Student Fee Request
2009-2010

Project Name:
Union Sustainability Initiatives

Project Description:
1. Recycling: The Unions are financially responsible for recycling, and the cost to continue recycling will increase significantly next fiscal year. Associated with the cost of recycling is labor to manually sort waste as well as a contract for the waste to be removed from campus to commence the recycling process. The Unions have received feedback that we should also 1) provide more educational material and create awareness in regards to campus recycling, 2) provide more visible recycling stations, and 3) be more informative about our recycling efforts.

2. Green Disposable Products: Dining Services uses nearly $116,000 of disposal products annually. These are products are generally not environmentally friendly, thus a massive setback in our attempts to decrease our carbon footprint. This project entails purchasing "green" disposable products so that we may be more effective in bettering environmental efforts. For this aspect, we are requesting the difference in the cost of purchasing "green" products versus environmentally unfriendly products.

3. Green Machine: A piece of equipment meant for maximizing cleaning efficiency as well as eliminating "the environmental impact of producing, packaging, transporting, using and disposing of traditional cleaning chemicals." For this aspect, we are requesting the difference in the cost of purchasing "green" floor scrubber versus an environmentally unfriendly one.

4. Water Conservation Products: Further environmental sustainability includes efforts to save water. 27 Waterless urinals would be installed in the Union bathrooms to address concerns regarding the wasteful use of water resources. By installing waterless urinals the Unions would reduce the water usage by 810,000 gallons annually, thus being more economically and environmentally sustainable. Funding would cover the actual equipment for completing the project.

5. YOUnion Aid: A new program designed to address the issue of sustainability, as a whole, at the Unions. The primary focus of the program would be to increase awareness about sustainability and its many facets. The four focus areas include educational, environmental, economic and social initiatives. Education would be the primary focus to increase awareness about maximizing resources while reducing/eliminating waste. Workshops, student staffing and volunteer efforts would comprise the programming aspect while being actively engaged in overarching Union sustainability initiatives such as those previously mentioned.

Student Priorities:
Students are concerned with the future and how the environmental impact of today affects tomorrow. This concern brings sustainability to the forefront of student concerns and areas of interest. Reducing our carbon footprint, being aware of such efforts and securing the longevity of our environment is a concern addressed by these initiatives.

Also, students are seeking employment and volunteer opportunities which would be created, specifically by a program such as YOUnion Aid.

Finally, students wish to be altruistic, innovative and civically engaged leaders. Engaging in innovative sustainability programming, as well as sustainable product and equipment implementation, propels the Unions and its students to be a leader in this effort.

**Anticipated Impact:**
Sustainability programming, products and equipment implementation would educate individuals who associate with the Unions. By increasing awareness, students and Union employees will be more inclined to be a positive contribution towards maintaining a sustainable environment. As a result, the Unions will reduce its carbon footprint and benefit economically from conservation efforts. For example, switching to waterless urinals will save the Unions 30,000+ gallons per urinal per year, multiplied by 27 new urinals yields 810,000 gallons that would be saved annually. Another impact is the creation of volunteer and employment opportunities. On a greater scheme, the Unions and consequently the U of A will be a competitive and innovative leader for sustainability efforts.