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Rebel Recycling Program

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Rebel Recycling Program

Social Problem

- The amount of waste produced every year is alarming and it is an ongoing issue
- Years ago, it seemed that there was “a simple remedy for the country's growing mountain of waste: If Americans would simply reduce the volume of stuff they buy, reuse what they have and recycle the rest, the depletion of natural resources would be slowed and there would be fewer potentially toxic garbage dumps”
- Three-quarters of all Americans recycle at home, making recycling one of the nation's most popular environmental activities. Skeptics argue that recycling does little to help the environment and often costs more than burying waste in landfills, but rising energy prices and concerns about climate change are strengthening the supporters’ case.
- The Rebel Recycling Program started in July 1995, and are currently collecting about 2.8 tons per day
- In 2003, they collected 374 tons of recyclables. In 2011, that number increased to 719 tons

Service Learning Experience

- Some of the people that are a part of the program, and who I was lucky enough to be able to talk to and learn from, explained that they take part in it because they feel that it is important
- Simply putting out bins provides a learning opportunity for someone
  - People are powerful when they come together and so much can be accomplished
  - We went around the entire stadium and went up and down the bleachers collecting cans and bottles. We each had two bins, one to empty out any liquid left in the cans or bottles and we put the recyclables into the other bin
- It took hours to set-up and hours to clean-up
- There were a couple other people helping out. Some were there because they needed to serve time for court, some were helping out because they wanted to get a good recommendation for housing, and some were just there because they wanted to help
- We went around and separated bins, put bags in them, and relocated them to different sections around the stadium
- We also set up recyclers next to each trash can in the tailgate
- They may not know what the bins are for, but they can ask someone and learn more about what they can do to help the environment. Waste and litter directly affects the community. Working together as a community to make it a better place is so important
- From my experience, I do agree with the coordinator, Tara, that the program is helping the environment
- By having this group of people, this team, they are able to collect everything and recycle it. The stadium was cleaner, the bottles and cans will now go to good use, and the environment and community will benefit from it

Difference Making and Future

- If they weren’t there to separate and collect all the recyclables, it most likely would have gotten swept up into the trash and taken to a landfill. Bottles and cans take years to decompose
- By putting out recycle bins, you can teach people what they are and you give them the option to help save the environment
- I think that spending some of my time with them and helping out did make a difference and hopefully made things a bit easier for the workers at the site
- It opened my eyes a bit and I’m glad. The people who are a part of the program really do care and they work hard
- This is important to me because now that I live here in Las Vegas, I consider this my home and community
- I want to do what I can to make the community a better place for myself and everyone here
- This program is helping to make a difference and hopefully people continue to help out and educate others in order to reduce the amount of waste and to better the community as a whole

Briana Pacheco

References
