

The Insider: Students turn trash into treasure

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It is cheaper to discard a \$59 microwave at the end of the school year than it is to keep it in storage between semesters. That's why [Trash to Treasure](#), a new student group at Tulane University, is providing a different option with the goal of keeping unwanted ? but still usable ? items out of the landfill.



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During spring semester move-out, when many are looking to dump their excess items and hop on a flight to their hometowns, Trash to Treasure was on hand collecting reusable items that students were leaving behind. The items are being sorted and stored this summer in preparation for a move-in sale that will offer the used items back to the Tulane community at deeply discounted prices.

“Seeing all the move-out waste really bothered me as a freshman so I set up small collections at my dorm,” says Tulane sophomore and program founder Anne Bevis. “When the piles became overwhelming, I realized the problem needed a bigger solution.”

Her solution came after meeting Alex Freid, founder of the Post Landfill Action Network at an environmental conference last fall. Freid had started a move-out program at the University of New Hampshire and she knew this is what Tulane needed.

On collection day, the group obtained dorm items such as clothes, mirrors, lamps, printers, organizing items and even televisions. Some items will be donated to charities and the rest will be available for their “giant garage sale” at the beginning of the school year. Monies collected will go toward the next semester's program costs and any profit will be donated to charity.

In April, the group was awarded a \$10,000 grant through the [NewDay Challenge](#) for being innovative in finding sustainable solutions to social challenges.

The money was used in part to rent moving trucks, pay for storage and advertise the event.