

Rising to the EcoChallenge

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When our Shannon Tocchini borrowed a sewing machine from colleague Ellen Ridgeway to create Halloween costumes for her purebred Whippets Sucia, Fraya and Matia, it aligned with one of the EcoChallenge commitments. Defined as “sharing economy,” it’s a commitment to sharing, borrowing or renting versus buying more stuff.

Last month’s EcoChallenge, powered by the Northwest Earth Institute, is an online educational platform that challenges participants to take action on environmental and social issues that matter to them.

Over 100 actions within nine challenge categories provide participants with diverse options. Categories include waste, health, food, simplicity, energy, nature, water, transportation and community. The efforts made during this challenge not only raise awareness, but are known to change a behavior permanently, thus altering the impact exponentially.

Observations from some of our team:

Visiting the main recycling facility this year probably had the biggest impact on me of any part of this challenge. I definitely recommend that if you care about recycling, you should seek out this opportunity to educate yourself on how that process takes place. It is well worth the trek.

—**Nicole Campbell**

We, as humans are part of our community that on its own is part of an environment that surrounds it. If we are healthy, it will translate into our community and consequently into our environment. —**Paulo Vasconcelos**

It's been interesting to see how many actions I already do, which means I am challenged to do even more. I have to be honest and admit that I've been resting on my laurels a bit, but I am gaining invaluable perspective into my personal commitment to sustainability in this process. —**Jenn Bies**

My family survived the meatless meals and were enlightened by watching documentaries about food. The most successful meatless meal was the sweet potato crusted spinach quiche. —**Irene Ng**

It's always important to be reminded of the simple things you can do daily to make a difference. —**Teresa Morse**

10 of many team accomplishments:

- Reused and recycled 504 plastic bottles
- Volunteered 56 hours
- Avoided 289 disposable cups
- Saved 1,140 pounds of CO₂
- Avoided driving 1,270 miles in a car
- Composted 62 pounds of waste
- Saved 1,900 gallons of water
- Spent 5,200 minutes learning
- Consumed 263 meatless or vegan meals
- Travelled 960 miles by bus

EcoChallenge engaged a record 16,615 participants across 842 teams from 79 countries, and our team of 58 ranked 20th worldwide.