

# Sustainable Living Resource Guide

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## Introduction

My GFI journey began in Oakland by meeting fellows from eight other UCs. Each fellow brought upon with them a unique project and collectively, we managed to target different aspects of sustainability. Some worked on the nutrition policies, while others on creating food access and security reports, health app, converting food waste into fuel cells etc. Though some of these projects are entirely different, they all serve the same purpose—empowering sustainability to and for the students.

My main project as an intern revolved around bringing awareness and healthier habits among students. I'm working on a Resource Guide that includes information about fair trade, non-GMO products, basic food hacks, ways to shop effectively, all followed by sustainable recipes.

When I came in as a GFI this year, I was given a few projects to choose from. I chose to work on this guide because of the strong impact it would have on the incoming students. The incoming freshmen for next year will be the graduating class of 2020, which is when the UC non-zero waste goal needs to be fulfilled by. Next year is extremely crucial to build a strong foundation as these students will be a part of this goal for all four years. This is where the guide plays a role. I believe this resource would be a key to creating a change in the students.



## Project Goals

The objective of this project is to cultivate sustainable practices among students from the beginning.

The guide will contain:

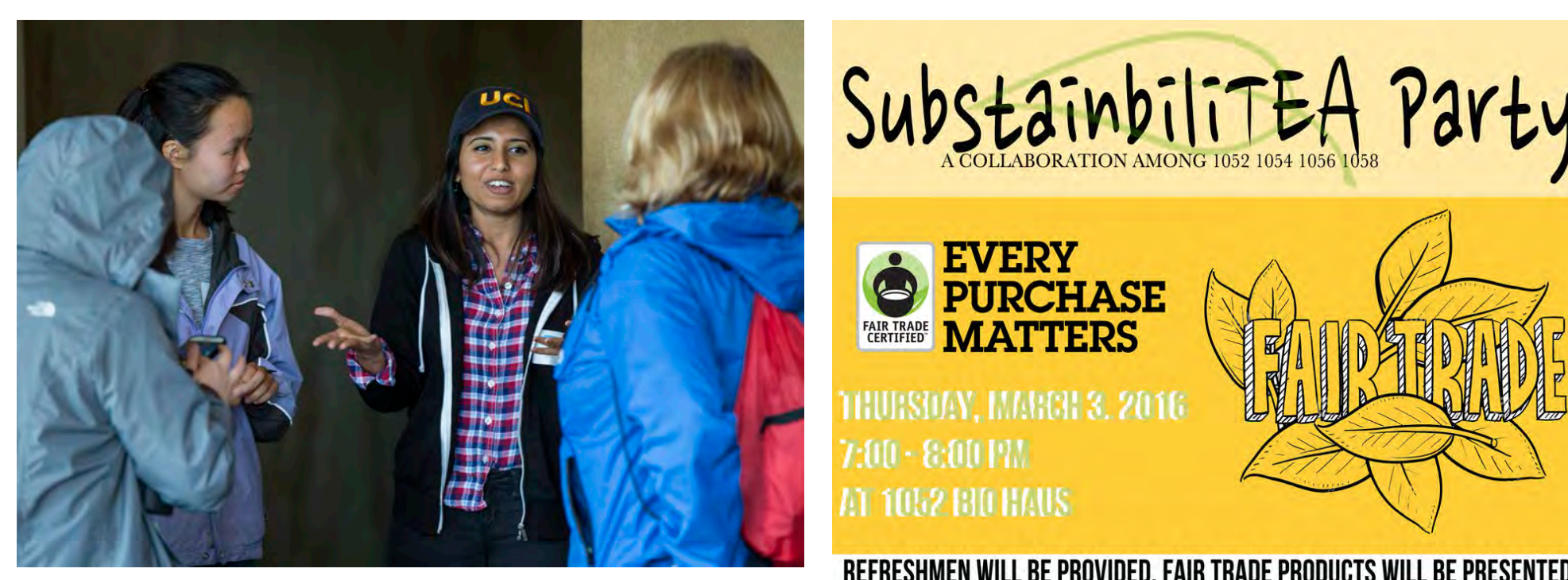
- Kitchen skills 101
- Stocking the pantry
- True Cost of food
- Meal planning
- Food Hacks 101
- Breakfast and snacks
- Lunch recipes
- Dinner recipes
- Dessert

None of the titles include the word “sustainability” but is rather incorporated in the text.

## Materials and Methods

I worked on this project with two other interns—Vanida Ngeam and Stephanie Silva. Together, we got some of the content for the resource guide from the web. The other portion came from all the activities we partook the entire year.

Part of my internship was to engage in outreach activities, and participate in workshops for self learning. I believe a lot of learning happens in groups along with people who care about the same topic as oneself. I attended a workshop on Fair Trade, and then later presented a similar workshop which I believe is an excellent way to retain information. That is, not only did I get to be part of discussions where I got exposed to the term, but even re-learn it for the presentation.



I also went to Chef Roger's workshops on experiential learning, where I got an opportunity to do some hands-on cooking! Roger went over the history (seed-to-plate) of turkey and corn. This helped me build a perspective on where our food comes from, why locally sourced food is important, and even some insight on GMOs.

Furthermore, our team went with Fernando to the UCI arboretum for a field trip. He explained to us what permaculture stands for, and the growing trend for aquaponics. This gave me an insight on strategic food planning. Sustainability is being able to use resources in way that doesn't harm the environment, and in fact encourage the ability to maximize the usage. The recipes in resource guide gives tips on how to use the product in entirety. For instance, for our blender-bike station, we used oranges to make smoothies, and then used the peel to soak in hot chocolate (to give it an orange flavor).



Stephanie, Vanida, and I also dedicated a huge portion of our time outreaching to about 200 students. Arroyo Vista (housing), had new compost bins placed in this year, and our outreach consisted of teaching students how to adequately sort trash. This was a big step for the UCI housing, and the students have shown great support ever since we presented. We always get students telling us how they put thought into putting something in trash, like they take an extra step to rinse out the cans before recycling, they compost the food waste, they reduce packaged bottles and use reusable mugs instead etc.

## Conclusions

All the activities mentioned in the poster, though may seem off topic, is in fact the biggest inspiration for all the content in the resource guide. The audience for this guide is the students, and these activities have helped me shape the tone for the subject. I've incorporated a lot of the content in a way that has helped me understand these issues. I used that experience to put what I think would work, or wouldn't work for the students.

All in all, this internship was a remarkable and a growing experience. Initially I only had an exposure and interest in sustainability, but now I have an understanding of it. I'm a Business Information Management major, and hence most of my studying involves in management and computer science field. I've never actively sought what sustainability means other than what my family instills upon me. This internship was a gateway for me to get involved in something everyone should be aware of regardless of their professional field. That is the beauty of sustainability—its not chained down to a specific group of people.



## Future Goals

I feel like being sustainable (though I've learned a lot) will always remain a learning process. I find myself trying to make conscious effort into living sustainable and even letting other people know.

I'm trying to see if I could overlap working for sustainability in my field. My friend suggested I create an app that lets people scan/take picture and it will let them know what trash can it belongs to. Some plastic is recyclable, some isn't there are many components that go in trash sorting, and I feel like the app will be an incentive for people to sort appropriately as it could be fun and interactive.



## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Rachel, my supervisor, for undying support. We've done so much this year and there have been times when I haven't been my best and yet she has never questioned. She just knew. A part of me is angry because she might ruin other managers for me in the future, because not everyone is accommodating 😊 Also, how can I not thank Vanida and Stephanie. This resource guide would be nothing without their help. It was so much fun to work with them!