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# Earthian Challenge

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# Earthian Challenge

By: Sai Nikita Tummala

I chose this project because my goal in life is to end poverty and the consequences that come with it such as food insecurity, shelter insecurity, and lack of healthcare. By choosing my project, I would like to eliminate the amount of food wasted here so that there are more sustainable and healthier practices of food on campus as well.

My overall goal for this project was to broaden participation and raise awareness about an issue. I would like to raise awareness about the food issue here on campus and get more students involved in sustainability and food waste.

My target audience is the University of Iowa students and I would like it if they took the initiative and wanted to take the Clean Plate Challenge. I also wanted students to take the challenge and put it in on their social media to spread the challenge.

I interviewed three students from the University of Iowa to gain their perspective on how much food is wasted on campus and around the world. I also met with Liz Christiansen (see inset) several times for meetings to work on the project. She is the director at the Office of Sustainability here at Iowa. I did need to do research on how much food is wasted and to really get the numbers for how much is wasted at the University of Iowa. The goals did not change over time, but a lot of the ideas have changed. From the beginning, I



wanted to do a challenge for the students however, I first started off with Meatless Monday then changed to No Food, and then after much deliberation and thought, I have ended up with the Clean Plate Challenge. The Clean Plate Challenge is students eating everything on their plate and then taking a picture of the plate. The students would then post this on Facebook and tag three of their friends.



*Image: An example of a Clean Plate Challenge photo.*

My actual video consisted of statistics about food composting, waste, and other information about food at Iowa regarding Hillcrest, Burge, and other dining places on campus. I also interviewed some students on campus to get their view on food waste. The interview was done through face-to-face interaction through the use of the one button studio in the main library. It was not a digital form of interview, but when the video is released, it will be seen digitally.

I had two partners, they were the Office of Sustainability and the University Housing and Dining. Also, I have 30 likes on my Facebook page dedicated to the Clean Plate Challenge.



One future direction is further conducting another aspect of the Earthian Challenge which is a challenge where participants would not eat for the entire day and the money from the three meals will be donated. Since this involves a lot of commitment, this would in the future if people show a lot of interest in it.

One lesson I learned from the project completion is that to complete a certain task, it would be the most effective if several different people and backgrounds come together. Additionally, I also learned that not everything turns out as you expect, but all you can do is pick yourself up and keep going and realize what the bigger goal is.