

An Exploration of My Passion Through Sustainability

The humid air stuck to my skin as I moved through the wilderness land. Distant sounds of birds and shrieking monkeys pierced my ears as I explored this forbidden place. The treacherous journey itself, just to reach the Amazon rainforest, was quite unforgettable. After flying into Cusco, Peru, I had to get acclimatized to the thin air that surrounded this 3,400 meters above sea level city, and then continued the journey by boat through the jungles of the Amazon.

My family and I reached our destination— a small community with a single-roomed school, a makeshift soccer field, and fifteen wooden huts surrounding the center of their village, hidden away from the rest of the world. As I sat outside of the wooden hut that I was going to spend the next three days in, I remembered in shock that my temporary home wasn't equipped with any running water, electricity or phone service.

Over the next few days, I had the privilege to see how the indigenous Peruvians supplied their food by catching fish, making a water irrigation system, and harvesting plants. They fed their leftover food scraps to livestock, along with using leftover wood to construct canoes. With limited resources, they were able to conserve and share whatever they had with their whole community.

Confronted by the villagers' resourcefulness, I acknowledged that my daily habits were wasteful such as throwing away unopened ketchup packets and unfinished food after a meal. I came to the conclusion that these wasteful habits weren't just a problem I faced, but a problem that was experienced all over the world.

After returning to the states, I contemplated what I had seen in Peru and felt compelled to take action. What small change could I possibly make?

I found out about the growing issue that affects our planet today— food wastage. The paradox that the world creates over 14% more food than needed but a global hunger crisis still exists, alarmed me. Furthermore, knowing that Americans throw away over one-third of food that it produces, which contributes to the climate crisis, made me feel unsettled. I understood that there was limited awareness in my community about this issue. My trip to Peru inspired me to action. I began composting and buying smaller portions. These small tasks became my daily routine but yet, I pondered, "How could I make a bigger impact?"

Young, but eager to create change, I decided to use the platform I had access to—social media. I started Foolish Food, a campaign to bring awareness about the issue of food wastage. Through Instagram and a blog website, I started giving tips to others on how they can begin to reduce their wastage. I wrote about the importance of buying smaller portions of food and how to start composting. I became involved politically by contacting my state representatives and working with them on legislation to create incentives for food providers to donate their unused food.

Through these small steps, I have been able to help my community take their own action to reduce this problem. Through my website, I have impacted over 500 students worldwide to start adopting these habits into their own communities and I have saved over 1,750 pounds of food from being wasted.

This experience showed me that even as a young person, using my voice to take action in my community was empowering and that I have the power to change peoples' negative behaviors. This initiated my love for activism and change making and inspiring others, motivates me to continue my work.

I am still actively working on expanding my organization so it can reach a greater demographic and I hope to see more confident youth take action in their community. Peru sparked my passion for advocacy and I hope to continue pushing for environmental justice for many years to come.



sashahussain21
Feb 14 · 2 min

The Consequences of Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner

In my introduction to Environmental Studies program, at the Evergreen State College, we do weekly seminar readings where we discuss a book related to that week's theme. A couple of...

OUR MISSION

<p>Youth</p> <p>We want to educate youth on food waste and create material that promotes a more sustainable lifestyle.</p>	<p>Restaurants</p> <p>We are in the process of creating a bill that gives restaurants a tax incentive if they donate unused food to the homeless.</p>	<p>Education</p> <p>We create podcasts that help inform people about ways to reduce food waste and the danger of wasting food.</p>	<p>Pledge</p> <p>We want to create a team across the globe that pledge to become more aware about this problem and educate others about this growing issue.</p>
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sashahussain21
Aug 1, 2018 · 1 min

How Minimizing Food Waste Helps You!

Minimizing food waste is important for the environment and for the economy. But by minimizing your food waste you also benefit! You save money on buying unnecessary food, lower your personal carbon footprint, save yourself th...

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