

## RENEWABILITY CASE STUDY: UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO

Purchasing Renewable Furniture may not be the number one priority that an institution sets out to do, but many have found that once they have been introduced to the concept, they wouldn't want to go back to purchase any other way. The University of Toledo is one of these institutions.

When he first started in his position as the Assistant Director of Operations for the University of Toledo, Joe Ecklund received his first assignment in purchasing furniture. He was allotted quite a large budget to replace Sauder Education's Basis chairs in their first floor lounge of the University's Academic House. Joe asked the Sauder Education representative to come in and take a look at the chairs in effort to receive a quote for replacements.



**SAUDER** | Education

The Sauder Education representative noted that even though the chairs were 10 years old, the frame on every chair was still in great condition and Joe was advised to consider replacing only the fabric. Joe took the rep's advice and chose to recover the chairs. "Sauder Education was able to recover the Basis chairs for only 1/10th the amount of UT's budget allowance and the recovery is going on 5 years now", expressed Joe.

The University now has a plan to recover their lounge furniture on an average of every 10 years. "This is due to stains and damages (spills and tears from writing utensils) moreso than a wear standpoint", says Joe. He believes the furniture would last 15 years before needing recovered if the fabrics were not subject to stain or damage.

The University of Toledo expects to pay around 25% - 33% the price of a new chair for the recovering. If the recovery costs of chairs were 50%+ the cost of a new chair, Joe believes it would be much more beneficial for them to just purchase new. But, Sauder Education meets the University's expectations with their Renewability program.

The initial purchase of the Basis chairs has now lasted 15 years for the University of Toledo and they are very happy with their purchase. By choosing to recover the chairs instead of buying new chairs, the remainder of Joe's budget allowance was able to be directed towards other projects on campus that otherwise would not have been able to be done that year. This along with the fact that the fabric recovery was done in a very timely manner and posed no obstacles to the University of Toledo, made them believers in Renewability. 5+ years ago, Renewability didn't even play a role in the University of Toledo's furniture purchase decision. Now, even though Renewability is not the only factor they consider, it does play a big part in the decision.

*Photos provided courtesy of the University of Toledo*