ZERO WASTE EVENTS

Poster and Project created by Zero Waste Team Associate Christian Monzon

Background

As we approach our goal of Zero Waste by 2020, we need examine all of the campus activities that produce waste. Currently, all events held on campus produce waste, but where does all of that waste end up? If not properly diverted, the waste ends up in the Santa Cruz landfill! So, how can we continue hosting all of our wonderful events while minimizing our campus waste footprint? The answer lies in Zero Waste Events! Zero Waste Events are events focused on reducing and diverting waste from the landfill.

Objectives

The focus of my project is set on creating a campus-wide, formalized system for Zero Waste Events that promotes and encourages waste reduction and waste diversion for all campus events. In addition to helping UCSC meet its Zero Waste goal by 2020, Zero Waste Events help promote waste reduction and diversion awareness and practices by educating both students hosting and participating in any event on campus. The Zero Waste Event system will ultimately exemplify UCSC's efforts to incorporate sustainability in all aspects of campus activity and demonstrate to current and future students what we prioritize as a public institution. To achieve the goals stated above, 3 objectives first have to be met. The first objective is determining stakeholders, processes, and strategies needed for a cohesive, campus-wide Zero Waste system by Spring 2014. The second objective consists of creating training modules for Zero Waste Event hosts by Spring 2014. The final objective assist with large-scale Zero Waste Events such as the Edge of Eden Music festival by implementing the developed trainings and strategies.

Implementation

Creating a Zero Waste Event system will require effective communication and cooperation between stakeholders such as student organizations, Conference Services, Student Environmental Center (SEC) and others. Although the UCSC Sustainability Office and the SEC promote Zero Waste Events, we as a campus lack the proper system to make ZW events prominent. In order to achieve the first objective I conducted research to determine the strategies and processes used and implemented in other UC's. In addition, I have networked and established relationships with and between various stakeholders across campus in order to achieve effective communication and cooperation.

The second objective has been achieved by determining what elements of our current Zero Waste system function and/or need to be revisited. In determining these elements, a training modules will be avalable in the form of a PowerPoint presentation, online document and eventually a video by Spring 2014. Essentially the trainings will provide the necessary information to host a Zero Waste Event and train any volunteers or students involved in hosting the event. Ideally the trainings will be thorough and explicit enough to minimize involvement of the Zero Waste Team, Sustainability Office, or SEC in planning any event.

The final objective would be accomplished by working with large-scale annual event committees to maximize the total amount of waste diverted from the landfill. Large events also provide the perfect opportunity to create waste reduction awareness among the UCSC student body.

These three objectives combined will ultimately lead UCSC closer to becoming a more sustainable campus, create a greater awareness of waste reduction efforts, and most importantly, reduce campus waste.