative health and environmental impacts associated with single-use plastic bottles.

**Student club describes plan to eliminate sale of single-use bottled water on campus.**

Next, the current and past presidents of CRC's Students for a Sustainable Future (SSF) club,



**If you haven't yet read *Bottlemania*, the campus Sustainability and OneBook Committees encourage you to do so and invite you to join the campus conversation about this important topic.**

Jaime Gonzalez and César Aguirre, explained the club's plan to launch an educational campaign that strives to eliminate the sale of single-use plastic water bottles on campus. In addition to stating the more obvious negative effects on the environment, they cited the incompatibility of plastic bottles with parts of CRC's Vision and Value Statements that refer to the campus's “respect for humanity and the environment” and “environmentally-responsible academic setting.” As an alternative, they proposed selling a new, more environmentally-

friendly product called “Boxed Water is Better,” which comes in a milk-like carton. They also advocated greater use of reusable water bottles through the retrofitting of water fountains on campus to make refilling bottles easier.

At the event, which was held in the Winn Center's Community Room and was well attended by students, faculty, staff, and administrators, CRC President Deborah Travis pledged to work with the SSF club to achieve its goals. She followed up immediately with an invitation to Gonzalez and Aguirre to make their presentation to all campus managers and administrators at the weekly management meeting – where these resourceful students received an enthusiastic response. President Travis subsequently asked Gonzalez to procure a sample retrofit kit for CRC campus water fountains to offer as a “Fund a Need” auction item for the annual CRC Foundation fundraiser, the Taste & Toast Gala, on October 4. Thanks to the generosity of donors, \$4000 was raised – enough to retrofit eight drinking fountains on campus.

Way to get the ball rolling SSF club, CRC administrators, and OneBook Committee! ♦



## Green Apple Awards

### Kudos to...

- Distance education coordinator Greg Beyrer and team for planning the May Innovate! 2014 conference as a zero-waste event—with assistance from Prof. Debra Sharkey, Rio Bistro Cafe manager Rose Hickok and her staff, and CRC students Michael Kwong, Krista Liebig, Amanda Lee, César Aguirre, and Jaime Gonzalez.
- Construction professor Ryan Connally for entering CRC in SMUD's "Tiny House" competition, in which he and student volunteers have two years to build a small, portable, "net zero house."
- The OneBook Committee for inviting César Aguirre, Jaime Gonzalez, and Prof. Debra Sharkey to provide the sustainability angle at the OneBook launch.
- SSF club leaders Jaime Gonzalez and César Aguirre for their excellent presentations regarding elimination for sale at CRC of single-use plastic water bottles (see pages 1 and 4).
- President Travis and other administrators for their willingness to work with the SSF club to raise funds to retrofit CRC's water fountains to make it easier to refill reusable water bottles.
- Ken Cooper, director of college advancement, for helping SSF club president Jaime Gonzalez to obtain—on very short notice—an Elkay retrofit kit to be auctioned at the annual Taste and Toast Gala fundraiser. ♦

### Cosumnes River College Sustainability Committee

#### Members:

Steven Coughran (Chair)  
Julie Elliot  
John Ellis  
Cindy Erickson  
Cath Hooper  
Bob Johnson  
Christina Ocrant  
Andrea Salmi  
Sangchin Sertich  
Debra Sharkey  
Linnell Violett

#### Student Members:

César Aguirre  
Jaime Gonzalez

#### Newsletter:

Cindy Erickson  
Cath Hooper  
Christina Ocrant



*We're on the web!*

*Look for archived issues of the*

**GREEN SCENE**

*on the CRC Homepage*



## News In Brief

### Winn Center Water Station Remains Popular

According to Dean Robert Johnson, the downstairs water filling station in the Winn Center has been getting so much use that, at 16,300 bottles, the water filter had to be changed. Here, nutrition professor Timaree Hagenburger takes advantage of the clean, fresh water to refill her bottle: "The filling station is one of my favorite features of the Winn Center. I love it when I see students empty out their sodas and refill with water." ♦

Helped eliminate waste from  
**00016836**  
disposable plastic bottles

