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Media Relations

Students Save More Than \$12,000 In 2011 Energy Challenge

December 23, 2011

DURHAM, N.H. -- Since 2006 students have been competing in an annual Energy Challenge among the on-campus dorms and apartments. This year, the newly renamed UNH Unplugged 2011 Energy Challenge yielded a savings of more than 85,000 kWh, a reduction of more than 35 metric tons in carbon emissions. This is the equivalency of \$12,000 in energy costs.

The top three winners, in order, were Hitchcock, Stoke, and McLaughlin halls. Most residence halls had energy captains, students who worked throughout the month-long challenge to promote energy saving practices to their fellow residents.

The Energy Challenge is timed to end right before Thanksgiving break when staff are encouraged to power down for the long holiday as well as for the December break.

Prizes for the winner this year are smart strips -- power strips that have different sections that dictate what electronics will be turned off. For example, a TV or computer can be plugged into the blue plug while other appliances, like cell phone chargers, are plugged into the multiple green outlets. The red section is for those appliances that need to be on all the time, like a mini fridge. The blue plug dictates the activity of the appliances in the green, so whenever the student shuts off his or her laptop, if it's plugged into the blue outlet, everything in the green section will also shut down.

Smart strips were selected as a way to encourage more energy savings in the buildings even after the challenge is over.


The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 12,200 undergraduate and 2,300 graduate students.


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