

Questions:

a.) As incoming Freshman, we were unaware of any sustainability-related organizations or projects occurring at the University of Illinois. To solve this problem, we decided to create a comprehensive resource for Illini interested in the environment and sustainability.

b.) We created the Sustainability Best Practices Guide, which can be used by students of all levels of interest in sustainability. The multiple sections of the guide include simple tasks that one can do at home, clubs and organizations students can be involved in, and information on the large-scale projects the University is undertaking related to sustainability.

c.) To accomplish this project, we collaborated with ISEE for resources and ideas on how to make the guide the best it could be. Once appropriate, we plan to contact individuals from University Housing to link our guide in Fall 2020 housing mass-emails.

d.) The result of our project was a multi-layered guide that brings attention to sustainable practices and the efforts the University is taking to become more environmentally friendly. Our project will be used by the students of the University of Illinois beginning in the fall of 2020 to learn about what they can do to live more sustainably.

Individual Answers:

Grace Rygiel:

The GFX Scholars Program helped prepare me for my future both at the University of Illinois and as an engineer. Through the study abroad portion of the program, I experienced new ideas and innovations from a different culture and was able to learn from Costa Rican experts in sustainability and engineering. It was captivating to see how people from a different area of the world used engineering to solve the country's unique problems, such as designing pavement that could withstand Costa Rican weather; I was exposed to a different way of thinking about solutions. Upon returning to the University of Illinois, I got to combine what I had learned in Costa Rica with solving sustainability-related problems on campus. Through the second semester continuation of the GFX Scholars Program, I was able to practice critical engineering skills through determining a problem, designing a solution to this problem, and collaborating with multiple people to complete the final product.

Sonali Kumar:

GFX Scholars gave me the opportunity to get hands-on engineering experience through projects and applications of what I learned in class during my Freshman year. I came to University of Illinois unsure of the engineering discipline I wanted to pursue in the future. Both

semesters of this program showed me how interconnected all the engineering majors are and how they vary. During the first semester of the program, I was able to learn with my fellow classmates and now friends how different environments lead to different innovations. When we visited Costa Rica we saw differences in pavements to sustainability compared to the US due to warmer temperatures and greater priority for sustainability. I was able to learn even more about sustainability from the people and places we visited. During the second semester, we applied what we learned in Costa Rica to create a project to solve a problem on campus. Through this, we further developed and applied our engineering thinking, and teamwork skills to create a solution for something we are passionate about.

Our Deliverable:

Our Sustainability Best Practices Guide is a resource for students and staff to learn more about sustainability from how to get involved to the efforts the University of Illinois is making to make the world a greener place. This guide acts as a quick glimpse to what the school offers in regards to sustainability making it easy for those interested to explore more and become part of the sustainability family.