

UNIVERSITY OF
ARKANSAS

A Semester in the Office for Sustainability

Elizabeth D. Hood

Bachelor of Arts in Political Science Student, Foundations of Sustainability Minor

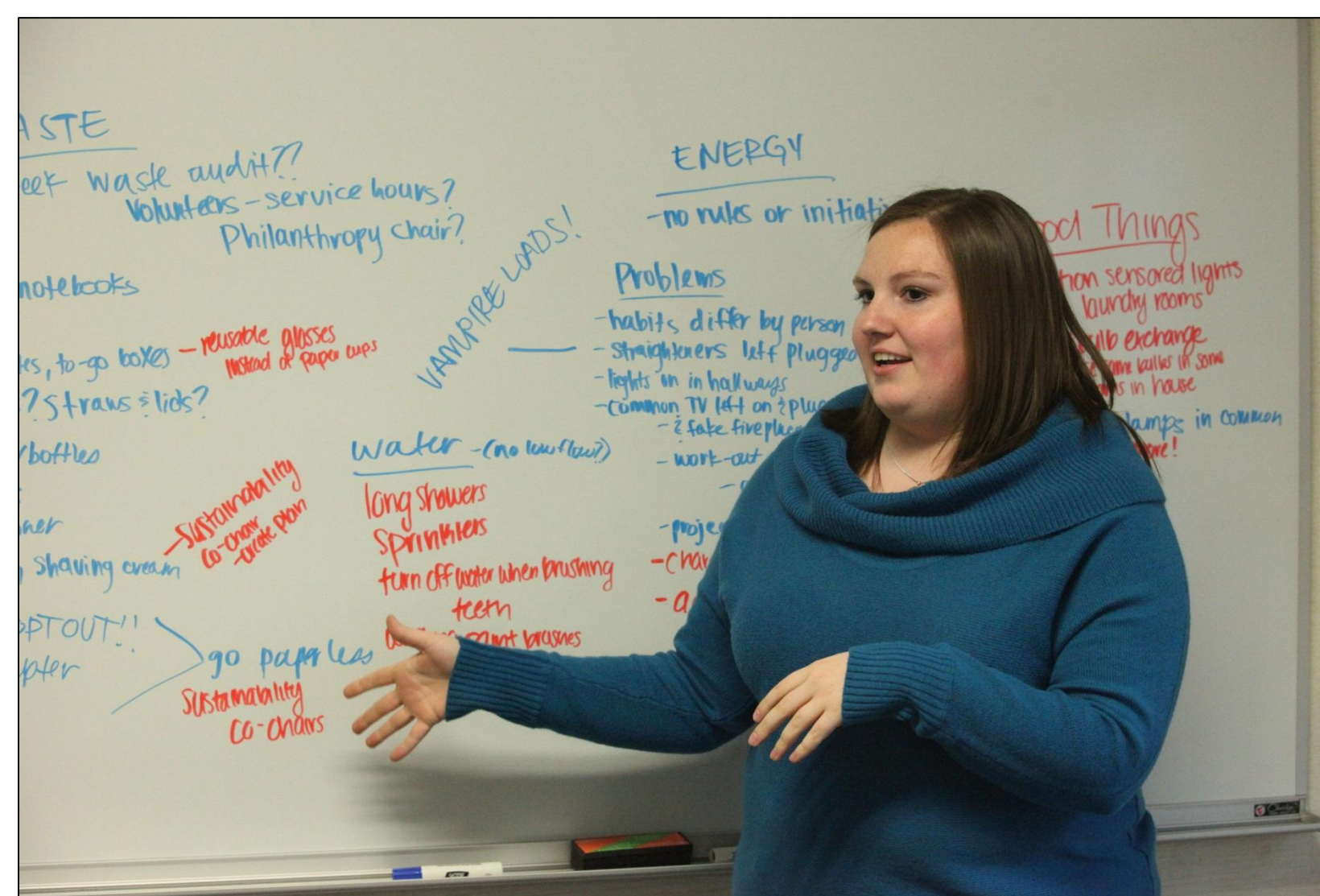


UNIVERSITY OF
ARKANSAS

Campus Sustainability

BACKGROUND

In the past, the Office for Sustainability had little to no contact with Greek Life staff or members. To reach out to the 22% of University of Arkansas students involved in Greek Life, the Office for Sustainability created a Greek Life Sustainability Internship position. In November of 2012, Carlos Ochoa, Director of the Office for Sustainability, posted the position information on the University of Arkansas Office for Sustainability Wordpress. After applying to the position, and receiving an interview, I was offered the position. I began work as the Greek Life Sustainability Intern in the Office for Sustainability on January 14, 2013.



SUSTAINABILITY DOMAINS

Throughout my internship I was involved in projects spanning every domain of sustainability. I had hands on experience working with the benefits and drawbacks of social systems, built systems and managed systems.

Social Systems

The vast majority of my internship was focused on social systems. Every project I was involved in had ties to the social systems, whether it was getting people involved, creating relationships between university offices. My internship allowed me to view the realities of attempting to create programs for people who were not enthusiastic about the program. Often I viewed sustainability as an ideal system where everyone will understand what you are trying to accomplish and immediately jump on board to help, unfortunately this is not the case. As the main objective of my internship was to create ties between the Office for Sustainability and Greek Life members, the social systems domain impacted much of what I attempted to accomplish throughout my internship.

Built Systems

One of the projects I took on this semester was the editing of the script for Student Ambassador tour guides. The current script makes no mention of the LEED certified buildings on our campus or the strides the university is taking in the built systems domain of sustainability. To edit the script, I began researching the campus buildings that feature environmentally friendly design aspects, such as the green roof on Hillside Auditorium.

Managed Systems

Two of the projects I worked on required me to partner with for-profit companies. Partnering with Better World Books and eSCO Processing and Recycling allowed me to learn more about the inner workings of two leaders in sustainability. Better World Books was my partner for the Office for Sustainability book drive and provided promotional materials and boxes for us to send the books we collected to their warehouse. As a company, they place great emphasis on recycling all books they cannot sell and donating a percentage of all the proceeds from selling the donated books to literacy groups. eSCO Processing and Recycling is a company that is R2 and E-Steward certified and dedicated solely to responsibly recycling electronic waste.

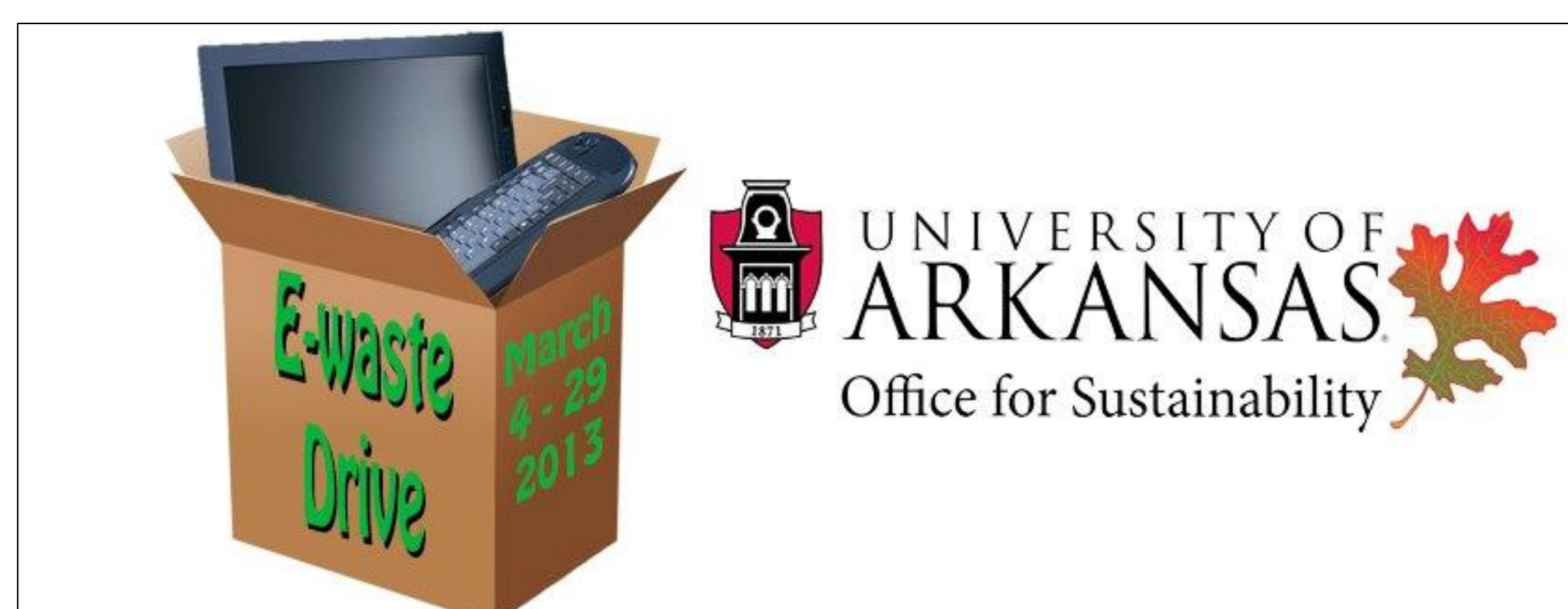


GREEK LIFE SUSTAINABILITY INTERN

As the Greek Life Sustainability Intern, I worked on many different projects throughout my time in the office. Spearheading projects such as an E-waste Drive and a Book drive and also lending my support to projects led by other interns, such as the RSO recycling competition allowed me to experience every level of involvement in various projects.

At the beginning of my internship we decided a major factor of getting students involved in sustainability is education. As a population that was largely separate from the sustainability efforts on campus, my main objective was to share basic sustainability knowledge and volunteer opportunities in the Office for Sustainability with Greek Life students. To address this aspect I partnered with an EnergyCorps member in our office to create a presentation on energy and water conservation and waste management designed specifically for Greek Houses. We also wanted to compile a list of Greek Life students interested in sustainability to better focus who we inform about volunteer opportunities.

While some projects I led were initiated by the director, others I initiated. No matter how they were initiated, every project I completed utilized Google Drive to either compile information, or to publish a form for students to complete. Many projects I spearheaded used Facebook event pages to spread the word and details of the event, the links to the event pages were often posted on Facebook group pages, like the Foundations of Sustainability Minor at the University of Arkansas group page. For my projects and others, I wrote blog posts that were posted on the Office for Sustainability Wordpress or the Campus Conservation Nationals Wordpress. Most projects also used Adobe Photoshop to create logos for the Facebook page or the Wordpress post.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All internship activities were overseen by Carlos Ochoa, Director of the Office for Sustainability and Dr. Marty Matlock, Executive Director of the Office for Sustainability.

Other interns in the program include Addie Benson, Alexander Clark Andrew Dugan, Brittney Horn, Kris Johnson, Elvira Kizilova, Andrea Love, Nnamdi Nnedu, and Supriya Thote. The EnergyCorps member in the Office for Sustainability is Mallory Jenkins.

All graphics used were created by Elizabeth Hood during employment at the Office for Sustainability. All photos are property of the University of Arkansas Office for Sustainability and were taken by Carlos Ochoa or Kris Johnson.