



**MOLLOY UNIVERSITY**

**PARTNERSHIP  
FOR GLOBAL  
JUSTICE  
FELLOWSHIP**

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**END OF SEMESTER REPORT – DECEMBER 2023**

Celine Lukito and Demosthenes Maratos

# THE FELLOWSHIP

The **Molloy University Partnership for Global Justice Fellowship** is committed to the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and requires the fellow to become familiar with each of the UN goals, especially as they pertain to Long Island. The Fellowship also necessitates the fellow to select a goal and undertake a project to address that goal locally.

This semester's fellowship recipient, Celine Lukito, wisely recognized the interconnectedness of two crucial United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: Sustainable Cities and Communities (Goal 11) and Responsible Consumption and Production (Goal 12). In extending the groundwork laid by her predecessor, last semester's fellowship recipient Nina Scanze, Celine focused her efforts on amplifying the growing enthusiasm for recycling initiatives among Molloy's student body and faculty. Leveraging the prevailing momentum, she sought to translate this anecdotal evidence into tangible data, strategically utilizing it to advocate for enhanced recycling practices. The imperative to expand recycling at Molloy becomes ever more apparent, given the university's firm commitment to Pope Francis's environmental encyclical, *Laudato Si'*.

Molloy's commitment to *Laudato Si'* also highlights a paradox, wherein the university, embracing the Pope's encyclical, currently faces a gap in pursuing all possible avenues to advance recycling efforts. This presents an opportunity for Molloy to align its actions more closely with the principles it has ardently committed to, fostering a path towards comprehensive sustainability and embodying the spirit of *Laudato Si'*.

Celine's fellowship project was methodically structured to survey both students and faculty, evaluating their perspectives on the current state of recycling on campus and soliciting opinions on the desirability of expanding these efforts. The primary method of data collection was a series of engaging events held on campus in collaboration with the Office of the Mission at Molloy University and the Siena Center for Social Justice. These events not only facilitated meaningful discussions on sustainability in alignment with her chosen goals but also served as the platform through which Celine gathered the survey data used in this report. The culmination of Celine's research efforts took the form of a compelling letter accompanied by survey results, both of which were delivered to President Lentini. The overarching objective remains to catalyze transformative change and advocate for an expanded recycling framework within the Molloy community.

# FELLOW PROFILE



## CELINE LUKITO

**Senior - Graduating in  
January 2024**

- Double major in Mathematics and Computer Science, Honors Program
- Student Representative, Molloy University Laudato Si' Action Plan Committee
- Recipient of Presidential Dominican Scholar, Dean's Scholarship, Murley Henderson Science Scholarship, Mission Scholar, and Community Service Award
- Software Engineering intern @Eversana Intouch, Campaign.com, Meraki
- President of Math Club
- Member of EARTH and NATURE club at Molloy University
- Orientation Leader and Student ambassador at Molloy

# IN CELINE'S OWN WORDS

## INTRODUCTION:

It is an honor to be a recipient of the prestigious Partners for Global Justice Fellowship at Molloy University for Fall 2023. This opportunity has not only afforded me the chance to promote sustainability on campus, but it has also empowered me to take a leadership role in a cause that I am truly passionate about. Throughout my years at Molloy University, I have observed concern everywhere about the lack of recycling programs on campus, but no action has been taken to address these issues. The one thing that Molloy University's honors programs emphasize is the value of having a global perspective to improve society locally and globally. Moreover, after visiting other colleges and universities that have implemented sustainability programs, such as establishing

their own composting, greenhouses, and recycling plants, I feel both envious and compelled to witness these implementations in my own university.

Building on the work of the previous recipient, Nina Scanze, I am eager to extend her efforts in expanding the plastic recycling program. Nina has successfully generated general interest in the initiative by introducing the recycling program to students and faculty. By collaborating closely with the Sustainability Institute at Molloy University and Molloy Laudato Si, I have decided to focus on Goals 11 (sustainable cities and communities) and 12 (responsible consumption and production) of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



# PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

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During the summer of 2023, I had the opportunity to visit Aquinas College, a Laudato Si college in Michigan, facilitated by Molloy Campus Ministry. Aquinas College gained recognition as a top performer in the 2020 Sustainable Campus Index for their commendable zero-waste and urban forest initiatives. My visit included participation in sustainability workshops, personalized zero-waste training, and collaboration with representatives from the Center for Sustainability, providing invaluable guidance on integrating these principles at Molloy.

Inspired by Aquinas Campus Dining, which successfully incorporates compostable products in utensils and containers, I reached out to Lessing's Services at Molloy, discovering their own implementation of sustainable products. However, it became apparent that further action is necessary, as Molloy lacks the facility to process waste on-site. Unlike Aquinas College, Molloy currently does not

possess a composting facility, and there is no collaboration with an external facility to handle recycling of these products.

To address this gap, collaborative initiatives with representatives from Molloy facilities, Campus Ministry, and Laudato Si have been initiated. The objective of this project is to spearhead and sustain the recycling efforts at Molloy University.

The specific goals include:

1. Identify the challenges associated with implementing recycling initiatives on the campus.
2. Quantify the general interest in recycling by collecting and analyzing relevant data.
3. Collaborate with student organizations to foster enhanced student engagement in recycling initiatives.



# METHODS AND EXECUTIONS:

**Phase 1:** Raise awareness and interest in recycling programs among students by developing eye-catching posters and a survey, utilizing collected data to demonstrate support in a letter to the president.

**Phase 2:** Implement practical measures for a more sustainable campus by installing strategically placed recycling bins and deposit return machines.

**End Goal:** Foster a sustainable and eco-friendly campus by exploring additional initiatives to create a culture of environmental responsibility among the campus community.

## SURVEY

To raise awareness and boost interest in recycling programs, a survey was created and distributed among students and faculty at Molloy University. This survey aimed to capture perspectives on Molloy's recycling efforts and generate quantifiable data for presentation to the president. Responses were collected from 154 members of the Molloy community, including survey questions such as:

How satisfied are you with the current recycling practices on Molloy University's campus?

Do you agree or disagree with the statement: "Molloy University should expand its recycling efforts to include a wider range of materials,

such as plastic, glass, and other recyclables"?

What specific improvements or changes would you like to see in Molloy University's recycling efforts?

How important do you believe it is for educational institutions like Molloy University to actively promote and engage in sustainable practices, including recycling?

How likely are you to actively participate in initiatives to enhance recycling practices at Molloy University?

A copy of the survey is available for view by scanning the QR code.

**SURVEY**



## A DEPOSIT RETURN MACHINE

During several meetings with the facilities department at Molloy, we discussed the potential impact on the department if we were to install recycling bins on campus. Various concerns were raised, including questions about who would be responsible for picking up recyclables, where the storage for recyclables would be located, and the estimated cost associated with installing recycling bins and establishing a contract with a recycling facility for pick-up.

These discussions highlighted a shortage of space for the storage of cans and bottles. It was noted that items being discarded are often dirty, posing the risk of attracting pests. To comprehensively address this initiative, the appointment of a recycling manager is crucial. However, the current absence of staffing for recyclable management and the requirement for board approvals add complexity to this endeavor.

As part of Phase 2 in Nina's project, a recycling competition was previously held, where residence halls, athletic teams, and faculty departments competed to see who could recycle the most waste. Although cans and bottles were collected in lobbies, no one assumed responsibility for their disposal, leading the task to fall on facilities.

Moreover, those cans and bottles should be rinsed to prevent attracting pests. However, students face difficulties due to the absence of a designated space to rinse their cans and bottles before disposal. Concerns also arise about the potential improper disposal of trash in can and bottle bins, given the consistent occurrence of trash being thrown into recycling bins.

To address these challenges, I proposed installing water bottle return machines



throughout the campus. This approach aims to ease the burden on facilities, ensuring clear accountability for rinsing, collection, storage, and redemption. Students will be incentivized to recycle with a 5¢ money-back guarantee deposit back for returning their bottles. Installing these machines on campus, which automatically shred recyclables into small pieces, will not only provide users with monetary incentives but also reduce the storage burden. We have contacted several facilities using these machines and are awaiting approval from various departments to proceed with installation on campus.

We have also spoken with representatives from a recycling company, RecycleTek, to explore collaboration on this initiative. Additionally, we have contacted several companies to inquire about the bottle deposit return machine, aiming to estimate the associated costs.

# CAPACITY BUILDING, EDUCATION, AND OUTREACH ACTIVITIES:



Furthermore, concerns have been raised regarding the current paper recycling, where students frequently place food inside the blue paper recycling bin, preventing proper paper recycling. It has been observed that this occurs due to the absence of trash cans located next to the recycling bins, leading students to dispose of their trash wherever convenient. To address this issue, representatives from Molloy Laudato Si have submitted a work order to install more trash cans next to recycling bins. Additionally, we have gathered several posters and graphics to be placed on trash cans and recycling bins to educate students on proper sorting for recycling. These posters can be found in [this](#) google drive link. We anticipate a reduction in food in recycling bins through these initiatives.

## INSTAGRAM, POSTERS & FLYERS

Working with the Laudato Si department at Molloy, we have established an Instagram handle as a means to reach students and raise awareness about sustainability. I have designed several flyers to be posted on the @MolloyLaudatoSi Instagram account, providing us with a platform to share information with the student body. The Instagram account can be accessed by scanning the QR code. Moreover, we have designed posters featuring zero waste tips, eco-friendly actions to support sustainability, zero waste reminders, urgent calls to action to

support our Earth, and more. A compilation of those posters can be found in [this](#) google drive link.

## INSTAGRAM



## BRING YOUR OWN CUP, GET FREE COFFEE

With the primary goal of promoting sustainability by raising awareness among students and faculty to bring their own coffee mugs, we organized four successful free coffee events across campus, where 60 cups were consumed in under an hour at each event. The table also served as an opportunity for students and faculty to

engage with representatives from Molloy Laudato Si and the Office of Sustainability for more information on recycling at Molloy. Many students and faculty expressed verbal interest in the recycling initiative and would love to see it implemented on campus. Additionally, we provided posters and pamphlets to the public to encourage recycling awareness and encouraged them to follow our Instagram account for further information.



# PROJECT OUTCOMES:

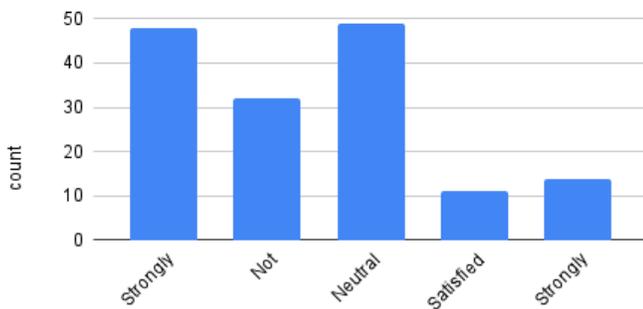
The survey revealed that only 16% of respondents are content with the existing recycling practices on campus, leaving a significant 84% who are not. Furthermore, 85% of all respondents expressed a firm belief that Molloy University should not just expand but actively champion its recycling and sustainability initiatives. Notably, all respondents conveyed a strong willingness to actively participate in such initiatives whenever opportunities arise.

Delving further into community opinion, 88% of all respondents believe that it is important for educational institutions like Molloy University to lead by example, and actively promote and engage in sustainable practices, including recycling. This indicates that a substantial portion of the campus community is dissatisfied with the current practices at Molloy, and believes that Molloy

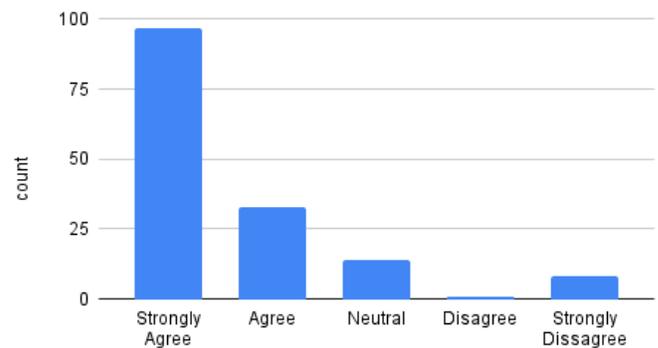
should improve its practices. The enthusiastic response underscores a shared eagerness to witness and actively contribute to the anticipated improvements.

A letter summarizing the key findings of this report has been sent to the president, and we are optimistic that with their support, these initiatives can gain further momentum. We hope to witness positive changes on campus, including the installation of recycling bins and water bottle return machines. It is essential to highlight that, as a Catholic Dominican University, Molloy has committed to becoming a Laudato Si university, with the responsibility to support the health of our campus and our common home, the Earth, in respectful stewardship of God's creation. The absence of recycling on campus reflects a gap in fulfilling that commitment to care for the environment.

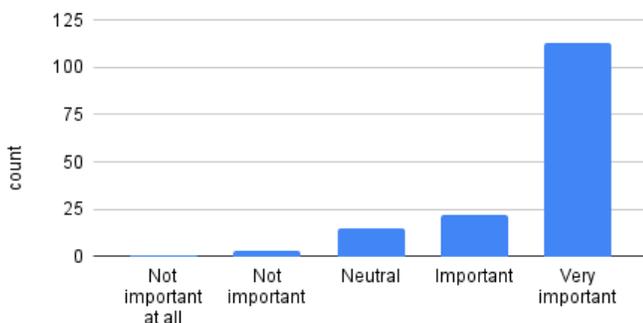
How satisfied are you with the current recycling practices on Molloy University's campus?



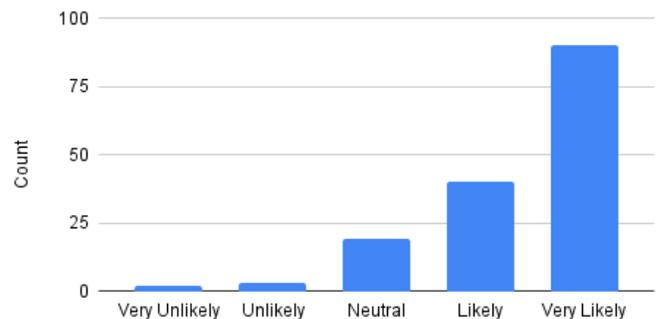
Should Molloy University should expand its recycling efforts?



How important it is for educational institutions to actively promote and engage in sustainable practices, including recycling?



How likely are you to actively participate in sustainability initiatives at Molloy University?



## FUTURE PLANS AND FOLLOW-UPS:

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In just three short months, I am hopeful that our efforts have made an impact, sparking an awakening among some students and faculty to push for further recycling implementation on campus. To broaden our reach, Laudato Si was invited to present at the Molloy Student Government meeting, which has been rescheduled to the spring semester. Additionally, the Laudato Si action plan will be presented at the college-wide Colloquium, where we are seeking endorsement.

A collaboration with Molloy Campus Ministry has been established, and I am eager to implement a campus-wide service day trip to local locations such as soup kitchens, the Amityville Sister House, Book Fairies Warehouse, and Homecoming Farm in the

next semester to encourage participation from the student body. Plans also include bringing back the previous recycling competition, extending it to the entire Molloy student body and clubs, with a focus on improved waste management this time.

Furthermore, Phase 1 of the project has been successfully executed, and we've seamlessly transitioned into Phase 2. Representatives from Molloy Laudato Si have actively communicated with facilities and reached out to various companies for the water bottle return machine. The anticipation is that this momentum will continue into the next semester with ongoing updates on the machine's installation on campus.

## PERSONAL IMPACT:

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Lastly, I would like to express my gratitude to Demo Maratos and the Sustainability Institute for providing me with the opportunity to be a recipient of this fellowship. This experience has allowed me to act on something I deeply care about, particularly within my alma mater, enabling me to make a lasting impact on Molloy's journey towards sustainability and environmental friendliness.

It would be a shame if Molloy grows into a great university but still lacks in seemingly small things, such as caring for the environment. How can we expect students to shine in the world when we are directly contributing to the decline of the environment? It seems hypocritical for us, as honor students, to be taught to be global citizens and to care

about the environment since freshman year. However, when students, along with faculty, unite to advocate for initiatives that would benefit the environment, significant resistance often arises, often due to financial concerns. How can we offer and promote a major in environmental studies, teaching the importance of recycling, while not implementing these practices in our own school? With these reasons in mind, I am hopeful that this initiative can come to fruition.

Thank you!

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

The *Sustainability Institute at Molloy University* acknowledges the generous endowment to establish the **Partnership for Global Justice Fellowship at Molloy University** and is very proud to be administering this unique opportunity for Molloy students. Since its establishment, this competitive fellowship continues to generate quite a bit of interest from many worthy applicants, and in keeping with Molloy's mission, has provided a meaningful student experience while contributing directly to the identification of approaches to ending, or at least mitigating, environmentally or socially damaging decision-making on Long Island.

