

A Report on The First Year of the ENERGY STAR Showcase Dorm Room

The ENERGY STAR Showcase Dorm Room had an amazing first year. The project was kicked off on October 12, 2001 in conjunction with Tulane's homecoming celebration and parent's weekend. Meredith Younghein, Shelley Kahler, and Alana Paul were the first residents. They had a 3-person Suite in the River Village, which was housed in the Willow residence hall. In addition to the three residents, another key member of the energy team was Maureen Devery. She calculated the savings of the room and helped immensely with its creation.

The suite featured a total of 16 ENERGY STAR computers, lamps, CFLs, and other electronics. We had 8 sponsors: Canon USA Inc., Panasonic, IBM, GE Lighting, Harmony Lighting, Sears, Roebuck & Company, Catalina Lighting, and Entergy. Early estimates show a possible savings of \$200,000 if each of the 1708 dorm rooms on campus were furnished with ENERGY STAR appliances and electronics.

The publicity of the room received many different responses. Articles in the Hullabaloo, the student newspaper, made Shelley, Alana, Meredith and Maureen visible on campus. Their friends and acquaintances would often question them about the "cool free stuff" in their room. An article in the alumni magazine caught the attention of one of Shelley's professors. During one of the first classes of the semester, he prompted her to do an impromptu presentation to her mythology classmates.

The room and "Sleep is Good" door-hangers were also the target of some negative criticism toward the university. A student didn't see the value in saving money through energy efficiency because of the recent tuition hike. Her opinion was published in the Hullabaloo and Maureen wrote a letter in response. She reminded the student that saving energy is a proactive way that students can work to decrease tuition costs. Maureen's letter to the editor was received positively, and other students wrote in support of her position.

Our Accomplishments:

- ✓ With the help of the CBR computer team, we created a website that explains the project and features links to ENERGY STAR. It received 15,000 hits in the first quarter of 2002.

- ✓ The room was visited by Tulane's President, Senior Vice President of Planning and Administration, Senior Vice President of operations/Chief Financial Officer, Dean of Students, Executive Director of Facility Services, Director of Purchasing, and Director of Housing. In addition to these administrators, other visitors included people from the mayor's office of environmental affairs, Entergy, and Tulane faculty, students, and purchasing staff. The tours focused not only on what is in the room, but how anyone can incorporate energy efficiency into their lives.
- ✓ Pictures and articles about the room and its residents appeared in Tulane publications, including the staff newspaper, student newspaper, alumni magazine, and even a football program.
- ✓ After visiting the room, President Cowen made it one of the topics of his weekly "Tulane Talk" e-mail. Though it usually only goes to faculty and staff, this particular "Tulane Talk" was sent to the entire student body as well.
- ✓ We visited President Cowen's office and did an analysis of his energy use. We discovered that most of his existing electronics are already ENERGY STAR. Once we get him a new clock radio and have him "change a light" his office will be completely "ENERGY STARRED."
- ✓ We created a virtual tour of the room – a PowerPoint presentation that shows web surfers the electronics and appliances in the room and explains why they save energy.
- ✓ The CBR computer team created video footage of the dorm room and tour at the open house on October 12, 2001.
- ✓ We created and distributed creative educational materials. Alana created the "Sleep is Good" door hangers, which were put on every resident's door. Shelley created the global warming bulletin board; RAs can download this and use it to inform their residents about climate change and energy use.
- ✓ We have been working with the purchasing staff to encourage the purchase of ENERGY STAR labeled electronics for offices on campus. The Senior Vice President of Operations has agreed to send a memo to all department purchasers encouraging them to ask for ENERGY STAR.

- ✓ Meredith has been working with the Tulane bookstore to incorporate ENERGY STAR into their product line. They have already agreed to carry compact fluorescent lamps and bulbs.
- ✓ Maureen and Alana presented the project and its savings potential to a meeting of the Chairs and Directors of the Liberal Arts and Sciences.
- ✓ We gave a presentation on connecting campus life to global climate change, which featured the room, at the Greening of the Campus IV conference at Ball State University in September 2001. We did a presentation to city environmental leaders at the Mayor's Environmental breakfast in October 2001. Maureen presented the room at a conference at Lewis and Clark in Portland, OR in February 2002. We also presented to the Sierra club in April 2002.