



Eco-friendly companies set example by supporting conservation efforts

DON'T BUY THIS JACKET



Patagonia is one brand urging customers to reduce, reuse, recycle | Patagonia

Companies make environmental sustainability part of their mission

by Darcie Kim

Our student body is undoubtedly fashionable and trendy. It's not uncommon to see girls wearing Lululemon leggings and white Stan Smiths, or guys wearing colored khaki shorts and a Vineyard Vines shirt. Different trends dominate fashion culture, but perhaps the most important trend is being overlooked: eco-friendly clothes. Awareness of the importance of a healthy environment has grown within the past few decades, with well-known organizations such as the Center for Marine Conservation and Greenpeace USA leading the charge to a greener future. However, it comes as a surprise to many that clothing brands are also making significant contributions to benefit the environment. Since 1985, Patagonia, a popular outdoor clothing brand, has been a part of the growing global movement 1% For the Planet.

They, along with 1,000 other brands, donate 1 percent of their annual sales to preferred groups from 3,000 approved environmental organizations. Patagonia specifically has given over \$74 million in cash and in-kind donations through the years to support domestic and international grassroots environmental groups. "Brands like Patagonia and Northface should give back [to the Earth] because they deal with the outdoors, and you would think that they would have some appreciation for the environment," said junior Grace Sheehan. Patagonia is hardly alone in incorporating eco-friendly into their sales. Amour Vert provides another example of a brand determined to do eco-good. The fashion-forward women's clothing brand can be seen on the racks of Nordstrom promoting an image of sustainability. As part of their Plant a T(r)EE program, they pledged to plant a tree in the U.S. every time a t-shirt is sold. To date, they have planted over 150,000 trees. "I think it's great how certain clothing companies are recognizing the importance of helping our environment. They have the resources to have an impact and

spread awareness, and taking part in specific movements like Plant a T(r)EE makes their company more appealing," said junior Alex Kotaba. Perhaps the brand that is best known for giving back to the environment is the shoe company TOMS. They manufacture shoes made of sustainable and vegan materials such as hemp, organic cotton, and recycled polyester. The shoeboxes are also made from 80 percent recycled post-consumer waste and printed with soy ink. Beyond sustainability, through their One for One movement, they have given 75 million pairs of new shoes to children, 450,000 weeks of safe water to people in seven different countries through sustainable water sources, and 500 eye examinations to restore sight for those in need, according to their website. Despite the indisputable benefits these brands have to the Earth, their messages promoting a healthier environment are still obscure. "I just remember that a girl did a project on [TOMS] in seventh grade, and it was about how they give their money to foundations every year," said senior Joe Bullard. It does not make sense that brands such as Patagonia and the Northface have a large number of customers, yet efforts to contribute to the health of our world are not widely recognized. "[Eco-friendly clothing brands] are not as promoted, and certain brands just dominate the market. Most people have brand loyalty and don't want to switch over unless the other brand has a much better product or looks a lot better," said senior Brian Kerwin. The difference that could be made if people were more aware and receptive to environmentally friendly clothing companies is significant. Consumers can control how many trees are planted or how many sustainable water sources are built, leaving a lasting impact on the world. "If everyone, not just a select few, were to purchase from brands that help the environment, then there could definitely be a lasting impact," said Kerwin.

Township goes green outside New Trier



Elliot Jerutis and forest preserve volunteer cutting down Buckthorn | NT News

Environmentally friendly with the click of a button

by May Paddor

Along with participating in clubs like Environmental Club or Animal Protection Club, there are plenty of opportunities for students to volunteer with organizations in and around the township that give back to the environment. BackYard Nature Center, located in Winnetka, works to integrate the environment into the lives of families of the township through volunteering and education. According to their website, "BackYard Nature Center works with personnel from the local park districts, the master stewards of the Skokie Lagoons, and community service groups to assemble and organize a diverse set of stewardship activities." Another organization that accepts volunteers is the Historic Wagner Farm. As volunteers, students can help with special events, work at the farmer's market, or on the farm. The 18.6-acre farm and heritage center has been in continual operation since the 1850s and has been open to the public since the Glenview Park District acquired it in 2000. Today it produces various corn, honey and animal

products and educates the public. The Glenview Park District Website explains, "[The Historic Wagner Farm's] mission is to help people connect with their food, their farmers, and how food gets from the farm to their table." Along with Wagner Farm, the Glencoe Community Garden gives students the opportunity to help produce food. The Glencoe Garden is a non-profit mini-farm and garden that donates its harvest to organizations like local food kitchens and pantries. Students can volunteer doing various tasks from weeding to harvesting crops. There is also a plethora of opportunities offered through various municipalities' websites. For instance, Wilmette has a website called Go Green Wilmette. On the website, they list different opportunities from Wilmette Beach Clean-up to different meetings pertaining to the town's sustainability. According to their website, "[Go Green Wilmette's] mission is to raise environmental awareness in the Wilmette community and to inspire residents to take action to make a difference." All of these opportunities and more are also advertised through different volunteering matching service websites. Through Volunteer Match, The Volunteer Center, or the Chicagoland Environment Network, students can volunteer with the click of a button.

Veganism is more than just a fashion trend

Difficult lifestyle of veganism proves rewarding for students

by Alyssa Pak

In recent years, veganism has become something of a trend. There are those who see it as a way to make themselves appear environmentally aware, health-conscious or cool. There are also those who see it as a way to lose weight. Whatever the reason, the fact that veganism may be seen as trendy may be a good thing, according to junior Hannah Kadin. "I think it's the best diet choice, and my favorite part is feeling better about not supporting unethical animal treatment," said Kadin, a vegan of about two years. Veganism becoming more mainstream over the years has led

to a more pronounced stereotype of the dieters, especially when it comes to preaching their diet to others. "There's a whole stereotype around vegans that we always try to push our beliefs on others and talk about the fact that we're vegan, which isn't true. If someone offers us something not vegan, we're going to have to explain that we can't eat it because we're vegan," said senior Lauren Yousha. Senior Nicole Pofcher expressed frustration with the fact that veganism is sometimes laughed at or looked down on. "I don't think that everyone needs to be vegan, but people could be more supportive of those who are vegan because it's an awesome thing to do for the environment, for the animals and for your health," she said. Junior Sabrina Morris stated that the idea of vegans only being able to eat foods such as salad is an inaccurate portrayal of what vegans truly eat. "Being a vegan doesn't mean I'm going to throw red paint on your

fur. It also doesn't mean I sit around chomping on leaves—I still eat my fair share of sugar, I've just become more mindful of it," she explained. Morris also said that each diet varies with each person. Pofcher voiced a similar opinion, saying that Ben and Jerry's makes awesome vegan ice cream. "Being a vegan doesn't mean I'm going to throw red paint on your fur."

Many vegans get their start through watching documentaries about the truth behind the animal farming industry, so if you want to know more about why people switch over to veganism, you might want to start there. "I've been vegetarian since I was about ten just because I really like animals and also began to learn

about how terrible industrial farming is both for ethical and environmental reasons. I realized that the dairy and egg industries were basically the same as the meat industry and also that animal products aren't particularly good for your health, so I stopped eating them," said Kadin. Although aware of the insidious aspects of animal farming industries, Morris noted that watching documentaries provided more insight into the topic. She was shocked by what she learned and decided to transition to veganism once she found out that animal products are directly correlated to diseases such as cancer and diabetes. "I like knowing that what I'm putting into my body is good for it and helping it fuel properly. I've become much more aware of what I put into my body, and I just feel better mentally and physically. I've become a much more healthy eater and have been open to trying so many more new foods," said Morris. Though veganism often seems

"trendy", it is important to understand that it is a major lifestyle change. "It's way too much of a commitment to just be something fashionable," said Yousha. Pofcher noted that being vegan definitely makes eating out harder, but looking at menus online before she goes out makes it more manageable. Despite the difficulties of keeping up with the diet, it is ultimately a rewarding experience for vegans, knowing that they aren't harming animals as well as feeling better about what they put in their bodies. "I feel like I'm making the world a better place every day, said Yousha. "My favorite part of veganism is the fact that I can eat larger quantities of food and it can be healthy and nourishing, but I don't feel gross after I eat it," said Pofcher. I feel like I have a better relationship with food, and along I know that I'm positively impacting the environment by not contributing to a larger carbon footprint and not harming animals."