Green Cup 2013 took place from October 21 to November 17. The competition was moved to the fall in order to engage incoming students, encourage students to develop sustainable habits from the start of the year, and take advantage of the fall weather. This year, events ranging from workdays at Wildroots to SEED’s Fall Speaker to a panel on the economics of food were held. These events were aimed to motivate students to act sustainably and to educate them regarding a variety of environmental issues and their impacts. Additionally, the first Off Campus Green Cup was held this year. Planned and sponsored by the Off Campus Eco-Reps, this competition worked in conjunction with on campus Green Cup to fully engage the student population.

A breakdown of the funding provided by ISEN and its uses are as follows: $250 for prizes, $100 to off campus Eco-reps to help with their events, $215 for publicity costs (including a North by Northwestern ad, TV ads in Norris, and table toppers), $232 to food for the awards ceremony. The total comes to $797, out of the $900 Green Cup was awarded.

The extra money allocated to prizes allowed Green Cup to provide the full prize money for winning teams, thereby providing them with an incentive to compete. This is deemed to be a successful incentive both because of feedback from teams in previous years and the fact that there was a total event attendance of 446 people this year. Without these funds, the winners would have received less than the promised prize money and Green Cup as an event, and SEED as a group, would have lost credibility. Additionally, we saw total water reductions of 721 cubic feet/person and electricity reductions of 1207 kilowatt hours/person. These results can also be attributed to the funding for publicity Green Cup received since the change in time of the
competition required heightened publicity and the funds for it. The magnitude of reductions is what made this year’s competition successful and the event attendance will hopefully encourage students to keep up the sustainable habits. The award to eco-reps also allowed them to provide giveaways and prizes at their events, which were significant incentives for attendance.

Overall, this funding helped make every aspect of a fall Green Cup possible. A survey is currently being distributed among students that will allow conclusions to be drawn about what was successful about this year’s Green Cup from the perspective of the participants. This survey will also provide numbers regarding the effectiveness of publicity campaigns and percent of the student population that participated in water and energy reduction efforts. This competition has already given information regarding what types of sustainability themed events students enjoy, such as those hosted in conjunction with academic departments, and ways in which we can better construct future events, like making sure there are equal numbers of events hosted on north and south campus.

Furthermore, hosting Green Cup in the fall was new to everyone involved, and significant publicity was needed to make the student population aware of the competition. While this was partially conducted via eco-reps and social media, TV and online ads were important parts of the effort to raise awareness. These campaigns would not have been possible without the funding provided.

Green Cup is an essential component of educating Northwestern students about sustainability and rallying them to participate in environmentally themed events. Hosting Green Cup in the fall showed that students enjoy outdoor events, which cannot be hosted in the winter, but that varying locations of events is still almost as important as varying the events’ themes.
Problems with conservation in the fall were also identified; primarily that between daylight savings and very little control over the heating in a student’s residence, understanding and actively impacting energy usage is difficult. Funding from ISEN made Green Cup 2013 possible, this allowing this information to be collected.