# Students light up Halloween with energy-saving treats

*By Susan Lang*

The day before Halloween this year, some 300 Cornell students and scores of other volunteers rang doorbells -- not to ask for treats but to offer them: 5,000 households received a bag of tricks on how to save energy, making it the largest door-to-door energy efficiency outreach effort in upstate New York history.

Meanwhile, 900 other Cornell students also did community service this past weekend, working at 60 different nonprofit and public organizations. All 1,200 students were part of the 19th annual Into the Streets, Oct. 29-30, Cornell's largest community service event, which is sponsored by Cornell's Public Service Center. This year, the event was expanded to two days, both of which were officially proclaimed as "Into the Streets Day in the City of Ithaca" by Mayor Carolyn Peterson.



*Provided*

**Kevin Cullinan and Chinomnso Nnodum '10 put together goodie bags to deliver to households as part of Lighten Up Tompkins, which was just one of many activities Cornell students volunteered for during this year's Into the Streets event, Oct. 29-30.**

As part of the "Lighten Up Tompkins" project, volunteers fanned out in the towns of Dryden, Lansing, Danby, Newfield, Enfield and Ulysses to deliver the goods directly into the hands of homeowners. Each household received a compact fluorescent light bulb; coupons from local businesses for energy saving materials; a CD of energy-saving tips; and information on improving energy efficiency, financing energy improvements, hiring a contractor and more.

Dozens of raffle prizes (worth more than $1,200 in energy efficiency products and services) will be drawn from those who return a brief survey listing what actions they took from the information and products they received.

"It's part of a larger countywide campaign to deliver immediate energy savings, educate residents that we all can 'take back the power' for our energy use and reduce carbon emissions over time for an economically viable county for future generations," said Dominic Frongillo '05, NYSERDA energy smart communities coordinator at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County (CCETC).

*Provided*

**Ashley Jeanius '11 is helped by another volunteer as they prepare to deliver goodie bags to deliver to households as part of Lighten Up Tompkins.**

Lighten Up Tompkins is a collaboration of the CCETC energy team, Cornell's Public Service Center, NYSERDA and more than 20 community businesses.

"We've inspired almost two dozen community partners, and we hope that every business, organization and homeowner will take the 'energy pledge' to get on the path to energy savings during the next few months," Frongillo said.

"If each household installs their compact fluorescent light bulb -- which uses 75 percent less energy and lasts 10 times longer than a standard incandescent bulb -- $278,000 will be saved collectively as well as 3.46 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions avoided over the life of the bulbs," said Shawn Lindabury '09, CCETC energy efficiency program coordinator. "We hope the materials will encourage residents to retrofit their homes using a Building Performance Institute-certified contractor and take advantage of NYSERDA financing programs. Retrofitting 80 percent of homes will save Tompkins County residents $34.3 million on energy costs and create 850 jobs," added Lindabury.

Follow-up educational events and workshops are planned throughout the year with a one-year goal of cutting energy use by 11 percent for at least 1 percent of Tompkins County households and businesses by Nov. 11, 2011. The ultimate goal is to reduce 80 percent of the county's greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, says Michael Koplinka-Loehr '84, past chair of the Tompkins County Legislature, who is the town of Lansing's senior energy management coordinator.

Any Tompkins County resident can receive a bag by calling 272-2292; to join the "Lighten Up Tompkins" educational campaign-planning group, call Koplinka-Loehr at 592-7650 or e-mail mak11@cornell.edu.