

IC Helps to Divert Over 11,000 Pieces of Trash at Grassroots 2024!

Every year, the [Finger Lakes Grassroots Festival of Music and Dance](#) brings four days of live music, food vendors, art and more to Trumansburg, New York. But as we know, large groups of people gathered together often leads to immense amounts of waste - specifically food and plastic waste. Luckily, the Dish Truck, and Ithaca College, were in attendance to help.

The [Dish Truck](#) is a pollution-prevention effort founded by Joey Gates where clean dishes are provided to event coordinators to use in place of disposable dishware. This reduces the amount of garbage created, water used, and greenhouse gases produced because of the event. A dirty dish collection station is set up at the event, where dishes are then properly cleaned off-site and reused, and all food scraps are separated into a compost station.

This year several current Ithaca College students, along with recent graduates, supported the Dish Truck's waste reduction efforts at this premier local music event. Adriana Sulca '24, Rosie Bostian '24, Alicia Menduni '25, Nate Nizinsky '26, and Caitlyn O'Dell '26 along with Scott Doyle '98, Director of Energy Management and Sustainability, spent the weekend washing dishes and silverware, tracking the number of items washed, and educating festival goers on event waste reduction.



IC volunteers at the Grassroots Festival of Music and Dance during their shifts throughout the weekend.

Throughout the four days, **over 3,000 plates and 11,000 total items** (including silverware and cups and bowls) were washed and used that otherwise would have ended up flooding the trash. Sustainability was definitely brought to the party!

Creating an eco-friendlier future for us all is not an easy task, and students were able to experience this firsthand throughout the weekend. When asked about her experience, Alicia Menduni noted "Being involved with such a successful waste diversion effort was tedious work at times but also very rewarding and fun! This effort of keeping over 10,000 items out of the landfill over the course of 4 days shows how possible it is to implement waste diversion efforts for smaller events." It is extremely valuable to recognize that this work can be challenging (and can be fun!) yet the significant benefits are crucial.