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Executive Summary

The past fiscal year has been one of transition and new beginnings, both for the Center for Sustainable Development (CSD) and sustainability at the College as a whole. In January of 2021, the CSD shifted from the Division of Academic Affairs to Facilities Management within the Division of Business Affairs. This transition was still underway as fiscal year 2022 began, bringing opportunities for new partnerships and collaboration. The shift also allowed for deeper connections to our operations at the College that have some of our greatest ecological impacts, such as energy and waste. In addition, the CSD hired an Associate Director for Student Engagement in December, Jen Jones, who is positively transforming the way the CSD engages with and supports students working with us for sustainability.

We kicked off the academic year in style with the fifth-annual SustainFest event, where we announced the U.N. Sustainable Development Goal of the year: Sustainable Cities and Communities. This theme flowed through many of the CSD’s events, speakers, programs and projects held throughout the fall and spring semesters. The CSD was thrilled to partner with new campus groups to continue promoting an active sustainability culture on campus. Through the CofC Honors Engaged program, REACH, the Center for Civic Engagement and others, we interacted with more than 2,186 students last year alone.

The CSD also saw many successes on the operational side. The first-ever residential compost pilot program was launched in the Warren Place Apartments. This program saw approximately 500 lbs of compostable food waste diverted from around 50 residents in just over 32 weeks. In addition, Mindful Move-In diverted 8,728 lbs from the landfill in August, and Mindful Move-Out diverted an additional 16,279 lbs in May. Significant energy savings continued as a result of the Facilities Management Energy Savings contract.

Finally, this year saw the culmination of the five-year Quality Enhancement Plan focused on sustainability literacy. The CSD looks forward to continuing the partnership with faculty and staff in Academic Affairs to grow and enhance the sustainability initiatives born out of this plan. There is much excitement as we enter fiscal year 2023 and focus on achieving our bold Sustainability Action Plan goals to moving the College closer to a zero-waste, carbon-neutral institution.

- Center for Sustainable Development Team
ZERO WASTE
Achieve 90% waste diversion by 2035.

75.8% of waste produced on campus is recoverable

54.9% of recoverable waste is organic (food, paper, etc.)

33.1% diversion rate in fiscal year 2022
ZERO WASTE
2021-2022 SPOTLIGHT PROJECTS

Mindful Move-in/Move-out

Mindful Move-in and Move-out help to reduce the uptick in waste we see produced during students’ move in and out from residence halls on campus. In the fall of 2022, increased visibility and collection of cardboard recycling through Mindful Move-in successfully diverted 8,728 lbs of cardboard from the landfill. Later, in the spring of 2022, Mindful Move-out allowed students to donate non-perishable food items, housewares & clothing to be reused, and foam mattresses & bedding to be recycled. This led to a total diversion of 16,279 lbs of material from the landfill - an approximately 11% diversion rate.

Cougar Compost

Cougar Compost was the culmination of an exciting Cougar Changemaker project submitted in the spring of 2021. The goal of the student project was to ‘tackle the food waste that CofC is responsible for’ and to ‘reduce the amount of waste we send to the landfill as well as push towards becoming a carbon neutral and zero waste school.’ The program was available to the Warren Place Apartment residence. Over the course of 32 weeks, more than 500 lbs of compost was diverted from the landfill, avoiding approximately 1,306 lbs of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions.

Waste Characterization Study

In the spring of 2022, the Center for Sustainable Development partnered with SCS Engineers to conduct a full-scale waste characterization study of the campus’ various waste streams. This project came to fruition based on the award of an Empower Grant from Siemens. The study showed approximately 75.8% of the College’s waste was recoverable. That brings us extremely close to our goal of 90% diversion by 2035. The CSD looks forward to working with key campus partners to begin tackling the recommendations from this report.

FY23 Goals:

- Hire a Zero Waste Manager to lead zero waste efforts across campus
- Develop additional key performance indicators to measure waste diversion and aversion
- Expand current and introduce new waste diversion efforts on campus
- Expand compost collection opportunities
CARBON NEUTRALITY
Achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.

Campus wide GHG emissions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Metric tons of CO2e</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY13</td>
<td>60,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY15</td>
<td>40,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>FY19</td>
<td>20,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>FY20</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>FY21</td>
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Commuting Modes - FY22

- Drive Alone: 51.5%
- Walk: 25.6%
- Bike: 3.7%
- CARTA: 7.6%
- Multiple Modes: 8%
- Carpool: 3.1%
CARBON NEUTRALITY
2021-2022 SPOTLIGHT PROJECTS

Energy Savings Contract
The College kicked off an Energy Savings Performance Contract, ESCO for short, in July 2021 that aimed to reduce emissions and save the College approximately $1.7 million annually. The project, led by Facilities Management, will engage almost every building on campus through the replacement of light bulbs to more efficient alternatives, replacement of shower heads and to low-flow fixtures as well as larger scale projects such as building envelope improvements and building automation systems.

Tree Campus Certification
The College of Charleston became a Tree Campus Higher Education campus in February of 2022, becoming the 9th South Carolina school given the honor. This effort was led by CSD student intern Hanna Giblin, who worked closely with the CofC Grounds department and the Landscape Committee to achieve the certification. Certification requires the development of a Tree Master Plan, Care Plan and a commitment to complete a day of service around trees annually.

Alternative Transportation
A transportation survey distributed by the CSD in the spring of 2022 reached a total of 1315 people and received 1,145 complete responses. This included 248 faculty members, 299 staff members, and 595 students. The survey revealed the most common form of transportation that Cougars utilize for their commute to campus is still driving alone, at 51.5% of respondents. As an effort to make biking more accessible for students on campus, the CSD Bike Share successfully distributed 10 bikes for long-term student use during the 2021 fall and 2022 spring semesters.

FY23 Goals:
- Craft a Climate Action Plan for the College with input from the campus community
- Expand alternative transportation portfolio for CofC students, staff and faculty
- Produce annual GHG emissions report
CSD INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The CSD internship program hosted 33 students the fiscal year (July 2021- June 2022) as they worked to make change for sustainability at the College. These outstanding students worked more than 4,600 hours on a range of projects and programs, all aimed at meeting the College’s Sustainability Action Plan goals. The students who participate in our internship program are able to gain real-world experience implementing sustainability, while also gaining professional development, peer-to-peer collaborative opportunities and a place to feel valued during their time at the College. In FY22, the CSD also supported two graduate assistants from the Environmental & Sustainability Studies Masters program.

CSD 2021-2022 Intern Positions

- Green Office
- Cougar Free Store & Reuse
- Graphic Design
- Zero Waste
- Cougar Changemaker
- Climate Innovation
- Student Engagement
- Community Engagement
- Food Sustainability & Biodiversity
- Sustainable Study Abroad
- Creative Media / Communications

Total FY22 Intern Hours

- Summer 2021 Hours: 960
- Fall 2021 Hours: 1,440
- Spring 2022 Hours: 1,440
- Summer 2022 Hours: 840
- Total FY22 Intern Hours: 4,680
Green Office Program
The goal of this program is to provide faculty, staff and students with knowledge and resources to integrate social inclusion and environmental consciousness into their working spaces. This year, the CSD doubled the number of participants in the program with a total of 13 offices now certified, including these new inductees:
- REACH Program
- Facilities Management
- Halsey Institute
- Mathematics
- Dining Services
- Academic Advising and Planning Center
- Environmental & Sust. Studies Masters Program

QEP Wrap-Up
Over the past 5 years, the College’s Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) has been focused on Sustainability Literacy as a Bridge to Addressing 21st Century Problems. Led by Dr. Todd LeVasseur and Academic Affairs these efforts worked to develop strong programs of learning for our student around sustainability. The CSD collaborated closely with Dr. LeVasseur and the QEP, and the team hosted a shared internship program, events, communication channels and a website to centralize sustainability efforts at the College. Some of the collaborative highlights of the final year of the QEP included SustainFest, annual Day of Service and Sustainability Week.

FY23 Goals:
- Develop CSD internship assessment protocols and methods
- Support the Academic Affairs Sustainability Working Group to solidify next steps for QEP institutionalization
- Expand staff and faculty sustainability learning opportunities (i.e. Green Office)
ACTIVE SUSTAINABILITY CULTURE

Embed sustainability values into the CofC campus culture.

FY22 Event Attendance on Campus

FY22 Student Green Fee Funds
ACTIVE SUSTAINABILITY CULTURE
2021-2022 SPOTLIGHT PROJECTS

Cougar Free Store
Established as a permanent fixture of the CSD in the fall of 2021, the Cougar Free Store provides a place for members of the College of Charleston community to donate gently used items for other Cougars to take - all for free. The Cougar Free Store has helped divert a total of 1,744 lbs of material from the landfill and has hosted 9 pop-up events across campus that encourage a culture of re-use and conscious consumption on campus.

Sustainability Partnerships
The CSD embarked on many new partnerships over the academic year, including ones with Honors Engaged and the REACH program. The CSD worked with around 20 first-years Honors Engaged students to help with developing residence hall compost expansion, green lab program research and climate action planning. In addition, the CSD hosted their first-ever REACH student who participated in the internship program and offered invaluable support to the zero waste efforts at the College.

Cougar Changemaker
The Cougar Changemaker program provided $37,500 worth of funding over the past year for 14 unique, student led projects. The fall 2021 semester projects included: sustainable period products, a garden at 12 Bull Street, laundry detergent sheet dispenser, mask recycling infrastructure, bird safety decals and drink spiking prevention materials. The spring 2022 semester projects included: native plants for Stono Preserve, hammocks, reef-friendly sunscreen, vegan nutrition, self-defense classes, clothing mending workshop, composting bins and support for an accessible solution for Porter’s Lodge.

FY23 Goals:
- Develop Active Sustainability Culture assessment methods and key performance indicators
- Create a “hub” for students interested in engaging with sustainability at CofC beyond the CSD internship program
- Initiate community partnerships to support broader sustainability initiatives at the City, County and regional level
In a partnership with University Communications, the CSD assisted in collecting, measuring and sending off old CofC banners to be upcycled into reusable bags. This pilot program resulted in the creation of 70 bags: 27 medium totes, 27 all-purpose totes and 26 zipper pouches.

The CSD hosted two CARTA bus ride-a-longs, one in the fall and one in the spring 2022, encourage the use of public transportation ridership. Trips to the EarthFare and Target in West Ashley showcased how this no-cost option is easy for students to use.

The new Solar Pavilion was dedicated in October of 2021, thanks to a grant secured by the CSD and Facilities Management from the South Carolina Department of Energy. The pavilion produces 250 kW of energy annually. The construction initiated an archeological dig resulting in an 1853 slave tag being unearthed at the site.
FY22 SUSTAINABILITY EVENTS

Two Social Justice Coffee Hours were hosted focusing on Breaking the Binary and Homelessness in Charleston. More than 40 attendees joined in on the important conversations.

SustainFest kicked off the 2021-2022 year focusing on the theme of Sustainable Cities and Communities. More than 450 CofC campus members came out to celebrate the start of the new academic year.

Nine sustainability events in five days wrapped up the 2022 spring semester during the CSD’s annual Sustainability Week. From a Sustainable Cities Expo to a Field Day, more than 350 faculty, staff and students engaged with the events and programs hosted.