



CLIMATE
CORPS

Zero Waste in Facilities and Community Colleges

San Mateo County Community College District

Trash Talking the Way to Zero Waste

SMCCCD has been recognized as an innovator for sustainability projects that serves their community. They are guiding 3 college campuses to becoming more sustainable institutions through 9 distinct district-wide sustainability initiatives.

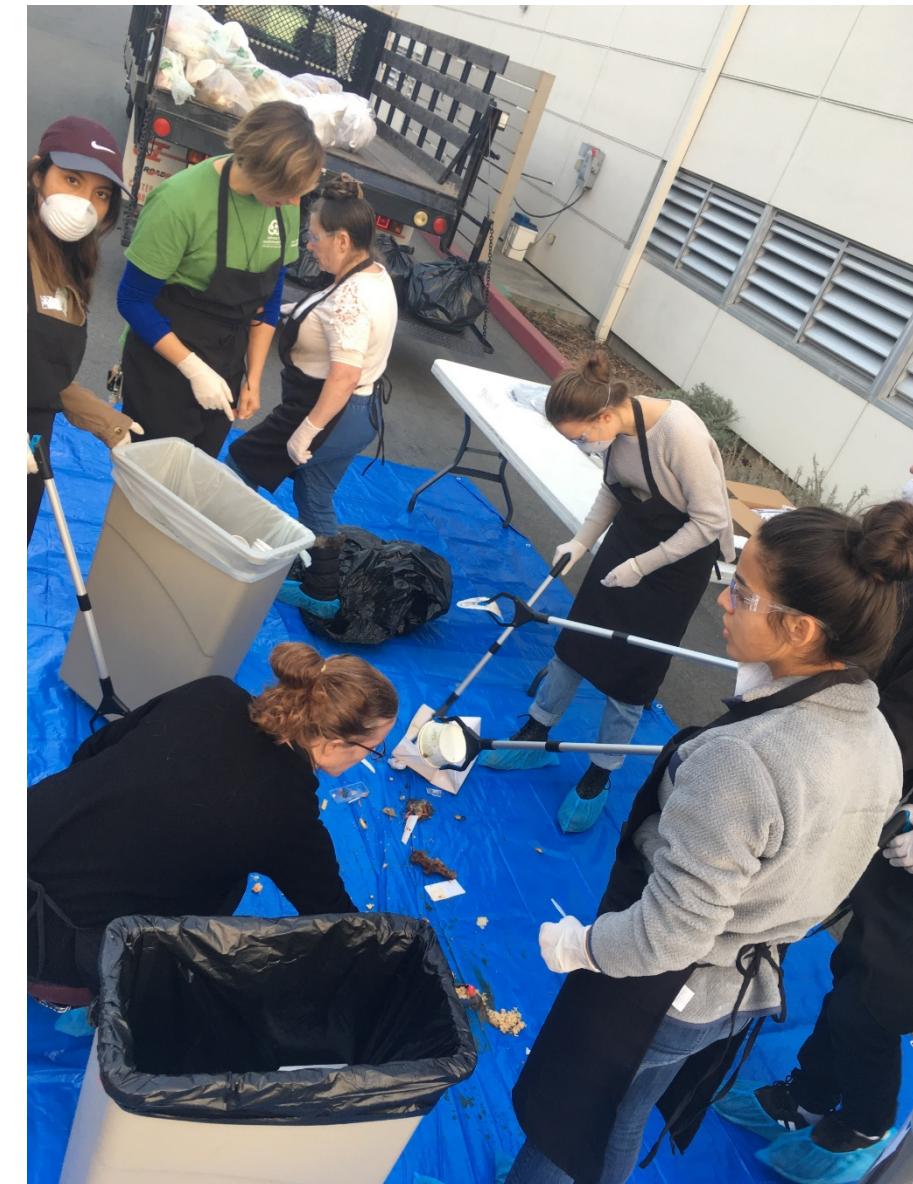
The role of the Zero Waste Program Associate is to aid SMCCCD's goal of Zero Waste by 2025 through reduction, sustainable procurement, waste diversion, stewardship, and institutionalizing sustainability through applied learning for students.



Green Infrastructure Expansion & Waste Reduction

SMCCCD was selected to receive the 4R's grant, \$25,000, from San Mateo County to expand its green infrastructure in order to expand its sustainability initiative.

- Co-developed software auditing tool to standardize auditing for waste bins and energy plug loads.
- Incorporated CaaLL by leading student competition in creating new signage to accompany newly acquired bins.
- Creation of the Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy to guide sustainable procurement district-wide.
- Revived the Green Office Program to pinpoint areas of improvement across different offices to reduce waste from the start at procurement.



Campus as a Living Lab (CaaLL)

CaaLL works to bring students hands-on opportunities in sustainability through applied learning. This allows students to take their knowledge out of the classroom to real-life applications. Through Zero Waste, students and faculty participated in waste audits to assess their current waste and where areas of improvement could be pinpointed.



Achievements / Results / Outcomes

Green Infrastructure Expansion

Over 90 new compost bins were added on all 3 campuses along with new signage

- Co-Developed software auditing tool with DabbleFox; DabbleFoxSHELF launched in January 2019.
- Educated over 200 faculty, staff, and students on proper waste disposal
- Saw an increase of waste diversion from 62% to 71% district-wide.

Campus as a Living Lab (CaaLL)

- Students from Cañada and Skyline College participated in waste assessments where 24-hours worth of waste were collected and sorted. This allowed SMCCCD to calculate the possible waste diversion of each campus.

Lessons Learned / Fellow Experience

Successful Strategies:

- Identify relationships amongst different stakeholders that are critical and utilize interns as a liaison.
- Sit down with individual stakeholders to gather information for best practices since they are the subject-matter experts of their departments.
- Approach initiatives from a customer service perspective; ask yourself, "how can I make their job easier?" while incorporating sustainability.

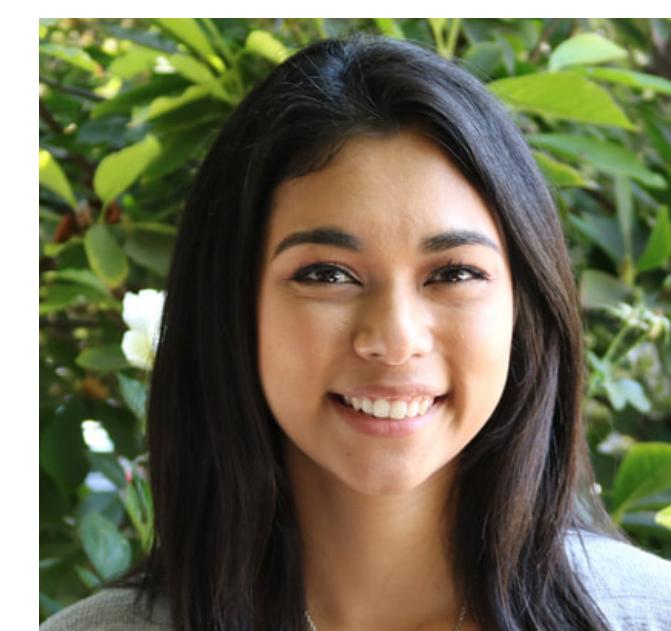
Recommendations for Improvement / Program Expansion:

- Keeping documentation of metrics along with key stakeholder relationships that have been made are essential in continuing the zero waste program without disruption.

Julie Nguyen

Julie graduated from the University of California, Riverside with a B.S. in Sustainability Studies. She has an interest in global sustainable development and is pursuing career opportunities in corporate social responsibility for program or business development.

Acknowledgements:



Julie would like thank her site supervisor & mentor, Joe Fullerton, and colleagues, Madeline Willett and Isaac Knipfing, for keeping momentum in the district office and inspiring her everyday. She would also like to thank regional supervisors Bailey Hall and Jake Pollack.