



2020-21 Awardee

Allison Altobelli and Miya Wagner

Thrift and Flop

Allison Altobelli and Miya Wagner are students in the Klein College of Media and Communication at Temple University, both earning degrees in Communications Studies. Allison has a minor in digital media engagement and Miya has a minor in psychology.



As the recipients of the 2019-2020 Green Grant, they used their funds to create a unique peer education experience, shedding light on the negative effects of fast fashion and channeling their creative skills to upcycle clothing and promote more conscious consumption through their organization, Thrift and Flop.

Thrift and Flop began their community through an Instagram page, inviting students to create unique pieces of clothing and community offering a special creative space where campus life, fashion and sustainability could come together. Now in the 2020 school year, Thrift and Flop has over 800 followers and 85 dues paying members. Their success was recognized by Student Activities when they won the Outstanding New Student Organization of the Year in spring 2020. Thrift and Flop's success is embodied in their community of waste conscious, fashion forward students.

The Problem With Fast Fashion

In America, we throw away about 4 billion pounds of clothing annually – making textile waste a huge challenge and one of the world's largest pollutants, as 85% slowly decay in landfills. Meanwhile fashion production comprises 10% of total global carbon emissions in a resource intensive manufacturing process. The industry requires about 700 gallons of water to produce a single cotton shirt and 2,000 gallons for a pair of jeans.



When students see other students taking action, they feel more inspired to join in.

Fast fashion is an ongoing environmental crisis, as we see statistics from the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change noting that emissions from textile manufacturing alone are estimated to increase by 60% by 2030.



How is Thrift and Flop a climate solution?

Thrift and Flop offers a solution: upcycled clothing. They are challenging themselves and their peers to think beyond just recycling, to repair, reuse and rethink, by starting with clothes that would otherwise be thrown away, we reimagine these garments for a different use and create a unique, beautiful piece of clothing. By altering their aesthetic or repairing them, the product life cycle is extended, and more fashionable, creative pieces are brought into the world responsibly.

According to Allison and Miya, Thrift and Flop encourages a movement to take whatever you already have in your closet and to “transform it into something entirely new” rather than constantly purchase the next, latest trendy item. “This cycle of buying and throwing out

clothes is what ultimately ends up producing more and more waste”

Our fashion-forward activists offer a solution by creating a strong community where students feel excited about sustainability, fashion, and creativity. The organization’s goal is “to focus on avoiding fast fashion and look within your own closet before buying something new. Thrifting and upcycling decrease our reliance on unjust labor practices and sweatshops, and the amount of ecologically harmful textiles, like the synthetic microfibers that end up in our oceans.”



Thrift and Flop in action?

Thrift and Flop holds weekly demo meetings, hosts photoshoots, plans thrifting trips around the city, officiates clothing swaps, produces fashion shows, and even conducts giveaway contests. The best part? The club provides all supplies necessary to upcycle and design your pieces.



Zero Waste is not just recycling but it's repair, reuse, rethink!



Let's hear from
Miya Wagner.

Let's hear from
Allison Altobelli.

"I wanted to create a community of creative, like-minded individuals that want to do good for the earth and be authentic. I found myself going to clubs for my resume but didn't feel genuinely excited to go. I also wanted to create a club on campus that combined three of my favorite things: art, thrifting, and fashion. Thrift and Flop is a community that encourages authenticity, creativity, and most importantly, sustainability in the form of fashion. Bringing light to alternative shopping experiences to young, creative college students has opened doors for our many members to not only create pieces that they love, but to meet people that want to make an impact on the world just by simply being more mindful. This club has been the highlight of my college experience and has become a part of me."

"I've always loved fashion and being creative with my look but within the past few years, sustainability has become really important to me. I started thrifting in high school and loved the creative freedom that came along with the \$3 jackets I was purchasing. Miya approached me in a class that we had together with this idea of upcycling clothing, making new pieces with friends, and developing a creative outlet for students to meet, share ideas, and thrift. I couldn't believe this didn't exist already, so I was totally on board and it completely blossomed into something we never expected."

How do student-led initiatives affect change on campus?

Miya and Allison mention how impressive it looks to those in positions of higher power to see younger students taking control of things they are passionate about. They say, “when a community of students can come together, especially about sustainability, which is a growing global concern, the need for change becomes more prevalent and immediate.”

How did the Green Grant support your mission?

The Green Grant enabled Thrift and Flop to purchase needed supplies for their meetings and operations making this semester of remote engagement and learning possible. The Office of Sustainability bought low-impact and reclaimed materials for embellishment and surplus and wholesale fabrics from FabScrap and Fabric Scrap Box. The Office of Sustainability continues to guide Allison and Miya, bringing their vision of fashionable and creative sustainability and zero waste practice to life.




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