As the Student Office Manager for the department of Solid Waste Reduction (SWR), it is my job to handle daily office tasks, research waste reduction issues, collect and report waste data from campus, attend and table events to promote the OfS (Office for Sustainability), and direct the department in the absence of Carolyn Noack, SWR Manager. Most of my time and effort this semester has been focused on the redesign of our waste tracking system. Carolyn Noack and I worked together to design a new layout in Microsoft Excel to report campus waste data. When redesigning the reporting system, we took into consideration reporting requirements for STARS® and EPA WasteWise and our need to easily access past data.

STARS® stands for Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System™ and is a program of AASHE (Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education). The goal of the STARS® program is to provide a transparent, self-reporting framework for colleges and universities to measure their sustainability performance. EPA’s WasteWise program is a similar platform that helps organizations and businesses apply sustainable management practices to reduce municipal and select industrial wastes. Western Michigan University (WMU) is a partner of WasteWise; this means that WMU demonstrates waste reduction efforts, environmental stewardship, and waste management practices by reporting to the WasteWise database.

Another project that I worked on, alongside Heidi Jimenez, with Anne Copeland and Carolyn Noack as supervisors, was migrating the SWR website from the WMU
Facilities Management webpage to the OfS webpage. This required revising information for on-campus recycling, researching ways to recycle off-campus, and updating other waste management information. Our schedule for launching the integration of the SWR department with the OfS webpage was pushed back due to time constraints and revisions. This project is ongoing with a set completion date for the end of the summer II semester.

I attended three different events this semester to support and promote the OfS on campus: The Medallion Scholarship (January 25 and February 1), Multicultural Leadership Competition (February 22), and the Sustainability Leadership Summit (March 27). For both the Medallion Scholarship and Multicultural Leadership Competition, two to three people represented the OfS in room 212 of the Bernhard Center. For both events there was inclement weather, so the attendance was low and not many people seemed interested in entering the room. I stood just outside of the door in the hallway to encourage people to visit all tables present in the room. For the Sustainability Leadership Summit, I tabled for the SWR department in the foyer of the Fetzer Center. Attendance from other sustainable organizations from the greater Kalamazoo area, students, and WMU staff was high and all seemed to be highly interested in learning about what research was conducted by the SWR team and the resultant findings.
Recommendations:

• Display current OfS events on the trifold (ie: Sustainabilibash, National Campus Sustainability Day, RecycleMania, Words of a Feather, Townhall Meeting, etc.)

• Have multiple people present from different backgrounds and interests from the OfS for tabling events

• If tabling in a secluded room, have one person out in the hall to encourage people into the room

• On the trifold, focus on student projects, Student Sustainability Grant, and jobs/internships/fellowship

• Update info on trifold to look consistent and professional

• Do not attend Multicultural Leadership Competition

• Have brochures on various activities to distribute: Gibbs House Fellowship, Student Sustainability Fee, Solid Waste Reduction, internships, etc.