



Green Fund

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Hybrid Flatbed Printer Funded by NAU's Green Fund

The Northern Arizona University Green Fund recently passed a project to fund a flatbed printer for NAU's Printing Services. Over the previous spring semester, the committee voted to fund \$65,000 for this project. The flatbed printer, among other environmental savings, eliminates 1,800 square feet of wasted vinyl per year by allowing users to print directly onto a board instead of printing onto vinyl that is then mounted onto a board.

The printer will allow for Printing Services to offer paper based, biodegradable signs as opposed to plastic or polystyrene foam based ones for the university. This could potentially divert up to 5,300 square feet of plastic from landfills every year. Additionally, the printer itself is efficient—it saves 50-80% more ink than competitors. The LED bulbs on the printer automatically turn off when not in use, and last approximately 10,000 hours, which is double to triple the run time of competitors.

The Green Fund has an annual budget totaling near \$600,000. With this budget, the Green Fund is working towards NAU's Climate Action Plan of achieving resource efficiency and creating a culture of sustainability, which includes reducing waste. By using a printer that has efficient bulbs and reduces waste, the Green Fund and the rest of NAU can continue to commit themselves to these goals.

“NAU Printing Services has a huge opportunity and responsibility to ensure environmentally sustainable technologies and printing options are available to the NAU Community. This project wouldn't have been possible without the support of the Green Fund and we are forever grateful for their support and continued partnership in a more sustainable future,” Dylan Turner, Assistant Director of Printing Services, said.

In addition to its environmental savings, the printer also has a return on investment. The printer will pay itself off in two years because of its ability to reduce labor and material costs– it cuts labor in half. Printing Services also uses a software system to track and report on the annual total square footage that were diverted to sustainable options. These reports will be available on demand for any time range.

Additionally, Printing Services recently won an award from Communitas in the category of excellence in corporate social responsibility, which the printer helped them receive. Communitas Awards are an international effort to recognize businesses, organizations and individuals who give their time and resources to help better sustainability within communities.

The NAU Green Fund was founded in 2010 and is comprised of eight students in addition to faculty and staff members who vote to fund projects and research using the \$15 per student per semester Green Fee. All of the Green Fund's meetings are open to the public and any student, staff or faculty member can submit a proposal.

Additional Contact:

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