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Net Impact UNH: Collaboration for Sustainable Impact

The value of student activism in addressing complex sustainability issues

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2022

By Kathryn Rascoe '22 | *Business*

Administration: Marketing

Net Impact UNH is one of over 400 chapters of an organization called [Net Impact](#), a membership-based nonprofit designed for students and

professionals interested in using business skills in support of various social and environmental causes. **Since our chapter's launch in 2011, Net Impact UNH has provided a space for sustainability-minded students to develop grassroots campaigns that address our most**



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pressing social and environmental issues, such as food waste, ethical sourcing, recycling and more. One of our more recent projects was the [Fair Trade Campaign](#), an effort by our members in coordination with Fair Trade Campaigns, the UNH [Sustainability Institute](#), and the [UNH Dining](#) and [Catering Offices](#) to increase the number of Fair Trade options available across our dining venues while simultaneously providing educational opportunities for the student body to learn more about the importance of choosing [Fair Trade](#) products. This campaign wrapped at the end of last spring, and today our campus is officially a Fair Trade Certified campus.

Interdisciplinary Collaboration for Sustainable Impact

In May of 2021, Jonah Rook '22 and I took over as Co-Presidents of our UNH chapter. As other student organizations may relate to, the spread of Covid-19 took a toll on our membership. Jonah and I have been working to build back the organization from the ground up, dedicating our time and resources



to student and community outreach in addition to our latest campaign work. It was really important to me that this student organization remain active at UNH. At present, we are one of the only organizations at UNH committed to sustainable action with a focus on interdisciplinary collaboration. Though we are a student organization housed under Paul College, we attract students from a wide variety of majors. **There is something extremely valuable about addressing complex sustainability issues as a group of students with completely different backgrounds** – I have come to know about many different resources on campus, been introduced to professors with renowned accomplishments in their fields, and learned about various community and university initiatives that I never would've been exposed to had I not had the opportunity to engage with our members.

Awareness & Education = Greater Collective Impact

This year, our work has revolved around two campaigns to generate

greater collective impact; one surrounding our ongoing efforts to spread awareness about Fair Trade Certification, and the other focused around educating our community about Regenerative Agriculture as a potential long-term solution to soil desertification. Regarding our work with Fair Trade, we plan to coordinate with the UNH Dining Office to create more promotional materials about the Fair Trade products currently offered at our venues, and with Catering Services to publish a “how-to” guide on planning a more sustainable event. We have some exciting events and campus collaborations coming up this spring as well.

- At the end of March, we will be hosting a Teach-In as part of the [Bard Worldwide Teach-In on Climate Justice](#), at which we are planning to have faculty from all of our schools and colleges speak about the relevance of sustainability and environmental justice in their field – this virtual event will be open to all faculty, students, staff, and community members.
- We additionally have been working closely with the [Freedom Café](#), a nonprofit coffee shop on Main Street that sells all Fair Trade products and provides educational resources to professors, students, and community members about the presence of forced labor in our supply chains. In March, we plan to host a Fair Trade coffee tasting event at the café – this will be open for registration at the end of February.

For more information about our upcoming events, follow us on Instagram [@netimpactunh](#) or send me a message at Kathryn.Rascoe@unh.edu. We also accept new members on a rolling basis and encourage anybody who is interested in the work we’re doing to stop by our weekly meetings, held in Nesmith 111 on Thursdays from 5:30-6:30pm.

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