



2021 Campus Race to Zero Waste Case Study Competition

University of California Berkeley

1. Contact info (name, department, school, email, phone)

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2. Focus of Case study

In an effort to reduce plastic consumption and waste on campus, the plastic water bottles offered in dining halls were made only available by request.

3. Detailed description of campaign or effort:

With the COVID-19 pandemic, dining halls on the UC Berkeley campus resorted to offering plastic water bottles during meal service times, as opposed to the usual water bottle refill stations to prevent the spread of the virus. These bottles were placed in very obvious locations, with no limitations on how many students could take. This seemed to encourage students to take and consume these, resulting in higher amounts of plastic waste. Not to mention, many students were not recycling these bottles and disposed of them in bins designated for the landfill. To encourage the use of reusable water bottles and reduce plastic waste, we reached out to Cal Dining and sustainability coordinator Sam Lubow to remove these water bottles from plain sight and only make them available by request. Additionally, we put up signage in the dining halls encouraging students to rethink their choice and to consider using a reusable water bottle instead. This message was also sent out to residential newsletters to further promote our campaign against contributing to plastic waste through excessive consumption of these water bottles. This signage also included a QR code that students without a reusable water bottle could scan. It would lead them to a google form where they could fill out information including their name and address to receive a free reusable Brita.

4. Planning steps & timeline to implement:

- Brainstorm initial ideas about project goals
- Develop signage, promotional materials, and google form to request reusable water bottles
- Contact Sam and dining halls to get project approved
- Send signage to residential newsletters
- Implement project through dining hall staff

5. Resources and stakeholders involved

Cal Dining, UC Berkeley

Sam Lubow, Sustainability Coordinator

6. Describe the Results of this campaign component

a. General results (ex: attracted attention of campus president, campus paper did a news story on the event, etc.)

Signage was put up in dining halls encouraging students to choose reusable water bottles, and water bottles were only available by request in some dining hall locations.

b. Specific measurable impact figures, if applicable (Ex: Reduced contamination rate 13%, Gathered 316 pledges to recycle more, etc., 250 people engaged, etc.)

75 Residents filled out the google form requesting a reusable water and agreeing to use it as a replacement for plastic water bottles to stop contributing to plastic waste.

7. What would you do differently in the future?

After brainstorming and taking our project step-by-step, our team thought that creating a roadmap or vision board for the project would definitely help enhance our project's overall concept. We would also hope to get in contact with other campus groups/communities to help support or expand upon the mission of reducing plastic bottle consumption.

8. What advice would you give to another college that wanted to do a similar effort?

Jessica: Make sure that you have a strong vision from the beginning and that you offer solutions for the problem. For example, rather than just encouraging people to use reusable water bottles, we offered students a free water bottle as a solution. Additionally, do not be afraid to reach out to upper management, as they care about your thoughts as a student on campus.

Will: Be as collaborative as possible with your campus community and don't be afraid to be critical of institutional norms. Think tangibly and have a thought-out agenda for your mission and overall goal for your project.

9. Photos and Graphics

CHOOSE TO REUSE!

**SAVE THE PLANET:
USE A
REUSABLE
WATER
BOTTLE**

**REDUCE WASTE AND CONSIDER IF YOU
REALLY NEED A DISPOSABLE WATER BOTTLE**

**Scan this QR code to
request a reusable
bottle if you do not
already have one**

**Plastic Waste
Reduction and
Awareness Campaign**

Will Gerardo + Jessica Yang

- Inform Res-Hall students about sustainability
- Increase awareness of impacts of plastic use
- Propose alternative solutions to plastic bottles
- Create a culture of using reusable bottles
- Develop effective signage for UC Berkeley students
- Coordinate and facilitate conversations with campus organizations

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Reduce Waste

ReuseThis™



Save the planet!

Use a reusable
water bottle

Reduce waste!

Consider if you
really need a
disposable bottle

Scan this code
to request a reusable bottle
and find your nearest refill station



**Cal
Dining**

caldining.berkeley.edu

Hours of Operations Nov. 11