

BROOKE CROUCH

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MY ISSUE: SINGLE USE PLASTIC USE

WHY: I LIVE ON CAMPUS AT MY UNIVERSITY AND AM CONSTANTLY SURROUNDED BY OTHER STUDENTS CONSUMING VAST AMOUNTS OF FOOD AND DRINKS. THERE IS A STARBUCKS AROUND EVERY CORNER AND THE AMOUNT OF TO-GO FOOD PLACES IS STAGGERING. THESE PLACES CATER TO THE IDEA THAT EVERYONE IS TOO BUSY TO MAKE THEIR OWN PRODUCTS AND HAS TO BUY THEM OUT. UNFORTUNATELY, THIS PRODUCES VAST AMOUNTS OF WASTE! THIS ALSO APPLIES TO PLASTIC BAG USAGE- I CANNOT COUNT THE NUMBER OF PLASTIC BAGS PEOPLE USE EVERY DAY, WITHOUT EVEN THINKING! OUR TRASH CANS ARE OVERFLOWING WITH MOUNTAINS OF SINGLE USE PLASTIC AND STYROFOAM CONTAINERS, CUPS, AND UTENSILS. IT MAKES ME SICK TO SEE HOW LITTLE THESE STUDENTS SEEM TO UNDERSTAND OR CARE ABOUT THE IMPACT THAT HAS.

MY GAME PLAN:

I WILL START SMALL, ON CAMPUS, AND THEN DEVELOP A SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN TO GO WORLD-WIDE!(HOPEFULLY. THAT WOULD BE NICE.)

1. EDUCATION. AS CRAZY AS IT SEEMS, SOME PEOPLE ARE JUST UNAWARE OF THE NEGATIVE IMPACT SINGLE-USE PLASTICS HAVE ON OUR ENVIRONMENT. I WILL HELP TO EDUCATE THEM BY PUTTING UP POSTERS SHARING FACTS ABOUT PLASTIC'S IMPACT ON THINGS SUCH AS MARINE LIFE, IN THE HOPES THAT SOME OF THEM WILL ACTUALLY BEGIN TO THINK TWICE ABOUT HOW

MUCH SINGLE-USE PLASTIC THEY USE! SOMETIMES PEOPLE LIVE IN A BUBBLE WHERE THEY DON'T THINK ABOUT HOW THEIR ACTIONS AFFECT OTHERS, AND I WILL TRY TO BURST THAT BUBBLE!

2. MAKE IT EASY FOR PEOPLE TO SWITCH TO REUSABLE PRODUCTS. I HAVE A DREAM TO GET A GRANT FROM A CONSERVATION GROUP IN ORDER TO CREATE AND DISTRIBUTE "REUSABLE STARTER KIT"-KITS CONTAINING SEVERAL REUSABLE ESSENTIALS. THEY WOULD MOST LIKELY INCLUDE REUSABLE UTENSILS, A REUSABLE COLLAPSIBLE CONTAINER, A REUSABLE TRAVEL MUG, A FOLDABLE BAG, AND A REUSABLE WATER BOTTLE. I WOULD LOVE TO BE ABLE TO DISTRIBUTE ONE OF THESE KITS TO EVERY STUDENT ON CAMPUS- I THINK THAT IT COULD BE HANDED OUT ON THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL FOR FRESHMEN IN THEIR DORMS, AND THEY ARE EXPECTED TO KEEP UP WITH IT FOR THE REST OF THEIR FOUR YEARS. I THINK THAT THE MAJOR BARRIER PEOPLE HAVE TO USING REUSABLE PRODUCTS IS THAT THEY DON'T WANT TO HAVE TO PURCHASE THEM, AND THEY DON'T THINK ABOUT BRINGING THEM WITH THEM. IF THEY WERE ALL TOGETHER IN A HANDY KIT, IT WOULD BE MUCH EASIER FOR PEOPLE TO USE THEM!
3. PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR CHANGE. ONE THING THAT I THINK WOULD BE VERY EFFECTIVE IS GIVING A DISCOUNT TO ANYONE WHO USES THEIR OWN CUP/PLATE/UTENSILS IN A RESTAURANT OR COFFEE SHOP. I KNOW THAT SOME STORES DO THIS, BUT THEY DO NOT ADVERTISE IT AND THE VAST MAJORITY OF PEOPLE ARE UNAWARE. I KNOW THAT SOME GROCERY STORES GIVE A DISCOUNT FOR BRINGING YOUR OWN BAGS, SO I THINK THAT THIS IDEA IS VERY FEASIBLE. IF THEY ACTIVELY ADVERTISED BRINGING REUSABLE PRODUCTS IN ORDER TO RECEIVE A DISCOUNT, I BELIEVE THAT A NUMBER OF PEOPLE WOULD BE MOTIVATED TO BRING THEIR OWN! PEOPLE LOVE TO SAVE MONEY, AND IF YOU, FOR EXAMPLE, GO TO STARBUCKS EVERY DAY FOR A COFFEE AND COULD SAVE 10%, THAT COULD ADD UP TO A LOT OF MONEY AND A BIG INCENTIVE! WE NEED TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE FACT THAT MONEY MOTIVATES PEOPLE AND USE THAT TO OUR ADVANTAGE.
4. INSTITUTE A TAX ON SINGLE USE PLASTIC ITEMS. THIS WOULD BE HELPFUL, BECAUSE PRODUCERS WOULD BE INCLINED TO PRODUCE LESS OF IT AND CHARGE THE CONSUMER MORE FOR

SINGLE-USE PLASTICS. THIS WOULD MEAN THAT THERE WOULD BE LESS SINGLE-USE PLASTIC IN EXISTENCE, BECAUSE IT COSTS MORE TO MAKE. STORES WOULD CHARGE MORE FOR THEIR PRODUCTS TO FACTOR IN THE EXTRA COST, AND MIGHT BE PERSUADED TO USE MORE REUSABLE PRODUCTS THEMSELVES. PEOPLE WOULD ALSO BE DE-INCENTIVIZED TO PURCHASE PRODUCTS THAT USED PLASTIC, BECAUSE THEY WOULD BE MORE EXPENSIVE AND THEREFORE THEY WOULD USE LESS PLASTIC.

5. INVEST IN SUSTAINABLE ALTERNATIVES. INVEST MONEY INTO COMPANIES PRODUCING BIODEGRADABLE PLASTICS, INSTEAD OF CONVENTIONAL PLASTICS. THIS WILL HOPEFULLY PERSUADE BUSINESSES TO PURCHASE BIODEGRADABLE PLASTICS FOR THEIR "TO-GO" PACKAGING AS OPPOSED TO CONVENTIONAL SINGLE-USE PLASTIC. INVEST MONEY INTO COMPANIES PRODUCING REUSABLE PRODUCTS SUCH AS UTENSILS, SO THE PRICES WILL DECREASE AND PEOPLE WILL BE MORE LIKELY TO INVEST IN THEM. INVEST MONEY IN NEW RESEARCH INTO OTHER FORMS OF BIODEGRADABLE AND COMPOSTABLE MATERIALS OTHER THAN PLASTICS. DECREASE OUR SOCIETY'S RELIANCE ON SINGLE-USE PLASTICS!

MY QUOTE (THAT WILL PROBABLY BECOME FAMOUS AND BE QUOTED BY MILLIONS ON DAY):

"GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY MIGHT SEEM A MILLION MILES AWAY, BUT EVERY MILE IS JUST COMPOSED OF SMALL STEPS- AND EACH STEP TAKES US A LITTLE BIT CLOSER TO OUR GOAL. WE ALL ARE TAKING STEPS TOWARDS THAT GOAL- AND WHEN MILLIONS OF PEOPLE TAKE THAT FIRST STEP, WE CAN MOVE FURTHER AND FASTER THAN WE EVER THOUGHT POSSIBLE."

-BROOKE CROUCH



ABOUT MY PHOTO:

I CHOSE TO PICK THIS PHOTO TO REPRESENT ME AS AN ECO-HERO, BECAUSE IT REALLY IS ALL ABOUT THE WORLD JOINING TOGETHER TO FIGHT FOR SUSTAINABILITY TOGETHER. ONE PERSON CAN DO A LOT, BUT TO WIN THE FIGHT AGAINST THE DEVASTATION AND DESTRUCTION OF OUR PLANET WE ALL NEED TO WORK TOGETHER. I VIEW THE ROLE OF ECO-HERO AS SOMEONE WHO SUCCESSFULLY MOTIVATES OTHERS TO JOIN THE FIGHT, NOT SOMEONE WHO LEADS THE FIGHT ALONE. WE WORK BETTER TOGETHER- AND I KNOW THAT TOGETHER, WE CAN FIX THESE PROBLEMS THAT WE HAVE CREATED.

MY SOCIAL MEDIA POST:

The screenshot shows a Facebook profile page for Brooke Crouch. The main post is a text-based update with a central image of hands holding the Earth. The text discusses the role of an eco-hero and the importance of global sustainability. The post includes a quote and several hashtags. The interface also shows a left-hand navigation menu with options like 'Intro', 'Photos', and 'Add Bio'. A chat window is open on the right side of the page.

Brooke Crouch
Just now

I chose to pick this photo to represent me as an eco-hero, because it really is all about the world joining together to fight for sustainability together. One person can do a lot, but to win the fight against the devastation and destruction of our planet we all need to work together. I view the role of eco-hero as someone who successfully motivates others to join the fight, not someone who leads the fight alone. We work better together- and I know that together, we can fix these problems that we have created.

"Global sustainability might seem a million miles away, but every mile is just composed of small steps- and each step takes us a little bit closer to our goal. We all are taking steps towards that goal- and when millions of people take that first step, we can move further and faster than we ever thought possible."
-Brooke Crouch
#PGC2018 #ecohero Turning Green, Natracare, 5 Gyres, @EnvirHealthnews

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