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Day 26 Greenest

I want to focus my climate action plan on producing less waste and shopping secondhand. Before coming to school at Florida Gulf Coast University, I had an internship with the Office of Sustainability at Indiana State University. This is where I got the idea of a secondhand move out/in store. I shadowed the Director of Sustainability at Indiana State while he was planning and running this event. I was extremely interested in its aspects and processes, and knew I wanted to bring it to my new school at FGCU. I learned a lot during my internship at Indiana State, but I've also learned many new things through Project Green Challenge. PGC has taught me to build a life that's healthier and more sustainable, and I want to do my part to achieve that goal. I want to be my own Eco Hero. I think my combined knowledge from both, Indiana State University and PGC, will help me succeed in this project.

My short-term goals for this project would be to implement a pilot program. I know I won't be able to realistically accomplish everything within the first year of this program. With help from PGC and/or grants that I apply for, I hope to start the pilot during Spring 2021 move out and again with Fall 2021 move in. This first year, we will focus on collecting small donations from students as they are moving out. I know that with this being a new program, lots of negotiations and discussions will be had concerning storage for these items. With a limited amount of space, our first year we want to only collect smaller items such as, laundry baskets/detergent, wastebasket, bulletin/white board, desk lamp and supplies, rugs, and any kind of storage unit. If the first year of this program goes well, we hope to expand it in future years. After a few years of only collecting these smaller items, we hope to eventually find a big enough space to allow us to collect larger items such as, mini fridges, microwaves, furniture, clothes, and even bicycles. We have hopes of continuing this program for many years through the Sustainability Office on campus, so even when I graduate, the program can go on.

This project is necessary because every year during move out many students throw their unwanted items in the trash. They don't stop to think about donating them or trying to find them a second home. The sustainability side to this is that in the future, new students moving in will not have to buy many brand-new items. They can buy second-hand items for a discounted rate. This way, no item is being trash and wasted and we're saving the resources it would have taken for a new product to be made. This will not only benefit the environment, but students too. They are helping the environment when they buy these second-hand items, but they're also helping themselves by saving money. We hope to sell these items back to students at a cheap price, so it can be beneficial to students from all economic classes.

In the early stages of this project, I need to get a few key staff members on board. I need the Sustainability Coordinator, Kathleen Crawford, to take a big role and help me plan this event. Then we need to talk to the Residence Education Assistant Director, Jerry Cherry, and the Associate Director of Maintenance Operations Housing and Residence Life, Ron Dalton, to help us get the word out to members of housing. They will also need to help us find a location for donations and setting up the store. We will also talk to the Service-Learning Coordinator, Jessica

Drummond, for help getting people to volunteer at the events. To get the word out on campus, we will need the Student Government Director of Sustainability, Marlin Smith.

The costs for this event can be minimized. Since this would be the first year of this event, we don't have much money to spend. But we would need to find a place to store all the items that we collect and have a way to transport the items to the storage place from the dorms. Costs can be decreased if we find a storage place close enough that we don't need a truck to transport them. But costs increase if we include items that need deep cleaning, such as bed sheets, clothes, and blankets. To be safe regarding health and safety and COVID, we will clean all the items we have. After collecting everything during move out, the summer will be used to clean. We will have volunteers help us with the cleaning efforts, while still being socially distant from each other. This project could go on with or without COVID. When I first worked on the project at Indiana State it was pre-pandemic and even now, it is doable.

Some skills that would be beneficial are effective speaking and likeability. We will be talking with many members of the faculty and staff on campus and will be asking them for help. It would be nice to be able to communicate with them effectively and have them like and trust us to run this project. The desired outcome would be to ultimately divert waste from the landfills and repurpose items to future students. Success would be if we could divert one dumpster worth of items. A lot can fit in a dumpster and this seems like a big goal, but I think with help and dedication I could pull it off.