Student Assistants Make the CU Green Labs Program a Reality: How Student Help Can Grow Your Green Lab Program

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Learning Objectives

- Understand the roles student assistants play
- Tools we utilize to coordinate student work and facilitate projects
- Benefits to our students in variety of ways
- Suggestions for hiring student assistants
Type of Work Done by Undergrad Student Assistants

- Recycling pick-up coordination
- Recycling expansion
- Fume hood sash checks
- Outreach on specific topic
- Poster/Sticker/Magnet Creation
- Contest monitoring
- Research/data collection
- Switching out posters
- Timer delivery
- Metering
- Procedure documents

- Mobile -20C freezer delivery
- Leadership roles
- I2SL Presentations
Types of Work Done by Graduate Students

- Leadership in department
- Organize meetings/webinars
- Onboarding new arrivals
- Grant writing for ideas
- Presentations at conferences
- Document review
- Specific projects
  - Green chemistry education proposal
  - Green chemistry survey of undergrads
  - Autoclave best practices
  - Autoclave metering
Hiring student assistants: ~3/yr for total of 10-12

- Online applications & in-person interviews coordinated by Env. Center
  - Preference for students looking for 3-4 years of employment
  - Good people skills for outreach
  - Past experience that points to responsible, dedicated work
  - Specific skills that they can bring to the team
- Environmental Center support with hiring requirements
  - CU Green Labs expectations for student assistants
- Weekly group meetings
  - Individual meetings every other week
- Starting pay is $12.25/hr for 5+hrs/week
- Maintain a team with some senior assistants to help train new hires
- Team building activities
Safety and Access to labs

Safety

● Safety email (similar to general chemistry teaching lab requirements)
● PPE provided (safety glasses & gloves)
● Senior assistants training new assistants
● Green Labs and EH&S partnership - monthly meetings to cover activities

Access to labs

● Name tag that identifies student as Green Labs Assistant
● Most labs are open and accessible
● Some locations require special access
Career Benefits for Students

- Resume builder
  - Experience unlike other applicants
- Hands-on experience & learning new skills
  - Important for interviews
- Letters of reference
- Posters - Adobe Illustrator
  - Name of webpage with poster
- Temporary employment after graduation
- Summer and break work opportunities
Panel: Benefits of Working for Green Labs

- Do you like the type of work that you do?
- Is it always the same?
- Is there room for creative work?
Panel: Challenges of Working for Green Labs

- What it is like to walk into a lab as an undergrad?
- How easy is it to step into the role of an assistant for CU Green Labs? What is the learning curve like?
- What kind of problem solving skills are needed?
- Flexibility with different professional culture and interactions during outreach?
Panel: Tools we use to organize

- Work queue
- List of Contacts
- Procedure documents

Panel: Other topics?
Questions?

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