HOW TO BRING
THE **ECO-PASS**
TO YOUR CAMPUS

The eco pass is a win-win for students' wallets and our environment, saving us both kinds of green. The best part? It's not hard to bring the eco-pass to your campus or workplace.

Students at De Anza Community College in California pioneered the way for other students by bringing the eco-pass to their campus last Fall. And they took the time to share their secrets with us.

Case-Study:
De Anza College in California

After having it in the plans for 6 years, De Anza College in Cupertino, CA successfully launched the eco-pass in September 2011. The success of the eco-pass was due to overwhelming student support. Although they faced some challenges by not having an example of another community college to learn from, and some challenges with student government, they had the support of the larger student body and eventually won the vote and support of student gov't and the administration too. There are 6 bus routes that stop near campus, making the eco-pass a convenient tool for students taking public transit, and incentive for those who don't. Frustrated with the rising cost of gas, the stress the congested campus parking lots (De Anza sells more parking stickers than they actually have spaces available), and the cost of public transit, the eco-pass filled a much-needed niche. The way it works is that all registered students must purchase the eco-pass by paying $5 (for full-time students) and $4 (for part-time students) per quarter. Students order the eco-pass through the campus website and attach it to their student ID for unlimited rides on local buses and light rail trains — and students are saving around $600 per year — what a deal! Advice from De Anza? If you have difficulties, don't be discouraged. By showing students the long-term benefits of the eco-pass, De Anza has proven that a community college on a low budget during a recession, can implement an eco-pass — and you can do it, too!

GREEN FOR ALL

What is the eco-pass?
- It's a pass that students or workers can use to get unlimited rides on local public transit, a pass that is subsidized by colleges and employers

How much does it cost?
- It depends on how much your college/university or employer is willing to subsidize it
- An important thing about the eco-pass is that everyone at the school or workplace must pay for the eco-pass, there is not usually an option not to purchase it
- At De Anza College, every student pays $4-$5 extra during registration and ends up saving $600-$700 per year on transportation and parking! Compared to the cost of gas or the regular bus pass, the eco pass is an affordable way to get around

How do you bring it to your campus? Here are some steps to consider:

Do your research
- Find out whether this has been done on your campus before.
- Find out which bus and train routes stop closest to your campus.

Reach out and get people organized!
- Talk to student gov't, environmental groups, and any staff who you think would support this effort. Find out what they think.
- Form a group of people who can carry forward the initiative and identify someone to bottom-line the effort.

Survey the student body
- Find out how many students support the eco-pass on campus and how much they're willing to pay. This is key in determining your next steps and making your case for the eco-pass.
- If you have a lot of student support, move forward.
- If you don't have student support, figure out why, and then figure out group's next steps
- If students are concerned with the cost, can you work to lower it?
- If students don't trust that this will benefit them, do you need to do education on the long-term benefits of the eco-pass?

Contact the local transportation authority
- Find your local transportation authority online or in person at their local office
- Schedule a meeting with them and your group to talk about how the eco-pass could work for your school

Meet with your administration
- Find out who in your school's administration is the right person to talk to about implementing the eco-pass
- Set up a meeting with the administrator and discuss your ideas
- Schedule a meeting with the administrator and a representative from the local transportation authority, allowing them to discuss how this could work for your school

Make an agreement
- Negotiate how much students will pay in exchange for the eco-pass.
- How much is the college willing to subsidize the pass to make it affordable for students?
- Remember, this will ultimately save the campus money from building parking structures
- Make sure you get the agreement in writing

Get student government to vote on the plan
- Now that you have input from the student body (surveys), your administration, and the local transportation authority, bring the plan to your student government for a vote
- They may need to vote on it for final approval since it is a fee increase for all students
- They may need the whole student body to vote on it
- Agree on when it will be implemented if passed

If it wins the vote, follow-up to make sure it's implemented soon
- Follow up with the administration and student gov't
- Find out if there is anything you can do to speed up the process

Make sure it's advertised online!
- Talk to the administrators in charge of updating your campus website to add a web page for the eco-pass
- Add your story about how students organized for the eco-pass
- Add other options for people to learn about alternative transportation to get to school, like bicycling or carpooling.
- Check out De Anza's "Commute Alternatives" site: http://www.deanza.edu/sustainability/commute.html

Publicize the eco-pass on campus!
- Write a piece for your campus newspaper telling the story of students taking the initiative to create change on campus that saves them money and helps the environment
- Put up posters announcing the launch of the eco-pass and the benefits it will bring
- Set up an info table during the first week of the semester to talk to students about the eco-pass, how you organized for it, and the benefits it will bring

Have fun! Organizing for change on campus is not easy, but it's important and it's a way to build meaningful relationships and be a role model for other students in the process.