



2024 Campus Race to Zero Waste Case Study

Contact info:

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Focus of Case study:

CSUN Sustainability and Student Housing launched Matador Move Out Donation Drive to connect waste diversion with addressing basic needs among the campus and community.

Detailed description of campaign or effort:

CSUN is committed to promoting sustainability and addressing basic needs. Our [Road Map to Sustainability](#) plan and [CSUN's Road Ahead](#) are guiding documents as we tackle these two issues. Matador Move Out Donation Drive, a collaborative effort between CSUN Sustainability and Student Housing, exemplifies this commitment. The goal was to reduce waste and support local communities by collecting durable goods that students often discard during move out. After years witnessing waste during move out, the 2024 program was the first of its kind at CSUN. With many difficulties preventing it from taking off, between staffing, funding, and time, the program finally launched this year and is here to stay.

Although move out is in May, the spring 2024 semester efforts align with the 2024 competition timeframe due to the majority of planning and coordination occurring during this period. The program aimed to intercept materials that would typically end up in landfills, repurposing them to benefit those in need. This is achieved by collecting gently used clothing, non-perishable food items, and reusable mini appliances, ensuring these resources are redistributed rather than discarded.

During the donation period, CSUN Student Housing residents were encouraged to donate unwanted but usable items. Collection stations were strategically set up in residential halls for easy access and convenience, making it simple for students to participate. The CSUN Zero Waste team played a crucial role in this process, promoting and planning, managing the collection stations, sorting donations, and coordinating with various local organizations for pickup or delivery. All items were meticulously sorted to ensure items were appropriately categorized and prepared for redistribution. Partnering with local charities and community organizations, the donations were distributed to the CSUN community in need along with the surrounding Los Angeles community, effectively bridging the gap between waste diversion and community support.

Matador Move Out Donation Drive 2024 proved to be a resounding success. Hundreds of students donated, contributing a significant volume of donations, over 10,000lbs in total. The initiative not only diverted a considerable amount of waste from landfills but also provided essential items to those in need and directly back to other CSUN students. By fostering a culture of sustainability and community service, the program made a lasting impact on both CSUN and the local community.

As the program continues to grow, it serves as an inspiring model for other institutions seeking to balance environmental stewardship with community support.

Planning steps & timeline to implement:

Fall semester :

- Establish recurring planning meetings with all parties & partners
- Connect with on campus and local partners to explain the program and setup further communication and coordination
- Research and learn about other move out programs at universities
- Establish the team leads and support staff
- Familiarize team members, partners, etc. with the program and address any issues or concerns if this is a recurring program
 - Go over debrief from the year before (if applicable) to make improvements or adjustments

Spring Semester:

February-April

- Inventory supplies – trash bags for sorted items, PPE supplies, signage, tape, promotional items, and volunteer giveaways, any other misc. supplies needed
- Advertise and promote event
 - Host Student Housing RA workshops
 - Create and post social media, print posters, email flyers, etc.
 - Promote event during Earth Month and especially at Earth Fair
- Gather volunteer support – host volunteer information sessions
- Solidify donation pickup schedule and/or delivery schedule with all organizations
 - Make sure there are clear lines of communication
 - Ex. phone number of drivers, team leads, organization point of contacts, etc.
- Make sure communication with housing staff is well established and they understand their role – this could change depending on the level of involvement of student housing
- Setup storage and sorting location, move supplies to central location
- Design donation period plan and schedule
 - Staff and volunteer schedule
 - Roles
 - Guidelines for donation sorting and organization

May-June

- Host a Swap and Shop promotional event in student housing to gather donations and attention to the program as a whole
- Plan for last day of move out
 - The last day students have to move out is typically the busiest donation day
- Clean up and any last donation deliveries or pickups
- Impact report and debrief with team

Resources and stakeholders involved:

The Energy and Sustainability department at CSUN created and led the program with support from Student Housing. We had California Climate Action Corps fellows that did most of the planning and preparation who were overseen by me, the Sustainability and Zero Waste Coordinator. We also had several key CSUN staff members that volunteered their time during the donation period to help collect and sort donations. The Zero Waste team (Energy & Sustainability staff along with CCAC fellows) had a budget for supplies (PPE, trash bags, etc.) and lunch for volunteers on the last day of move out. Although we were able to have a successful program using a small budget and volunteers, in the future we will be setting aside a budget to provide overtime support to campus custodial or laborers for help moving mini appliances and cleaning up after donations. We gathered several on campus organizations that received donations, these were the CSUN Food Pantry, Women’s Research and Resource Center, and Maddie’s Closet. We also had pickups from LA Family Housing, FoodCycle LA, and Hope of the Mission. We dropped off items at Goodwill and the Salvation Army, and the campus Bookstore. These partners will be unique to each campus and community. We are particularly happy with our partnership with the Food pantry and LA Family Housing because the donations go directly to the community in need helping the food insecure and unhoused community

Describe the Results of this campaign component:

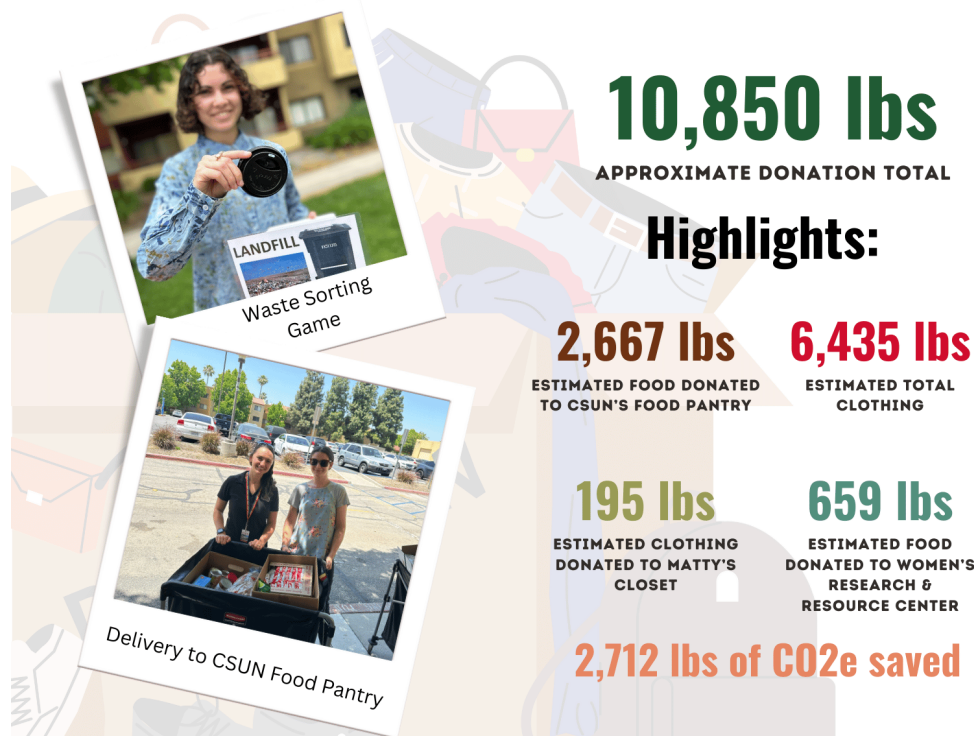
The Matador Move Out Donation Drive was featured in the CSUN Institute for Sustainability Monthly Newsletter, we were nominated for a campus team award, and our work was shared widely by campus administrators.

Specific measurable impact figures:

Summary of Impact

We are happy to announce that the Matador Move Out Donation Drive numbers are in!

Approximately 10,850 total pounds of clothing, non-perishable food, and other miscellaneous items were collected and donated to campus and local partners including the CSUN Food Pantry, Women's Research and Resource Center, Matty's Closet, LA Family Housing, and Hope of the Mission. Some honorable statistics to highlight are that we provided 2,667 pounds of non-perishable food donations to the CSUN Food Pantry which will provide about 7 weeks of food to CSUN students and the campus community and 659 pounds of non-perishable food donations to the Women's Research and Resource Center. Also, we received about 6,435 pounds of clothing, of which 195 pounds were donated to Matty's Closet. Most of our donations went to LA Family Housing which services the San Fernando, Santa Clarita, and Antelope Valley's unhoused populations. By diverting these items from landfill, we saved 2,712 lbs of CO2 equivalent emissions. [Click here for full report.](#)



What would you do differently in the future?

In the future we would set aside funding to pay for overtime for campus workers like custodians and laborers to help move mini-appliances around. We would make sure to have a storage location designated for the entire month of May (this first time we had a dormitory in housing for 2 weeks during the donation period). We would advertise to gain volunteers and staff help by showcasing the "thrifty" aspect of the program. People that help with sorting and donation collecting can get "first dibs" on items they find. We would also make sure to have plenty of wheeled carts to move donations around, we only had about 10 this first year. Another improvement would be to move mini-appliance donation locations to outside of residence halls instead of parking lots.

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

A campus student housing move out program is a huge endeavor, it takes several dedicated staff to accomplish, this cannot be a student led effort. Students can participate and play a major role, but the amount of time and labor that goes into it require paid employees. Each campus will be unique in the set up and outcome of the program but learning from veteran campuses is the best first step.

Photos and Graphics

[2024 Matador Move Out Impact Report](#)

[Signage used for donation locations](#)

[Social Media post example](#)

[Presentation to Student Housing Resident Assistants](#)

[Matador Move Out Website](#)

[CSUN News Article](#)

Instagram page: @csunzerowaste