

2015

The Clark University Community Thrift Store

Monica Phung
Clark University

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Strengthening Ties for Collective Impact

Monica Phung

John Richards

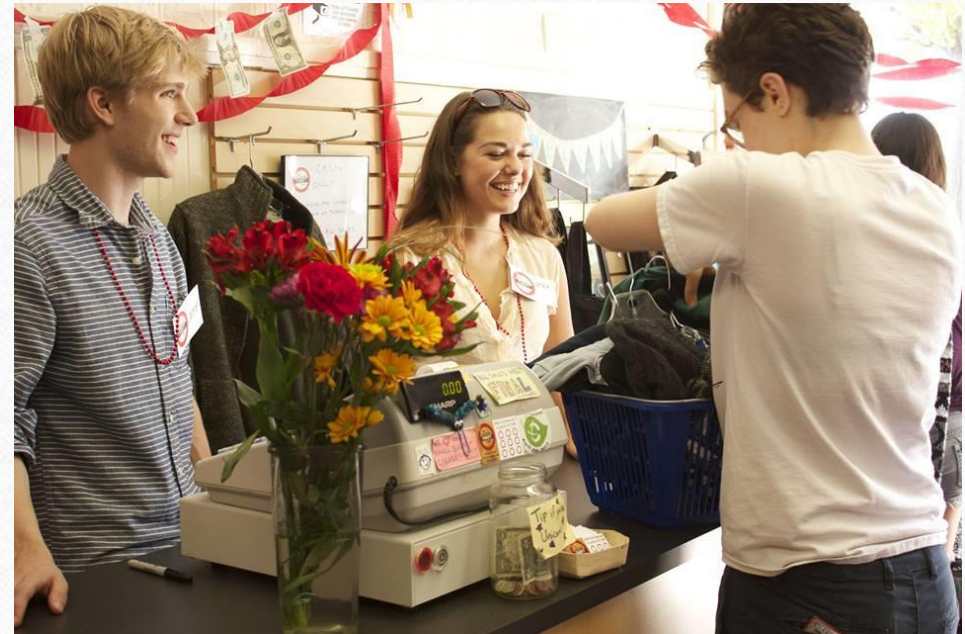
About Us

Save, Grow, & Give. Together.

- **Mission:** To be a student-run sustainability-focused business that serves the needs of both the Clark and Main South communities by providing affordable clothing and other items with superior customer service.
- **Vision:** A more sustainable and connected Clark and Main South community.

Core Values

- Giving the best service and value to our customers
- Commitment to sustainability and behaving in an environmentally responsible way,
- Provide a fun, energetic atmosphere for customers and CTS staff and volunteers,
- Offer learning opportunities for CTS staff and volunteers,
- Encourage innovation and entrepreneurship, maintain a high standard of ethics



Background

- Founded in 2010
- Started by 2 Clark undergraduates due to excessive waste when students moved out
- Awarded \$3,000 for U-Reka! Big Idea contest



Evolution

- Began with unrefined business plan
- Developed efficient retail operations
- Expanded marketing, refined aesthetic, and improved quality
- Underwent 2-part move over the course of 6 months



New Location

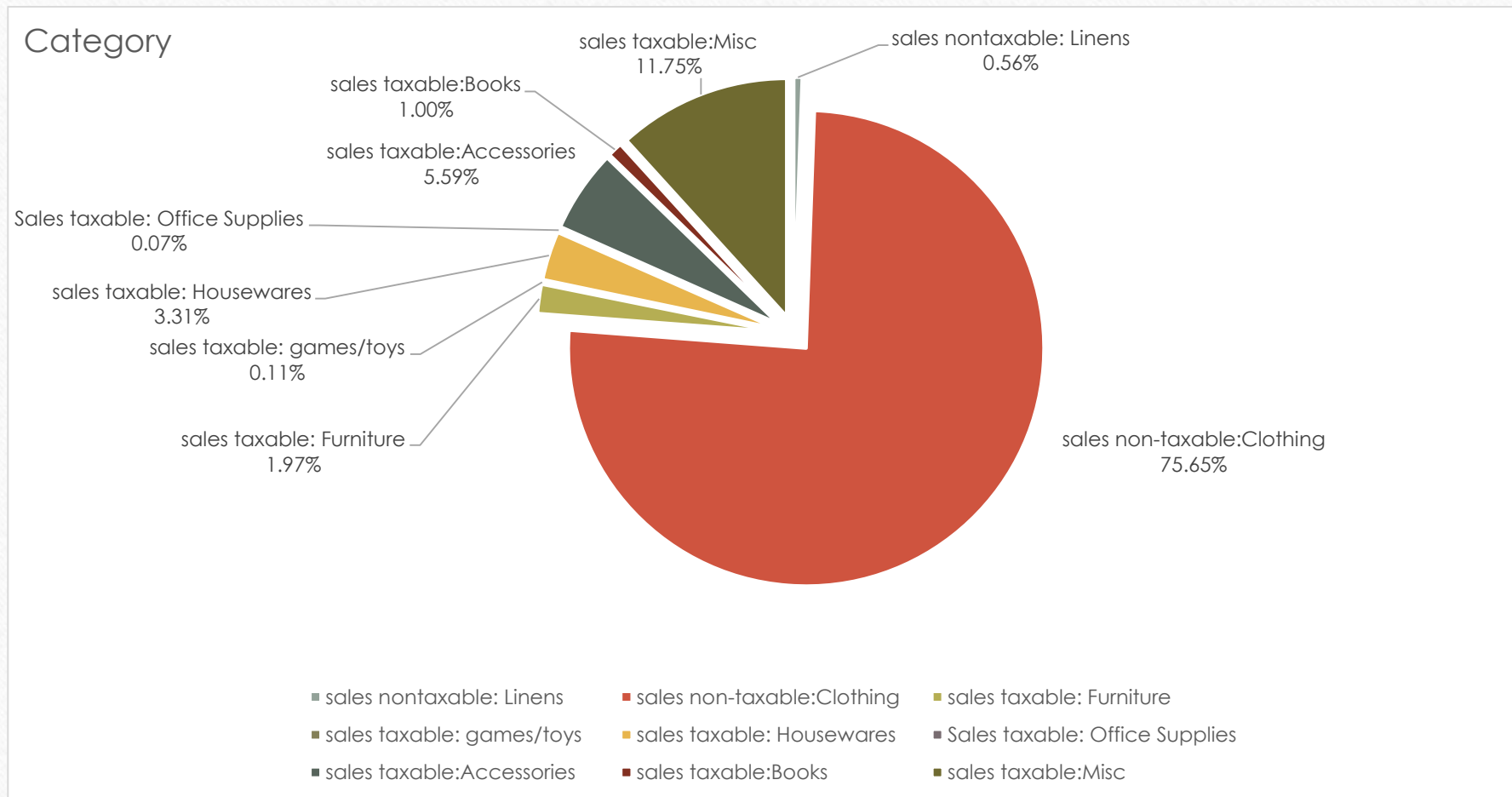


Current State

- Currently employ 11 students
- Access to large number of volunteers
- \$23,000 yearly revenue
- 24 tons of waste diverted from landfills
- Partner with local community businesses
- Active member in University Community



Inventory and Sales



Inventory Management

- Donations
 - Accept from community members and students year round
 - Sorting process, Quality Benchmarks
- Collections
 - Huge volumes of donations during end of Spring semester
 - Disperse collection boxes into dorm lobbies and key campus locations



Inventory Management (cont.)

- Stock rotation
 - New, Sale, Clearance
 - Old stock rotated out and sent to local business partners
 - St. Vincent de Paul, Goodwill
 - 217 bags donated in move



Marketing

- Specialists
 - Social Media
 - Promotions
- Facebook
 - Post boost success
 - 10,000 reached
 - Reached 1000 likes!
 - Weekly posts
- Twitter
 - Dedicated volunteer to manage Twitter



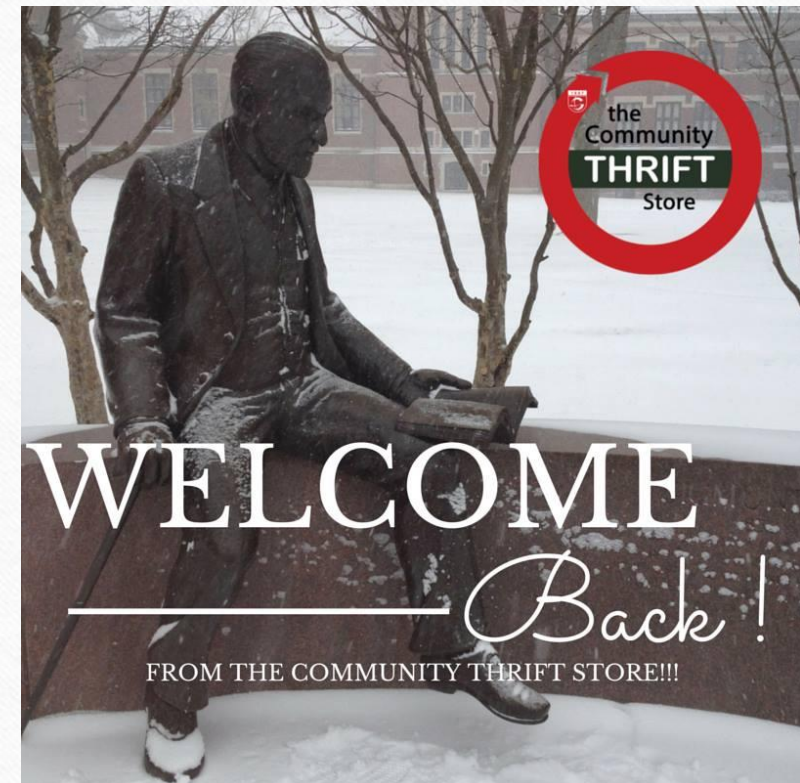
Events and Promotions

- Valentine's Day Card Making
- Night at the Theatre with Clark Musical Theatre
- Styling Advice with Local Blogger (The Fashion Cookbook)
- Make your own Halloween Costume
- Clothing Swap during Earth Week
- Tabling in University Center and Accepted Student Days
- Spotlight Student Art



Challenges

- Financial
 - Driving sales via stock rotation, promotions, weather, etc.
- Staff
 - Change in staff dependent on school year
- Stock
 - Maintaining quantity and quality
- Hours
 - Dependent on academic calendar



What Can You Do?

- Promote sustainability
- Connect with like-minded businesses/individuals
- Find the right people to support you!
- Research your options
 - Needs/desires in the area
 - Avenues for funding/support

Questions?

