



# HDH Sustainability Annual Report

Environmental and Social Responsibility

ACADEMIC YEAR 2019-2020

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The 2019–2020 academic year was a rollercoaster of successes and challenges, which culminated with a global pandemic and historical unrest and change. Ultimately, it was a year of opportunity, success and growth. Much was achieved this year, but we recognize that with such uncertainty comes responsibility. Housing, Dining, Hospitality (HDH) does its part to pursue a sustainable future through its mission. We are committed to being resilient in the face of uncertainty, remaining optimistic, and paving the way for a more sustainable future.



# A Snapshot of Academic Year 2019–2020

1. Reached more than 2,500 students through collaborative educational programs and events

*See page 3 for more details*

2. Engaged with an audience of over 11,000 through social media

*See page 3 for more details*

3. Donated more than 9,800 pounds of food to fight food insecurity issues

*See page 4 for more details*

4. Constructed two new LEED Gold communities

*See page 5 for more details*

5. Reduced carbon footprint of our food by 15%

*See page 4, 5 for more details*

6. Donated 9 tons of goods to the Disabled American Veterans

*See page 5, 6 for more details*

7. Diverted over 150 tons of pre-consumer food scraps to the Miramar Greenery

*See page 4 for more details*

8. Expanded our post-consumer composting program to all restaurants

*See page 4 for more details*

9. Hosted 54 zero waste catering events

*See page 4 for more details*



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# The HDH EcoNauts

The EcoNauts are HDH's student sustainability team. They use creative and engaging means to educate students and the campus community on sustainability. Environmental impact topics include energy and water conservation, sustainable lifestyles and proper waste sorting. The EcoNauts also assist with sustainability projects and initiatives within HDH and UC San

Diego. Their work supports our campus and [University of California Sustainable Practices Policy goals](#).

The 2019–2020 EcoNauts team consisted of Christy Schlutius, Shannon Lee, Roxy Montalvo, McKenna Thompson, Zoe Li, Arielle Hancko and Josh Grimes.

**The UC San Diego National Residence Hall Honorary (NRHH) nominated the EcoNauts for the 2020 "Community of the Year" award for their outstanding impact on the residential life community of students.**

## Educational Programs and Student Outreach

The EcoNauts conducted 65 educational programs and events in the 2019–2020 academic year, reaching approximately 2,500 students and residents, including those in our Graduate and Family Housing (GFH) communities. These programs ranged from large-scale, campus-wide events such as WellFest and the Night Bazaar, to personalized, small-scale events in partnership with resident assistants (RA) and housing advisors (HA) across campus.

Social media was a powerful tool for the EcoNauts to reach students on campus. Through Facebook and Instagram posts, social media campaigns, and their vlog series, the EcoNauts engaged an audience of over 11,000. Vlogs gave viewers an inside look at the EcoNauts, HDH and campus sustainability initiatives and eco-friendly lifestyles. Social media campaigns engaged and encouraged

students to practice sustainable behaviors. Specifically, their energy conservation campaign in Winter Quarter 2020 reached an audience of more than 4,300, teaching simple yet effective tips to save energy at home.

**Social Media by the numbers:**  
**14 vlogs reached 5,804;**  
**21 posts reached 850;**  
**energy conservation campaign reached 4,364.**

The EcoNauts launched an EcoEvent Competition, using a point-based award system to incentivize RAs and HAs to host sustainable programs and events. They encouraged RAs and HAs to focus event themes around sustainability, and plan and

execute events in a sustainable manner. Points were awarded for reducing or eliminating landfill waste, opting for plant-based foods, and resident attendance. Of the 50 RA/HA programs, eight qualified as an "EcoEvent."

The winner of the EcoNaut's EcoEvent Competition was Earl Warren College. Warren RAs hosted 20 sustainability programs with the EcoNauts, reaching 276 residents. Congratulations!

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# Progress: Successes, Challenges and Updates

## • UCOP ZERO WASTE GOAL

UC San Diego's waste diversion rate for academic year 2019–2020 was 43%, an increase of 5% from the previous year. Although we did not reach our zero waste goal by 2020, we learned plenty that have set many pieces in motion and will help us improve our campus goals.

The UC Office of the President (UCOP) revised and updated the zero waste goal to target per capita waste reduction moving forward. These new goals are: Reduce waste generation by 25% per capita from FY 2015–/2016 levels by 2025, and 50% per capita by 2030. You can learn more on the [UCOP Sustainability website](#).

## • ZERO WASTE CATERING EVENTS

Through partnerships with UC San Diego Facilities Management (FM) and Roger's Urban Farmlab (RUF), UC San Diego Catering expanded their zero waste catered event offerings. In total, they hosted 54 zero waste events, ranging from small office gatherings to large-scale campus events. This is an increase from 35 zero waste events last year.

Notably, this includes the 2019 Chancellor's Staff Appreciation Holiday Breakfast, which achieved a 94.5% diversion rate. This diversion of more than 4,500 pounds of waste avoided emissions of over 4,000 miles driven.

The success of this event was possible through partnerships with FM, Campus Sustainability and San Diego State University.

## • FOOD SECURITY EFFORTS

We donated over 9,800 pounds of food to the UC San Diego Food Recovery Network (FRN), Triton Food Pantry (TFP) and San Diego Rescue Mission. These donations prevented edible foods from entering the landfill and helped combat food insecurity among UC San Diego students and the San Diego community by providing almost 8,200 meals.

## • BACK-OF-HOUSE FOOD SCRAP RECYCLING PROGRAM

We composted more than 150 tons of pre-consumer food scraps from our restaurant kitchens. Launched in 2010, the program has successfully prevented over 2,000 tons of food waste from entering the landfill, avoiding an equivalent carbon emissions from 300 vehicles for one year.

## • POST-CONSUMER COMPOSTING PROGRAM

The Tiny Bin Tim (TBT) post-consumer composting program expanded to all dining restaurants. More than 4,000 pounds of food waste was composted. Through the program, carbon emissions

equivalent to driving the length of California 4 1/2 times were avoided. This number would likely be higher, but as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, we closed our restaurants' dine-in service during spring quarter.

The TBT program originally began as a small-scale pilot in Roots in 2018, initiated by HDH Sustainability and the EcoNauts. The following year, we expanded to 64 Degrees, in collaboration with the UC San Diego Student Sustainability Collective (SSC) and RUF.

This program is instrumental in HDH's and the campus' sustainability mission. Post-consumer composting has been a challenge for UC San Diego to overcome for many years. Historically, attempts to collect post-consumer food scraps have been unsuccessful due to high levels of contamination, leading to landfill waste. This program successfully collects post-consumer food scraps with minimal contamination, allowing us to divert a waste stream from the landfill that previously was inaccessible.

This program is possible through partnerships with FM, RUF, the SSC and Ellie's Community Garden.



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## • ROOTED IN FLAVOR

Canyon Vista Marketplace was renovated and opened to reveal a revolutionary approach to food: Rooted in Flavor. This approach is based on the principles of Menus of Change, a groundbreaking movement from The Culinary Institute of America and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health that promotes healthy and sustainable menus. By providing nutritious, delicious and environmentally sustainable food options, HDH aims to show that small choices make a big difference. Menu items are designed to be plant-forward, which emphasizes and celebrates plant-based foods, reduces environmental footprints and is both healthy and delicious.

As a result of this program, the environmental footprint was reduced by 15% per pound of food, totaling 2.1 million pounds of CO<sub>2</sub>e. That's equivalent to emissions of driving around the Earth 95 times!

## • HYPER-LOCAL PRODUCE

Twelve new aeroponic grow towers were installed outside of Canyon Vista Marketplace. These towers produce leafy vegetables and herbs which are used in salads and other dishes served in the restaurant a few feet away. Together with the aeroponic tower garden at 64 Degrees, these gardens produce more than 400 pounds of fresh produce each month.

## • 2020 RESIDENTIAL MOVE-OUTS

Our campus move-outs were different due to COVID-19. The majority of residents moved out in March. Donation drives were not hosted given concerns of spreading potentially contaminated materials. Fortunately, during the normal June move-out timeframe, we hosted smaller-scale donation drives with the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) and FRN. Nine tons of items were received and donated to the DAV. Each ton of donations to the DAV contribute approximately \$2,000 towards programs benefiting disabled veterans in the community.

Our food donation drive was similarly impacted. We partnered with the FRN to donate food from three colleges, but due to scheduling and staffing challenges, we unfortunately were unable to record the specific amount donated.

## • HDH DONATION PROGRAM

HDH Custodial Services started a program to collect household item donations from residents and redistribute to others in need. This program served approximately 25 undergraduate and graduate students directly through pickup and delivery of items, and assisted over 60 residents in GFH through two swap events.

Throughout the year, we received a number of donations from

students and staff. These items are stored in dedicated storage containers for distribution when requested by students.

## • LEED BUILDING PROJECTS

Our two new GFH communities, Nuevo East and Nuevo West, were certified LEED Gold. The Canyon Vista Marketplace renovation was certified LEED Silver. LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification ensures buildings are energy and resource-efficient, healthier, and high-performing through green features and sustainable design, construction and operation practices.

## • SUSTAINABILITY SIGNAGE UPDATES

New sustainability signage was installed in all residential unit common spaces across campus. These signs offer detailed information on proper waste-sorting procedures. They show what items go where, based on the specific items that can be recycled or composted in San Diego and on campus. This is part of a larger initiative in partnership with FM and Campus Sustainability to update waste sorting signage to look and feel more consistent across the entire campus.



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# On-Campus and Community Partnerships

Our on-campus and community partnerships are critical pieces in our sustainability mission. Working collaboratively with others allows us all to move forward towards a more sustainable campus and community.

## ● **WARREN COMMUNITY GARDEN**

In winter quarter, Canyon Vista Marketplace partnered with the student-run Warren Community Garden to provide food scraps to get their composting system up and running. Food scraps were collected from the kitchens and composted at Warren Community Garden. Students then used the compost to grow fruits, vegetables, and other plants in the garden.

## ● **EDCO DISPOSAL**

UC San Diego partnered with a new campus waste hauler, EDCO Disposal. Within their first month on board, they tackled one of the most challenging times of the year for waste: Move-Ins. Together, we diverted more than 22 tons of materials from the landfill, making it one of the smoothest and least wasteful move-ins to date.

## ● **HDH GREEN GRANTS**

HDH Sustainability awarded Sixth College RAs a Green

Grant to fund an educational program about ocean plastic pollution. Residents enjoyed a day at Mission Bay Aquatic Center and learned the importance of avoiding single-use plastics and preventing ocean pollution. The Green Grant was used to provide reusable items so participants could make the connection between their individual actions of reuse and its impact on our local waterways, such as Mission Bay.

## ● **INTER-SUSTAINABILITY COUNCIL**

The EcoNauts represent HDH Sustainability on the university's Inter-Sustainability Council, which brings together the various sustainability organizations, groups and departments on campus in bi-weekly meetings for increased communication and collaboration.

## ● **MIRAMAR GREENERY**

We continue to partner with the City of San Diego's Miramar Greenery for our back-of-house

food scrap recycling program. This partnership allows us to compost all our food waste from our kitchens.

## ● **DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS**

The DAV have remained a valued partner for our donation programs. DAV donation bins are frequently located in our GFH communities, as well as on main campus. During our abbreviated undergraduate move-outs, 9 tons of donations were collected.

## ● **FOOD RECOVERY NETWORK**

Through our partnership with UC San Diego's FRN, more than 3,700 pounds of edible (but not sellable) food was recovered from HDH restaurants, providing almost 3,100 meals to those in need. To date, HDH has donated over 15,500 pounds of food to FRN.

## ● **ROGER'S URBAN FARMLAB**

HDH continued its partnership with RUF (formerly named Roger's Community Garden) to divert

post-consumer food scraps from zero-waste catering events and the Tiny Bin Tim composting program in restaurants. Composting with RUF greatly contributes to our campus' zero waste goal.

## ● **SAN DIEGO RESCUE MISSION**

We continued our partnership with the San Diego Rescue Mission to collect edible, fresh food donations. Nearly 6,100 pounds of food was donated to the organization, providing more than 5,000 meals to those in need.

## ● **TRITON FOOD PANTRY**

We continued our partnership with the Triton Food Pantry (TFP) to donate non-perishable foods from our restaurants and markets throughout the year. Additionally, for every pound of coffee sold, 15 cents is donated to the TFP by our coffee supplier, ecogrounds!



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# Sustainable Foods

After successfully meeting and exceeding the UCOP goal in academic year 2018-2019, UCOP revised and updated the sustainable food goal moving forward. The criteria for "sustainable food" has been updated to match AASHE STARS\* v2.2 criteria, a widely accepted, researched and thoroughly vetted set of criteria which focuses on third-party certifications to verify sustainable foods. The goal has been updated as well: Achieve 25% sustainable food spend by 2030. Under this new criteria, HDH sits at 15% sustainable spend, and we are confident in our ability to reach this new goal by the deadline.

In addition, a new section of the policy was added. The 10-campus UC system is now tracking and reporting plant-based foods, as defined by Menus of Change and AASHE STARS v2.2. UCOP will be setting a baseline and goal for the UC's in the near future. Currently, HDH sits at 30% plant-based food spend.

*\*The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) Sustainability Tracking Assessment & Rating System (STARS)*

Sustainable Product Category	Money Spent	Percentage
American Humane Assoc.	\$81,788.66	0.6%
Cage-Free	\$212,961.22	1.7%
Certified Humane Raised	\$385,484.69	3.0%
Fair Trade	\$180,498.50	1.4%
Grass Fed	\$38,311.31	0.3%
Monterey Bay	\$251,507.17	2.0%
Rainforest Alliance	\$80,670.35	0.6%
USDA Organic	\$669,315.04	5.3%
Total Sustainable Spend	\$1,900,536.94	15.0%
Total Plant- Based	\$3,801,686.11	30.0%
Total Spend	\$12,657,895.72	



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## HDH Hydration Locations

**Hydration Locations** promote reuse and waste reduction by providing convenient stations to refill water bottles with free, fresh drinking water. There are more than 80 Hydration Locations across campus. In partnership with the Healthy Campus Network Healthy Beverage Initiative, HDH replaced and updated 15 Hydration Locations. Additionally, HDH installed two new locations in our GFH communities.

Visit [hdhsustainability.ucsd.edu](https://hdhsustainability.ucsd.edu) for a map of Hydration Locations across campus.

These Hydration Locations also prevent thousands of single-use plastic water bottles from being used and discarded. By our estimates, these Hydration Locations avoided approximately 900,000 bottles\*. Producing and recycling plastic water bottles is energy and water intensive. To

create one bottle, it takes approximately twice as much water as stored in the bottle. Hydration Locations saved more than 280,000 gallons of water, and avoided an equivalent annual carbon emissions from 72 cars!

*\*Due to the impacts of COVID-19, a number of stations were inaccessible or closed off for safety reasons. For these reasons it is important to note that these numbers are rough approximations based on historical data and extrapolation.*

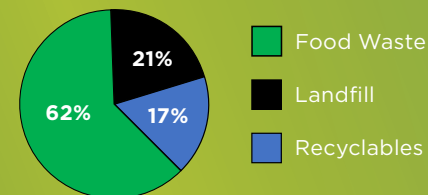
## Waste Audits

The EcoNauts performed two waste audits in academic year 2019–2020 to quantify what items are being thrown away into the landfill, and to identify areas of improvement for diversion. In fall quarter, they audited the front-of-house landfill waste at 64 Degrees. In winter quarter, they audited landfill waste collected from the residential halls in Eleanor Roosevelt College.

**The results are as follows:**

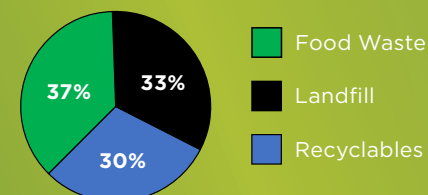
### FALL QUARTER:

64 Degrees Trash Composition by Weight



### WINTER QUARTER:

ERC ResHall Trash Composition by Weight



The EcoNauts found that roughly 79% of waste found in the 64 Degrees trash bins and 67% of waste found in residential hall trash bins could have been diverted (recycled or composted). In particular, they found a majority of rigid plastics (such as to-go containers and cold drink cups) and paper material in the waste. We have much room for improvement to achieve our campus waste diversion goals. HDH and the EcoNauts will be bringing more programs in the future to help us get there.



The background is a solid green color with a subtle gradient from a lighter green on the left to a darker green on the right. In the bottom left corner, there is a geometric design consisting of several overlapping triangles and quadrilaterals in various shades of green, creating a modern, abstract pattern.

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