

PICA Events Coordination

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Abstract

Building Empowerment and Sustainable Community through Food Systems Learning is a project to connect the Santa Cruz and UCSC community to their food systems and each other, contributing to a wider sustainability movement. Learning and collaborative opportunities through events will help empower communities to live sustainable lives and consider global sustainability issues. This project shares and reflects the mission of the Program in Community and Agroecology (PICA) for food systems learning, the Campus Sustainability Plan, and the Blueprint for a Sustainable Campus, by combining goals, objectives, and blueprint topics like food, social and environmental justice, and academics and curriculum. Goals for this project include reaching at least 100 students, hosting 9 PICA workshops through the academic year 2013-2014, collaborating on campus sustainability events, and contributing to PICA's sustainability as a program. Events will provide a space for people to collaborate, share skills and knowledge, and engage in community building. The Program in Community and Agroecology as well as numerous other sustainability organizations are a part of a growing generation of active environmentally and socially conscious people organizing across spaces for more sustainable, just practices and food systems. Workshops will bring in knowledge from guest facilitators and open up learning opportunity to the wider UCSC community. We build a sustainability movement by acknowledging environmental and social injustices, educating, training, workshopping, discussing, and engaging in sustainable approaches for action.

Problem Definition, Context, Background

Defragmenting for Collective Action

The widespread changes in the movement towards a sustainable future are fragmented by geographic location, economic stability, or other circumstantial elements. Local efforts contribute to large-scale change, but they are even stronger when combined with others for collective action. Spaces that encourage people to learn and exchange knowledge helps to deconstruct the fragmentation among communities and individuals. Achieving this goal means extensive outreach to garden, agroecology, and housing communities as well as communities less directly connected to food systems.

Social and Environmental Justice

PICA workshops and collaborative sustainability events provide a space where students can develop their interest in sustainable and equitable food systems while also contextualizing local efforts to global social and environmental justice issues. Environmental justice is constantly being violated within modern industrial production systems, especially within food systems (Guthman 2). The recognition of the interconnections of social and environmental justice in food systems are now being termed food justice. The grouping of food and justice alone does not necessarily unify the two, but does create an avenue for identifying their association and creating

new systems on community scale that represent an alternative movement (Gottlieb, 5). Many current agricultural systems violate worker rights, health rights, and use massive amounts of carbon emissions to transport marketable food products. Western food systems have created an unhealthy trend, where food is “transformed into a raw material to be processed into brand name commodities” with little nutritional value and unhealthy side effects (Gottlieb, 2011). Low-income communities are subject to inequitable food access when unhealthy options are concentrated in their areas instead of grocery stores or food markets (Gottlieb, 2011). This same system uses low wage immigrant labor through the whole food supply and production system (Gottlieb, xi). People affected by inequitable food systems tend to be marginalized people of color (Gottlieb, xi). It is important to recognize the privileges held individually and in some societies in relation to these struggles. This is made possible by providing an opportunity for education and engagement at events that recognize social and environmental justice issues, and the global struggle for power, food, health, equality, and representation.

Existing Frameworks

The sustainability framework for this project will be based on the UCSC Campus Sustainability Plan working from a few core principles for improvements with sustainable practices on campus. The CSP is a “transformational initiative to increase sustainability campus-wide and move UCSC towards its vision,” for environmental stewardship in all operations (CSP 3). As stated in the CSP, “engagement will be critical as UCSC seeks to change behavior and promote an ongoing commitment to living within available resources” (CSP 2). The project will reflect that commitment and the goals stated within the Campus Sustainability Plan. Workshops and other events at PICA will provide opportunities for increasing awareness, education, and engagement in sustainable living practices, especially regarding food systems.

The project will address awareness, education and engagement for the entire UCSC community. Some workshops will build on awareness of the food justice issues mentioned above, working to contextualize local efforts. Workshops will also educate members of the community that come out and participate, about sustainable practices they can implement into their own lives. Events will be oriented towards active engagement in hands-on educational activities and with wider community. Sustainable operations within PICA facilities will always be considered. PICA already practices zero waste goals through its extensive composting system, and by using reusable plates and silverware for community events. Growing and sourcing local food sources, composting, and educating about the benefit of sustainable practices and behavior changes can contribute to campus climate initiatives (CSP 7). This project will aim to provide resources and opportunities for a wide audience in the UCSC campus by promoting "broader participation by the entire campus community," helping to spread food system awareness. Sustainability goals will engage more of the UCSC community in its food systems through effective outreach and promotion and co-curricular focus (CSP 3). PICA is just one part of a whole network of food system oriented groups and socially conscious organizations on campus. Direct interaction in the community will help connect to other organizations and working groups

to develop skills, tactics, tools, and strategies for collaboration. This project's vision for sustainability through community engagement will help individuals lead more sustainable lives and build alliances for a stronger more unified sustainable movement.

Project Description

Vision

Provide an experiential learning opportunity that encourages students to feel more empowered and motivated to implement sustainable practices in their lives. Students will gain this experience through workshops and sustainability related events that encourage community engagement, knowledge and resource sharing, and hands-on skills learning. Events will foster an environment where students can feel welcome and comfortable with each other, but also challenged to question their practices, institutions, and food systems.

Goal

Organize PICA events and campus-wide sustainability collaborative events that will expand the number of people that connect to their food systems on and off campus. Community participants will gain a better understanding of the connection between social and environmental justice issues in food systems and how their actions are influential and important. Integrating discussion into hands on learning activities will generate better understanding of these themes.

Another key goal is to reclaim a space for community members in and out of PICA and Village residency to build relationships, alliances and networks that collaboratively share knowledge and build sustainability practices. Collaboration with PICA and Village residents, other campus gardens, Gardener's Alliance, CASFS, and various other sustainability and diversity groups on campus will help build collaborations and alliances to mobilize for sustainability. Together we collaboratively acknowledge each other's influence and contributions in the community through collaborative events at PICA including workshops, workdays, housing events, and guest visits like Annie Leonard during February 2014. Contextualize the value of responsible, equitable food systems, and community.

Objectives

Host 3 interactive food related sustainability workshops each quarter, which will educate at least 100 students total. Collaborative campus-wide events will reach out to 50-100 students through outreach, workshops, volunteering, and attendees of the event.

Larger scale events such as the Earth Summit in Winter and the Sustainability SpringFest Celebration will open the forum to a wider audience and connect the small scale skills learning at PICA to the larger overarching goals and topics that sustainability groups aim to address. Many of these goals are outlined in the campus blueprint, like climate change, social justice, resource conservation, and waste reduction.

Contribute efforts to sustain PICA programs now and into next year and the future through collaborative grant writing with PICA's core leadership. Events and collaborations will also outreach to more people and help sustain connections with other programs.

Project Timeline/Flow

Creating events aimed at social and environmental justice themes will be accomplished through time specific project implementation steps.

Workshop Planning- 3 in Fall, Winter, and Spring

- Start contacting workshop facilitators at end of each quarter, set workshop themes.
- At the start of new quarter, set dates, reserve spaces, send in PO requests, make fliers.
- In middle of quarter work heavily on outreach, get to know community, solidify workshop plans
- Host workshops, follow up with facilitators and attendees, do evaluations.

Fall Quarter

Get trained, plan and host 3 workshops at PICA

- Work with available resources
- Get trained with Mira

Winter Quarter

Co-host and Plan Earth Summit Event (Thursday March 6th)

- Attend weekly planning meetings
- Invite wider ucsc campus community
- Coordinate workshops at event
- Outreach at PICA table

Spring Quarter

Co-host and plan PICA's Garden Party

- Reserve necessary spaces
- Invite campus sustainability orgs, wider community, PICA and village residents
- Organize activities, plan event schedule

Co-host and plan UCSC Campus Sustainability Celebration where results from year-long projects will be presented (May 22nd)

- Organize results onto poster, make presentation
- Help plan the presentations part of event

Host an event outside of workshops

- Set date by Week 2
- Reserve space
- Invite community members, diversity and sustainability groups, performers, speakers, wide audience

Project Stakeholders, Student & Mentor Roles

Project Stakeholders will be essential for collaboration to make events go through smoothly. The Sustainability Office staff will approve project ideas and provide some mentorship in logistical planning. Campus sustainability related and not related organizations will take part in events and require collaboration and coordinated communication.

Mentor Roles

Student mentor- My role as a student mentor in the community will include education tools to help facilitate and host a safe and welcoming learning environment for students to get engaged and build on knowledge and skills. I will need to approach community members, facilitators, students, my mentors, and other collaborators in a professional, warm, organized, and sincere manner as I will be representing UCSC, PICA, the Sustainability Office, and myself as an academic and mentor. I will make myself available to the PICA community for enquiries, requests, assistance with other PICA leadership needs, and to the wider campus community as a supporter, leader, educator, motivator, and as an equal. I will take input from others and work within financial and grant limits to adapt to those inputs.

PICA Mentor- My mentor Mira Michelle will help with logistics if needed, support for project ideas, moral and professional support, and with key advice when planning events and coordinating with parts of the community I am less familiar with. She will also help with training, submitting PO's, honorariums, and with grant writing.

Evaluation

The successful implementation of project goals will be measured based on these actions:

Education and outreach to at least 180 students and community members

- Measure attendance numbers at small scale workshop events and larger sustainability focused events.

Engagement of the community to sustainability related issues and topics

- Collect from students, workshop facilitators, PICA and Village residents, and community members by asking for input at events, creating forms, and providing a quick survey at the end of event

- Assess the success of workshop event based on results
- Evaluate myself on how closely I engaged with community members that have attended events or worked with PICA
- Document the moments in workshops and other events when people are engaging and learning

Empower community members to lead sustainable lives and challenge systemic injustice within food systems.

- Document discussions- graphic facilitation
- Power mapping on food related and other food unrelated structures
- Food mapping- visualize the power of choice in using local food sources
- Record or videotape social justice, environmental justice, and other political or power themed discussions (with consent from participants)
- Community art projects- help visualize health, social justice, community, and empowerment

Results

Original Goals and Objectives	Results
Education and outreach to at least 180 students and community members for small and larger scale events	Outreach to sustainability listservs, colleges, other campus gardens, ESLP, PICA, Camper Park and Village housing
Educate at least 100 students total.	Reached at least 88 students in workshops, and more in campus sustainability events
Host 9 PICA workshops through the academic year 2013-2014	Successfully hosted 9 workshops
Engagement of the community to sustainability related issues and topics	-Provided and collected short evaluations after workshops to get feedback from attendees -Contextualized sustainability in all workshops
Collaboration on campus sustainability events	-Attended regular planning meetings, outreached, helped plan and run Earth Summit -Helped out with Sustainability Spring Fest event- registration at door, sign making, and outreach
Empower community members to lead sustainable lives and challenge systemic injustice within food systems.	-Hosted “Healthy Practices from a Food Justice Perspective” workshop that explored injustice and inequality in food systems -Helped plan the Food Justice Fair, an educational and socially engaging event to

	<p>bring the Camper Park, Village housing, and PICA housing together.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Hosted “Sustaining Culture and Community Through Food” cooking workshop focused on sustaining cultural and societal wellbeing through food systems
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References

Campus Sustainability Plan 2013-16

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PICA website: ucspica.org

PSI position overview document

PICA Events Coordinator position overview document