

BROOKE CROUCH

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UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

SOME OF MY RESEARCHED SCHOOLS:

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

1. 1ST SCHOOL IN THE WORLD TO EARN PLATINUM STARS STATUS, WHICH DOES AN IN-DEPTH MEASURE OF HOW SUSTAINABLE A SCHOOL IS
2. ALMOST HALF OF THEIR CLASSES ARE RELATED TO SUSTAINABILITY- THAT MEANS THEY ARE CREATING THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS IN GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY
3. 93% OF THEIR WASTE FROM DINING HALLS IS DIVERTED
4. THEY HAVE A COMMITMENT TO BE 100% RENEWABLE ENERGY POWERED BY 2030
5. THEIR WATER USE IS DOWN 25% IN THE LAST 10 YEARS
6. THEY HAVE 25 ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS ON CAMPUS!
7. 26 OF THEIR BUILDINGS ARE LEED
8. MANY OF THEIR SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES ARE STUDENT LED

STANFORD UNIVERSITY

1. THE FOOD IN THEIR DINING HALLS IS ALMOST ALL VEGETARIAN, AND HALF IS VEGAN- THAT MEANS THEY ARE CUTTING DOWN A HUGE AMOUNT OF THE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS FROM ANIMAL AGRICULTURE!
2. HALF OF THE FOOD IS LOCALLY SOURCED, THEREBY REDUCING THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF FOOD TRANSPORT
3. 65% OF WASTE IS EITHER RECYCLED OR COMPOSTED
4. THEIR AIM IS TO REDUCE CARBON EMISSIONS BY ALMOST 70% IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS
5. THERE ARE OVER 20 CLUBS DEDICATED TO SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES AT STANFORD!
6. PLATINUM STARS RATING

GREEN MOUNTAIN COLLEGE

1. STUDENT RUN FARM WHICH PROVIDES MOST OF THE FOOD FOR THE COLLEGE- CUTTING WAY DOWN ON THEIR GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

2. MOST OF THE DEGREES AVAILABLE ARE FOCUSED ON SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE- CREATING THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS WHO WILL PUSH FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE
3. BECAME CARBON NEUTRAL IN 2011
4. BIOMASS PLANT PROVIDES HEATING IN COLLEGE BUILDINGS
5. LEED DORMS
6. STUDENT CAMPUS GREENING FUND- STUDENTS CAN APPLY FOR SMALL GRANTS TO MAKE THE SCHOOL A MORE SUSTAINABLE PLACE
7. SUSTAINABILITY 2020 PLAN: ACTIVELY PROMOTING SUSTAINABILITY AS A WAY OF LIFE, NOT JUST ON CAMPUS BUT IN THE LARGER WORLD

INNOVATIONS THAT I CAN IMPLEMENT:

I CHOOSE NOT TO LIMIT MY INSPIRATION TO ONE SCHOOL- EACH OF THE THREE I HIGHLIGHTED HAVE THEIR OWN UNIQUE APPROACH TO SUSTAINABILITY THAT MY SCHOOL SHOULD ADOPT! SUSTAINABILITY IS A GROUP EFFORT- THE MORE RESOURCES WE HAVE, THE MORE WE LEARN AND THE MORE WE CAN PROMOTE SUSTAINABILITY IN OUR OWN LIVES!

THE THREE IDEAS THAT I MOST ADMIRER WERE:

1. STUDENT LEADERSHIP IN SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES. I LIKED THIS IDEA BECAUSE IT CREATES A SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY AMONG YOUNG ADULTS. AFTER ALL, WE ARE GOING TO BE THE NEXT LEADERS PRETTY SOON, AND WE NEED TO HAVE A BIG FOCUS ON COMBATING CLIMATE CHANGE AND PROMOTING GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY! I ALSO THINK THAT IT HELPS EDUCATE PEOPLE ABOUT IMPORTANT ISSUES; TOO OFTEN, PEOPLE MAKE CHOICES THAT HAVE A NEGATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OUT OF IGNORANCE, NOT INTENTIONAL MALICE. IF WE CAN EDUCATE STUDENTS, WE CAN CREATE A "GREEN WAVE" INTO THE FUTURE!
2. ACTIVELY SEEKING TO BECOME MORE RELIANT ON RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES. THIS IS A HUGE ONE, ESPECIALLY FOR LARGE UNIVERSITIES. THERE ARE SEVERAL THOUSAND STUDENTS IN EACH UNIVERSITY- THERE ARE MORE THAN 20,000 AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA!- THAT THEY USE A LOT OF ENERGY. THIS, IN TURN, CREATES A HUGE DEMAND FOR FOSSIL FUELS. THAT ISN'T SOMETHING WE WANT TO BE DOING! FOCUSING ON SWITCHING TO RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES WILL HELP EVERY SCHOOL DRIVE DOWN THE AMOUNT OF POLLUTION AND GREENHOUSE GASES THEY PRODUCE, WHETHER IT BE GOING COMPLETELY CARBON NEUTRAL OR JUST INCREASING THE AMOUNT OF SOLAR PANELS AROUND CAMPUS.

3. AN EMPHASIS ON PLANT BASED, LOCAL FOOD. AGRICULTURE IS A HUGE PRODUCER OF GREENHOUSE GASES, SPECIFICALLY ANIMAL AGRICULTURE AND IMPORTED FOODS. WHEN YOU SWITCH TO A PRIMARILY PLANT BASED DIET, YOU DRASTICALLY REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF LAND AND WATER USED TO PRODUCE YOUR FOOD, AND DECREASE THE AMOUNT OF GREENHOUSE GASES(MOSTLY METHANE AND CARBON DIOXIDE) YOU PRODUCE. LOCAL FOOD REDUCES THE AMOUNT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PACKAGING USED FOR YOUR FOOD, AND SUPPORTS SMALLER, MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY CONSCIOUS FARMS.

WHAT WILL I IMPLEMENT?

WELL, ALL OF THESE IDEAS ARE AMAZING AND COULD DEFINITELY BE MORE IMPLEMENTED AT MY UNIVERSITY! HOWEVER, THE ONE I THINK THAT I COULD HAVE THE BIGGEST EFFECT ON IS THE INCREASE OF STUDENT LEADERSHIP. I AM CURRENTLY INVOLVED IN SEVERAL SUSTAINABILITY RELATED CLUBS AT MY UNIVERSITY:

- SUSTAINABILITY ADVOCATES(WE PLAN AND IMPLEMENT PROJECTS THROUGHOUT CAMPUS TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABILITY AND INCREASE EDUCATION AROUND THE IMPACT PEOPLE CAN HAVE ON THE ENVIRONMENT)
- VEGGIES OF VIRGINIA(A PLANT-BASED ADVOCACY GROUP)
- SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE IN MY DORM(MY DORM IS SPECIFICALLY TARGETED TO STUDENTS WITH AN INTEREST IN SUSTAINABILITY, AND WE TRY TO IMPLEMENT SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES AND INCREASE AWARENESS AROUND SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES)

THESE CLUBS ARE ALL AMAZING! HOWEVER, THE MAJORITY OF STUDENTS AT MY UNIVERSITY ARE NOT INVOLVED IN THEM! THIS YEAR, IT WILL BE MY GOAL TO BROADEN THE AMOUNT OF PEOPLE PARTICIPATING IN THESE CLUBS. I WILL ALSO TRY AND GET THESE CLUBS TO SPREAD THE MESSAGE ABOUT LIVING A SUSTAINABLE LIFE TO MORE PEOPLE, CAMPUS-WIDE. I DEFINITELY THINK THAT MANY STUDENTS JUST DON'T WANT TO THINK ABOUT THEIR IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT, AND WE FACE A LOT OF APATHY. HOWEVER, I AM HOPEFUL THAT WITH CONTINUED EFFORTS, WE WILL AT LEAST BEGIN TO GET THROUGH TO SOME PEOPLE! IT TAKES A LOT OF PEOPLE MAKING SMALL CHANGES TO MAKE A BIG CHANGE. I AM CONFIDENT THAT EVEN THOUGH WE WON'T BE ABLE TO GET EVERYONE MAKING ALL THE RIGHT CHANGES TO REDUCE THEIR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT(IE. PLANT-BASED DIET, RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES, NO SINGLE USE PLASTICS), WE WILL BE ABLE TO GET A LOT OF PEOPLE MAKING A FEW SMALL CHANGES, WHICH CAN ADD UP TO A BIG IMPACT!