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UD Christian Ethics and the Environment Class Partners with Recycling Effort to Improve Programs

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NEWS RELEASE

(NOTE TO EDITORS: The Christian ethics and the environment class meets Tuesday mornings from 7:10 to 9:40 a.m.)

**UD CHRISTIAN ETHICS AND THE ENVIRONMENT CLASS
 PARTNERS WITH RECYCLING EFFORT TO IMPROVE PROGRAMS**

DAYTON, Ohio — A classroom of University of Dayton students is venturing outside in search of a link between the scientific and the sacred. At the same time, they're making campus a cleaner, more resourceful community.

As part of their Christian ethics and environment class, the students have partnered with the University's recycling department to help cultivate its programs. From picking up cigarette butts to educating fellow students on curbside recycling, they have "rejuvenated the department," says one UD official.

"This department would not have half the programs and activities it has in place if it weren't for their help," says Kelly Stanforth, a UD student who works part time as the University's recycling coordinator. "I've worked personally with more than 70 students from the class. They've been amazing."

The rewards for the students are less tangible, says Sister Leanne Jablonski, S.M., who teaches the course.

"We want them to explore the relationship between their faith and the environment," Jablonski explains. "My hope is that they develop a sacred appreciation — a love, really — for nature that will last throughout their lives."

In spring 2000, students researched recycling opportunities on campus and then wrote a report on their findings. They recommended ways the University community could reduce paper and disposable food container use, Stanforth says. They also helped deliver recycling containers throughout campus and UD neighborhoods.

"This was a wonderful opportunity to spread the word of how recycling works on campus," says Stanforth, 22, a senior majoring in environmental engineering. "It's a very grass-roots, student-led initiative."

Last fall students installed commingle containers in all campus buildings; labeled

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recycling dumpsters on campus; picked up litter throughout campus; distributed flyers on paper, curbside and student-housing programs; and registered 75 UD houses for curbside recycling.

"They even designed and led a recycling activity at the University's child-care center," says Stanforth, who took the class in winter 1999.

Senior Nikki Shoemaker, 22, a public relations major from Bucyrus, Ohio, took the class last fall. She says it helped her connect nature to the Bible.

"We searched through the Bible for references to nature," she explains. "I never realized how many there are. It opened my eyes to the important part nature plays in my religion."

Michael Roma, a sophomore majoring in mechanical engineering, said the class helped him make the link between his major and nature.

"It was a difficult class but by the end of it I was looking at things differently," says the 19-year-old from Louisville, Ky. "I no longer look at engineering from just a scientific point, but consider how my job will affect the environment."

Aside from the service-learning requirement, students study current Christian thought in environmental ethics and how it relates to current science and environmental challenges, Jablonski explains. Students also keep journals on their interaction with nature and write ecological autobiographies to explore their family history and nature.

"These students are our future leaders, our scientists and engineers," Jablonski says. "It's important to the planet that they develop a sacred respect for the environment."

- 30 -

For media interviews, contact **Sr. Leanne Jablonski, S.M.**, at 937-429-3582 or via e-mail at jablonski@udayton.edu, **Kelly Stanforth** at 937-229-9378 or via e-mail at stanfokl@flyernet.udayton.edu, **Nikki Shoemaker** at 937-627-8549 or via e-mail at shoemana@flyernet.udayton.edu and **Michael Roma** at 937-627-5417 or via e-mail at romamics@flyernet@udayton.edu.