

## **This new DU event is necessary, and here's why**

As most of us already know, we are facing a climate emergency.

No matter the size of the impact, DU and its students, faculty, and staff have in some way contributed to this. The [Center for Sustainability](#) has been working tirelessly to make DU and its practices as sustainable as possible. Earth Day of DU-ing was created as a way for students to engage in sustainable practices and do a lot of good for the whole of Denver. More students should be caring about it.

Especially because Earth Day is only a few weeks away.



Figure 1 - [Garden Planting](#)

The University of Denver has adopted a set of 25 sustainability goals that they hope to accomplish by the year 2025 called the 25x25 sustainability goals. Seems pretty ambitious, right? These include energy, water, and waste goals while also incorporating outreach, engagement, and education. DU currently has a [silver star rating](#) from The Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System ([STARS](#)), and we hope to reach gold status by this year.

DU uses a lot of resources to service its community. That includes normal everyday use of water, electricity, and food on campus, but also the services needed to support the students that live on campus. According to [US News](#), 48% of the students at the university live in college-owned housing. The Center for Sustainability found that domestic use accounted for 69% of water use at DU in 2018. The same report found that domestic water use has been increasing over the years.

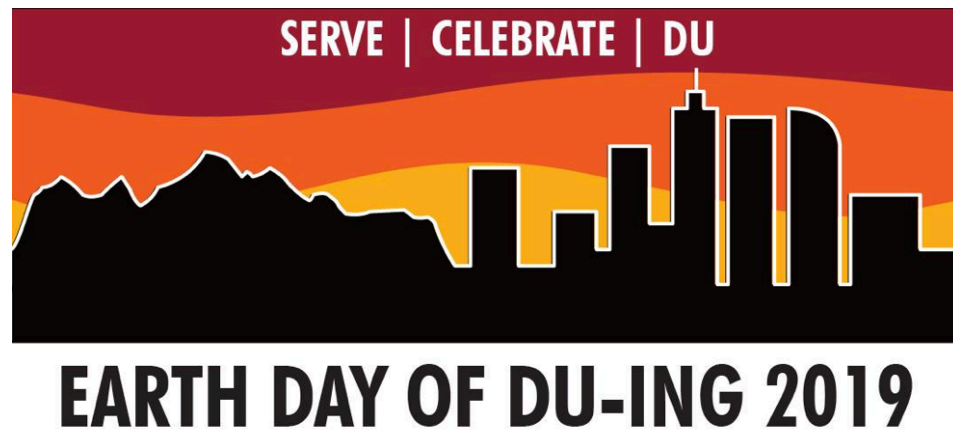
Something must be done.

Many of the [Center for Sustainability's initiatives](#) are meant to engage the DU community with sustainable practices, including the Renter's Efficiency Program for Students, DU Ski Bus, DU Bike Shop, Thrift Store, Food Pantry, Zero Waste Athletics, and Gear Garage are many of the programs DU has created for the community to promote sustainability.

These initiatives work best when students know about them, know how to use them, and understand the importance of them.

This is where Earth Day of DU-ing comes into play.

This event was spearheaded by the Center for Sustainability and in 2019 made its first appearance on campus. The event is meant to promote the [university's mission](#) of being a private university dedicated to public good. In its first year the Earth day event was a success. According to the 2019 Sustainability Report, there were 16 different projects completed throughout the day by 230 volunteers working for 700 hours to improve the Denver community. Volunteers were DU students, faculty members, staff, and even included some DU alumni. It seems small, but every hour and every hand helps.



*Figure 2 - [Earth Day of DU-ing 2019](#)*

Earth Day of DU-ing showed the impact that engagement can have, and it was only one day. It was a way to work hard for the environment, and it allowed people understand the small ways our actions hurt the environment. Or even how big actions can help.

The most impactful part of this was that it showed people that hard and meaningful work can be rewarding.

It's not surprising that most students wouldn't have paid attention to the number of [kilowatts per year of energy](#) the school is using, or even read the Sustainability Report. It can be pretty depressing. But events like these show the impact we can have and the power that community outreach has.

Who knows, maybe a student living on campus can participate in an event like this and realize the true cost of their 45-minute-long shower.

This climate emergency we are facing can feel daunting and never-ending, especially because most of the blame isn't meant to be placed on any one individual. Years of earth-destroying practices and a need for economic growth has brought us to where we are today. That being said, the safety and longevity of this planet shouldn't be pushed aside as a problem for other people to handle. Everything counts.

Earth Day of DU-ing is a perfect way for the average DU student to become aware of how their actions affect mother earth, and to do whatever they can to help her out. Because honestly, she needs a lot of help.

And Earth Day is quickly approaching.