

## TRASH TO TREASURE

REDUCING WASTE DURING ON-CAMPUS DORM MOVE OUT

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### The Campus Environmental Center

- "To empower the University of Texas at Austin community to pursue a genuine culture of environmental sustainability through constructive and dynamic means."
- Mission:
  - Understand and Act
  - Educate Others
  - Be a Leader
  - Try New Ideas
  - Collaborate



# CEC History

- Founded in Fall 2002 by a group of students led by Corinna Kester.
- Original goals:
  - Improve the UT recycling program
  - Build a partnership with UT administrators to improve the campus environment
- 2003
  - CEC became an official agency of Student Government
  - Received a grant from the National Wildlife Federation Campus Ecology Program and matching funds from Student Government.
- 2004
  - University Operations agreed to fund a CEC Director position and a Sustainability Coordinator position



## **CEC** History

- 2005
  - The Trash to Treasure (T2T) Program began
  - Funding from T2T, Employee and Campus Services, and the Student Services Budget Committee (SSBC)
  - The creation of part-time official staff Advisor position
- 2009
  - Began using SSBC funds for student wages
  - The Advisor was taken in by Facilities Services' Recycling and Sustainability Branch
  - The Advisor role became a full-time position



## **CEC** History

- 2010
  - Became a sponsored student org under Campus Planning and Facilities Management (a large portfolio containing the Office of Sustainability and all of Facilities Services)
- 2010-2015
  - The CEC took on new projects and grew to employ over 20 students and staff
- 2015
  - The CEC became housed under the Office of Sustainability within Campus Planning & Project Management



#### Overview

- A recycling and resale program.
- Mission
  - To promote a culture of sustainability and stewardship among UT staff and students through the reduction and diversion of waste
- Goals
  - To divert reusable items from ending up in a landfill
  - Provide inexpensive home goods, clothing, and school supplies to the UT community
  - Raise funds for the Campus Environmental Center
  - To help UT meet its zero-waste goal by 2020



#### Trash to Treasure Team

- Two paid student leader positions (year round)
- Team members
  - UT Farm Stand team members
  - Zero-waste team member
  - Social media team member

Facebook: CEC Trash to Treasure Instagram: @trashtotreasure\_CEC







#### Metrics

- In one school year...
  - About 12,000 lbs of food, school supplies, home goods, and clothing diverted from the landfill.
  - About 1,400 lbs of goods donated to local non-profits
  - About 2,300 lbs of food donated to the student food pantry
  - 280+ services hours completed by volunteers



#### Resources & Services

- Storage unit (year round)
- Pick-up truck
- Garbage bins with wheels
- Veterinarian scale for recording metrics
- A budget for posters and fliers
- UT Moving Services (two box trucks & a moving crew)
- A volunteer base





# Storage & Sorting

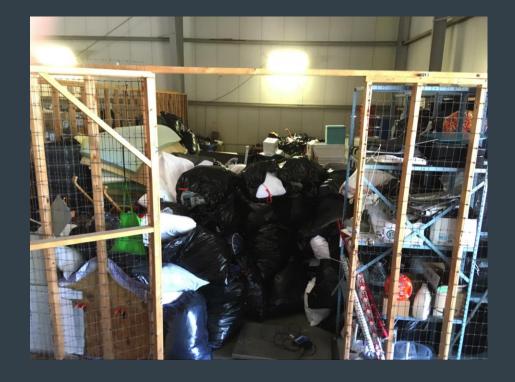
- Facilities complex
- Year-round storage unit
- Clothing racks
- Shelving units
- Wheeled bins

- Sorting mostly done in the summer by two student employees
- Freshman orientation sessions
- CEC sort days



# "The Cage"







#### **Donation Drive**

- During spring dorm move-out
- 14 campus residence halls
  - 7000+ students living on campus
  - Placed bins in 6 of the 14 dorms
- 10 days
  - One pick up, every morning
  - On the last three days, picked up once in the morning and once in the evening
  - Last day: Used a moving box truck







## Donations to the Community

- SAFE Austin
  - Sheets, blankets, comforters
- Casa Marianella
  - Bedding & towels
- Street Youth Ministry
  - Underwear & socks
- Austin Animal Center
  - Towels

- Eagle Carpet Recycling
  - Mattress toppers
- Salvation Army
  - Pillows
- Goodwill
  - Everything remaining after sales



#### Sales

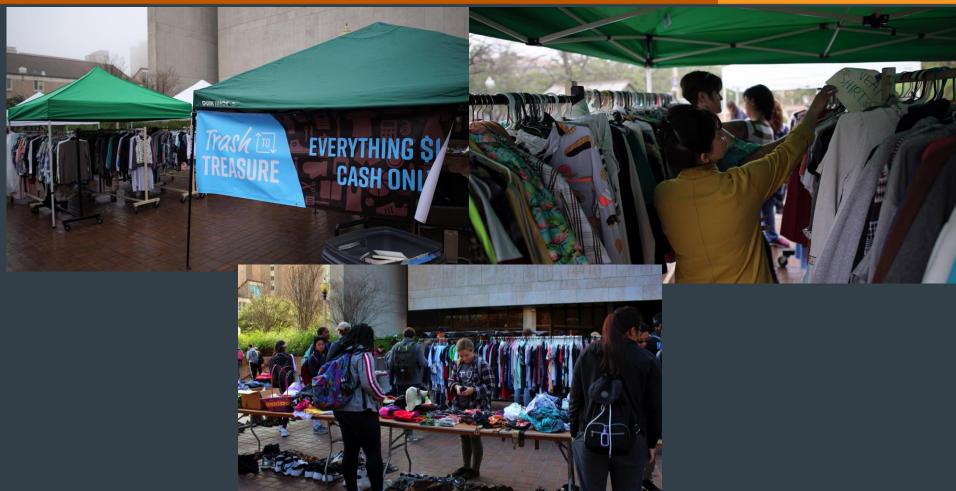
- 2-4 per semester
- Heavily advertised
  - Posters
    - Dorm bulletin boards, outdoor kiosks, building bulletins
  - Facebook event
  - CEC newsletter
  - UT calendar
  - CEC calendar
  - Digiknows
  - Texas Parents newsletter



#### Sales

- Pop-up thrift shop on campus
- 2-4 per semester in total
- UT Moving Services transports goods to sale site for us
  - 2 box trucks
  - 2-4 crew members
- Items moved to site via bins and clothing racks
  - Items removed from bins and placed on tables for easier viewing
- Outdoors in a highly trafficked area
- ~5 hours in length + 1 hour set up and 30 minute tear down
- 3-10 volunteers at a time















#### Volunteer Recruitment

- GivePulse
- List serv
- CEC meetings
- Google doc
  - Shared via:
    - CEC Newsletter
    - Mailchimp email list
    - Facebook page



## Partnerships

- The UT Outpost
  - Student food pantry
  - Career Closet
- Service fraternities & student organizations
- UT Farm Stand
  - Provide t-shirts as reusable bags
  - Informational tabling







# Clothing Mending Workshop





## Equity

- Every item just \$1
  - TVs, desks, bookshelves
  - Desk lamps, coffee makers, shower caddies
  - Scientific calculators, laptop chargers, portable phone batteries
  - Brand name clothing: North Face jackets & backpacks, Jordans (shoes), Nikes, Patagonia shirts, Levi Jeans, Wrangler Jeans, Polo shirts, Timberland, Lululemon, Chacos, Yeti water bottles, Adidas.
  - School Supplies
- Facilities Sale
  - \$1 per bag of any size