

# UTRGV Student Initiatives

## Shine on Campus

## Sustainability Day

By: Ramiro Coronado

RIO GRANDE VALLEY, TEXAS – OCTOBER 2023 – Campus Sustainability Day took place on October 4-5, where various student organizations and departments at the Edinburg and Brownsville campuses came together and showcased their initiatives to sustainability and community engagement.

Campus Sustainability Day brings organizations together in order to promote and raise awareness of how UTRGV contributes towards sustainability.

Throughout the two-day event, attendees participated in a variety of activities and discussions, all aimed at raising awareness and inspiring action to address the critical challenges facing our planet.

[The School of Earth, Environmental and Marine Sciences \(SEEMS\)](#) took part in the event, showcasing various types of rocks and engaging students in discussions about their programs and ongoing projects.

"Most of the students are engaged and want to know more. They bring up and ask questions that we may have not necessarily considered in the past. They also help drive the path," shared Bryan Hoke, lab technician for SEEMS.

David Lecusay, a representative of [Bee Campus USA](#), emphasized "Native plants attract pollinators and we need pollinators. They provide us with more flowers, more crops, all the way to agriculture, and the big thing about sustainability at the end of the day... is human beings, so everything boils down to us"

These organizations are dedicated to environmental awareness and nature conservation. They emphasize the importance of native plants in attracting pollinators and supporting sustainability.

[The Geology Club](#) aims to foster an appreciation for the geological aspects of the valley. They organize local trips to places like Sal Del Rey to bring awareness to the unique natural features of Texas.

Vianey Yong, a member of the club, stated, "We have this club to explore the hidden treasures of Texas and bring awareness to the diverse geological landscapes right in our backyard."

The Transportation Alliance is a newly established organization focused on creating safe and sustainable transportation infrastructure for pedestrians, bikers, and scooter users.

"Our goal is to collaborate with local government and UTRGV to make transportation options more accessible to everyone, especially those who do not own a vehicle." said Ali Ramos, a member of the new Transportation Alliance

[The Hub of Prosperity](#) Agroecology Program manages an agroecology garden on campus and the Hub of Prosperity Farm. They host monthly workshops on various agricultural topics.

Mario Ferro, a participant, highlighted the importance of these workshops, saying, "We teach ourselves and others how to grow our own food. We've struggled throwing away tomatoes because, once you start growing things, you know the energy that goes into it"

Among the attendees, the [UTRGV Campus Food Security Initiative \(CSFI\)](#), a model that promotes peer-to-peer engagement and collaboration to address systemic issues, engaged students about initiatives to create easy access to locally grown and sourced fresh produce. CSFI provided students with recipes and food samples made with resources grown within the campus.

"We do a lot with the food pantry and our main goal is to promote recipes and food items that are affordable and accessible, to students specially." "We create plant-based and plant-forward meals at an affordable price." stated a representative of CSFI.

"The [UTRGV Food Pantry](#) often partners with Campus Food Security Initiative, where workshops are set up to teach the student simple and fast meals with ingredients the Food Pantry provides for free" said Katia Valdez, an employee from the Brownsville Food Pantry.

For more information about sustainability initiatives and their impact, please visit the [Office For Sustainability website](#)