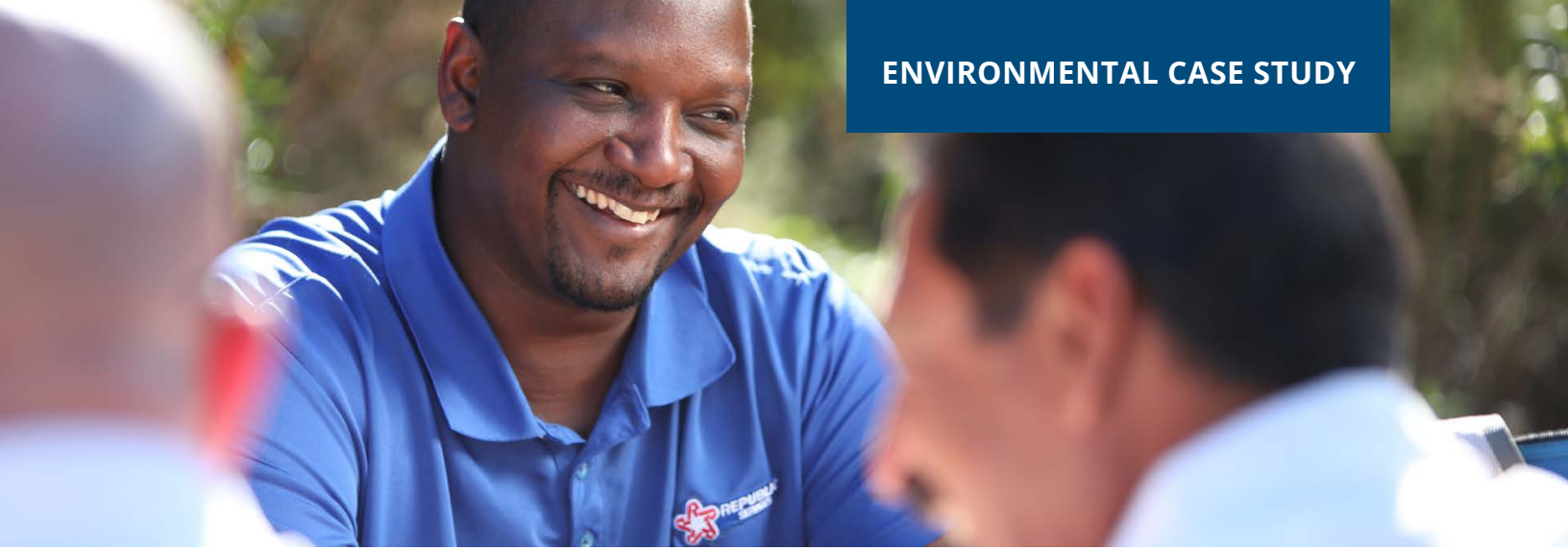

ENVIRONMENTAL CASE STUDY

Faith, Fellowship and Sustainability

Located in San Jose's Almaden Valley, St. Anthony's Catholic Church serves as a gathering place for worship, community events and fellowship activities. With a strong commitment to environmental stewardship, church leadership has taken proactive steps to improve waste diversion and support California's Senate Bill (SB) 1383 organics recycling requirements.

Opportunity:

Church representative Paul was highly engaged in understanding and improving the congregation's waste management practices. Seeking a clearer picture of contamination and diversion opportunities, Paul partnered with Republic Services Sustainability Advisor Lily Woon to conduct a waste audit and review the materials being generated during church activities and events. The audit provided valuable insight into common sorting challenges and identified opportunities to improve diversion through education and source reduction.

Solution:

To support the church's sustainability goals, Lily conducted staff training focused on proper recycling and organics separation. Participants actively engaged in the training by bringing examples of materials they regularly encountered and asking questions about the correct disposal methods. The collaborative approach helped clarify common areas of confusion and build confidence in the church's sorting practices. Beyond improving collection habits, St. Anthony's has also been working to reduce waste at the source by transitioning from plastic plates, cups and other disposable food service items, to paper alternatives that can be composted. This change not only supports organics diversion, but also helps reduce the amount of plastic requiring disposal or sorting.

Takeaway:

Successful sustainability programs begin with education, engagement and a willingness to make meaningful changes. By conducting a waste audit, investing in staff training, and exploring opportunities to replace disposable plastics with compostable alternatives, St. Anthony's Catholic Church is demonstrating how faith-based organizations can lead by example and create a lasting positive impact on both their community and the environment.

Learn more at
RepublicServices.com/municipality/san-jose-ca

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