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Taking Back the Tap

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Taking Back the Tap

Sept. 28, 2012

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.— As a part of the Illinois Wesleyan University's commitment to sustainability, the Sierra Student Coalition (SSC) has collaborated with the Office of Residential Life (ORL) and the Residential Hall Association (RHA), to start the "Take Back the Tap" movement, in an attempt to reduce the plastic bottled water usage on campus.

As part of the movement, SSC with ORL and RHA handed out refillable water containers in exchange for students signing a pledge to not use the plastic bottled water. The organizations hope students will refill these bottles instead of using plastic ones. According to SSC member Jinny Alexander, the bottles given to the students are well made and have a wide opening that makes it easier to clean and use. The bottles are guaranteed.

Alexander, in speaking about the movement explained the environmental consequences of using plastic bottled water, "Studies show only one in seven water bottles is recycled and the others end up in landfills. Also three times as much water is used while manufacturing the plastic bottles than the amount of water that they can contain." According to Alexander, the myths about tap water being unsafe or bottled water being better are untrue. "Tap water in the USA is just as safe as the bottled water, it is strictly regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency. More than 40 percent of bottled water also comes from the municipal water sources and it is much more expensive than tap water."

The SSC started work on this movement last year when they formed a committee consisting of IWU students working for reducing bottled water consumption. They secured funding from the Student Senate for "Hydration Stations," innovative water refill stations, to be installed in campus buildings, including the new Main Classroom Building. "Our ultimate aim is to ban bottled water on the campus," said Alexander.



Alex Kim '13 and Megan George '13 pass out water bottles and take pledges in support of the Taking Back the Tap campaign.

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