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Earth Jam kicks off celebratory Earth week

Megan Troutman Apr 24, 2015



NAU students jamming out and painting what they about love earth. Earth Jam April 17, 201. (Photo by: Garrett Harper)

Garrett Harper

Despite wind tunneling through the South Quad and dark clouds swirling above, music continued to accompany environmentalists across campus who came together for Earth Jam, an early celebration of Earth Day.

Earth Jam, organized by the environmental club Green Jacks, was created to raise awareness about sustainability and other organizations around campus. Students were jamming to music about the Earth, while various organizations held booths lining the corner of the

quad. Although the weather was more tumultuous than planned, students still came to enjoy to the event and learn about sustainability.

Sophomore environmental science major Dylan Lenzen was excited for the event.

“Yeah I’m excited. This is actually a really good turnout for the weather,” Lenzen said. “I’m actually surprised that everyone came out who did.”

Lenzen is the vice president for Green Jacks, and will be president for the club next semester. For Earth Jam, Lenzen worked to pass out invitations to environmental organizations to come table for the event.

“We were trying to get as many groups as possible and we weren’t sure if everybody would show up, and I think everybody did show up,” Lenzen said. “More people keep coming too, which is great.”

Earth Jam was made as a pre-Earth Day event to kickstart more events for Earth week.

“We wanted to boost the sustainability awareness on campus and for everyone to get together and have fun right before Earth Day,” Lenzen said. “And also to let everyone know what’s going on, like Take Back the Tap, and other organizations on campus.”

One of the booths was decorated with a line of plastic water bottles, representing the amount of bottled water the average American drinks in one year.

This booth was for the campaign Take Back the Tap, an organization to ban water from university vending machines and build more water bottle refilling stations across campus.

“We’re basically doing it because we think that bottled water should be a public service and not a corporate commodity,” said senior environmental studies major Bobbi Wilson. “Having big corporations like Nestle and Coca-Cola basically owning our water and selling it back to us for two times more than it’s worth.”

Wilson is the campus coordinator for Take Back the Tap, and was invited to run an informational booth at Earth Jam. Her booth had pledges for students to sign to use tap water instead of bottled water.

If the university gathers the most pledges out of 30 other involved campuses, then \$1,500 will go toward refilling water bottle stations.

“We’re mostly just excited to get signatures,” Wilson said. “To get more signatures and see if we might end the contest and get the new refilling stations.”

Take Back the Tap is run by an organization known as Food and Water Watch. The project will officially be taken on by Green Jacks next year to make sure the pledges follow through.

“Originally, it was just a jam,” said freshman environmental studies major Jack Meyer. “When we were planning, that was supposed to be it — a bunch of people just jamming all day everywhere, but then groups started coming out asking to come table, so we just sent out a big invite to all the groups to just do it. So it worked out pretty well.”

Meyer is involved with several environmental groups on campus and is also an active member of Green Jacks.

“Everybody came out and all the booths just did their own thing,” Meyer said. “We gave them tables but that was it — everyone doing their own thing while enjoying the Earth.”

Green Jacks hopes to make Earth Jam an annual event to start Earth Day activities. They also hope to start up a series of events called “Seminars for a Better World,” described as similar to TED Talks.

“The ‘Seminars for a Better World’ will be awesome,” Lenzen said. “As for sustainability, I think the overwhelming thing from students is how they can get involved.”

With these talks, students will be able to hear from professors and experts about what they can do to take part in saving the Earth.

Lenzen is excited for the new programs Green Jacks will bring to campus. This year, Green Jacks was focused on expanding the program, so now they will work on specific programs and events.

“This year did a really great job growing the club,” Lenzen said. “We want Green Jacks to be that base for people to tap into, so if you have an idea you come to us and we can help you set it up and then the whole group is there to use as a resource for volunteering or helping

you.”