

INCENTIVES AND BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION IN THE UNT CAMPUS RACE TO ZERO WASTE

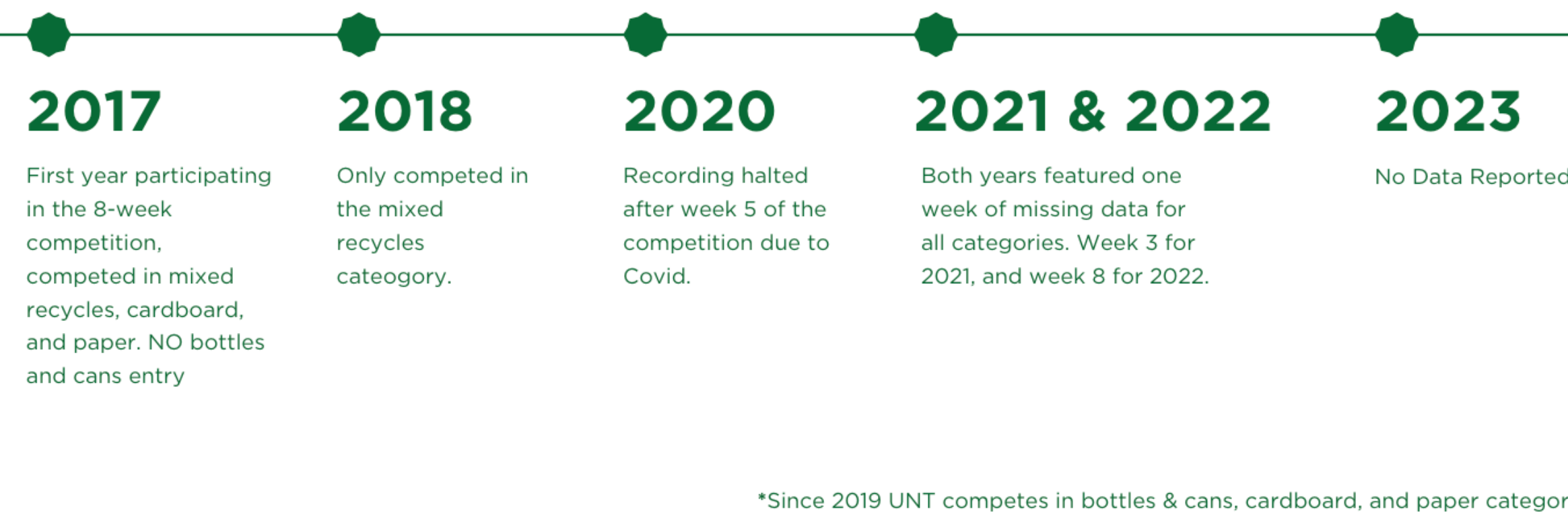


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Context

- This applied anthropological research is conducted in collaboration with UNT's We Mean Green Fund (WMGF) to investigate student awareness and interest in WMGF zero-waste initiatives, especially participation in the national Campus Waste to Zero Waste (CR2ZW) competition.
- Zero waste initiatives impact both manufacturing and consumption, to create a system that reduces waste and reuses resources.
- The CR2ZW competition aims to educate students about waste and fosters community around sustainability.

UNT's History of Competition Data:



Literature Review

Entangled - Ian Hodder

- Hodder's (2012) theory of T (things) + H (humans) conceptualizes a world of networks comprised by H + T dependencies. One example of entanglement is student relationships with consumption, waste and recycling.

Circular Economy

- Circular economies may be implemented when zero waste is the goal. Circular economies rely on reusing existing resources, repurposing and recycling goods over harvesting new materials.

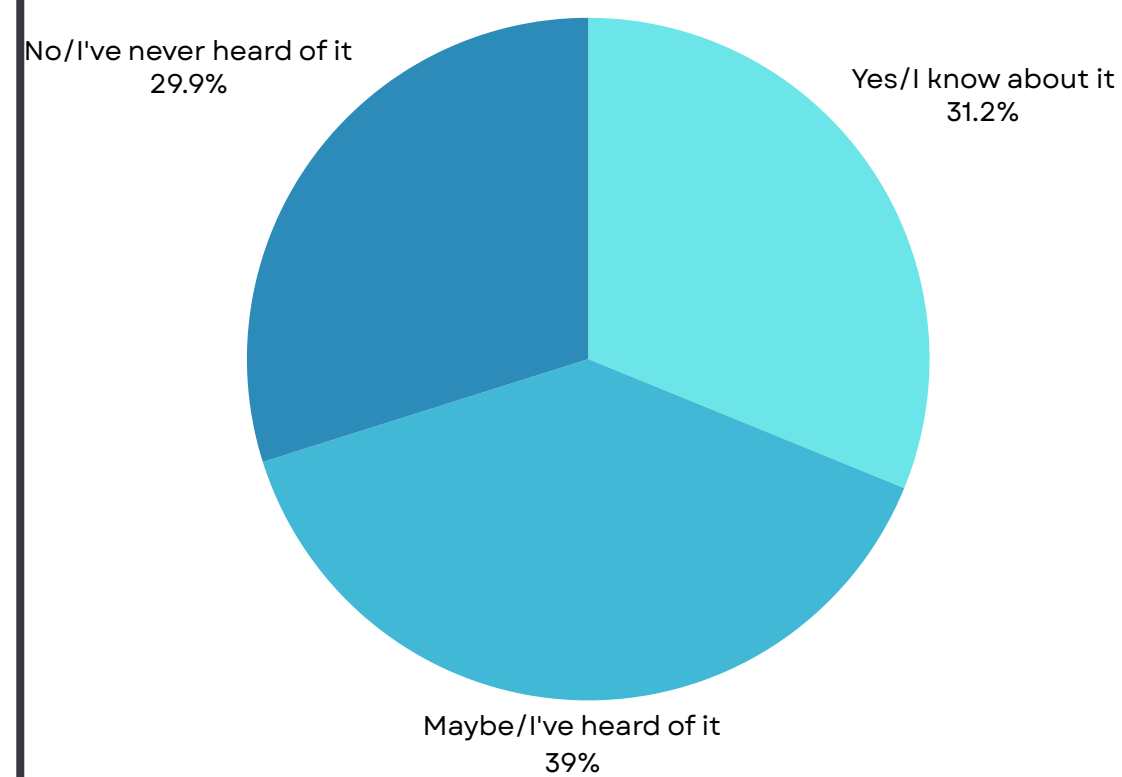
Discard Studies

- Lepawsky and Liboiron (2022)
- Zahara & Phillips (2019) - demythologizing waste
- Zhang & Maniates (2021) - individualizing responsibility

Student Survey Results

Responses: N = 77

Are you aware of the UNT We Mean Green Fund?



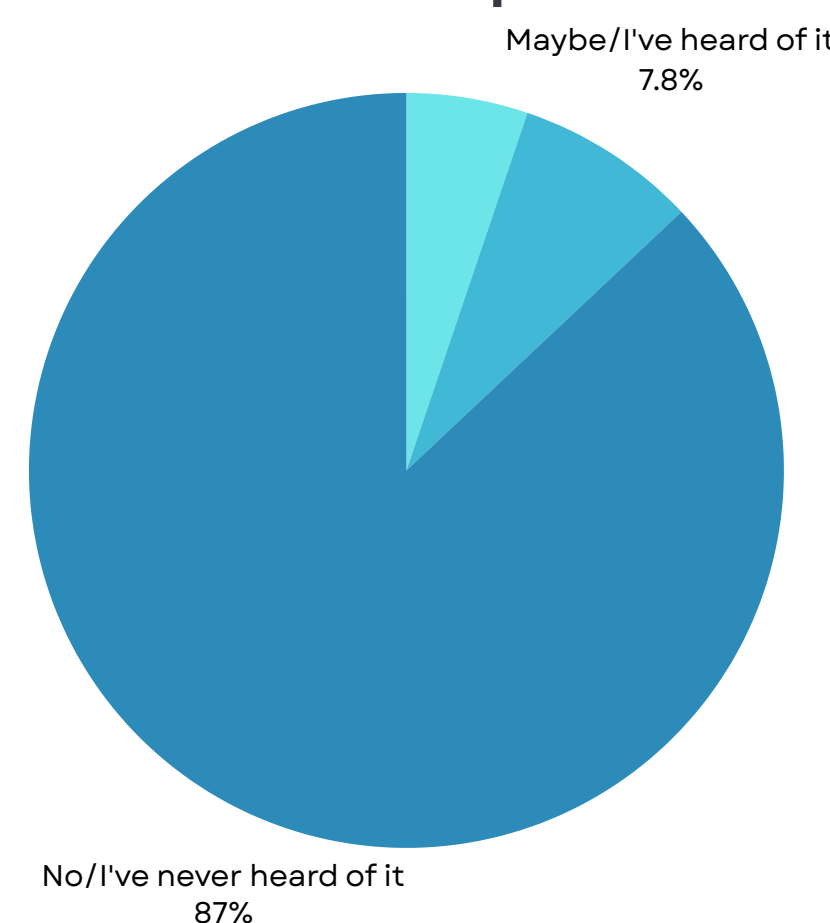
Findings: 70.1% = some type of interaction or knowledge of the program.
Explanation: The WMGF communicates via social media platforms, gains visibility on campus, and hosts events which may account for students knowledge.

Are you aware of the Campus Race to Zero Waste Competition?

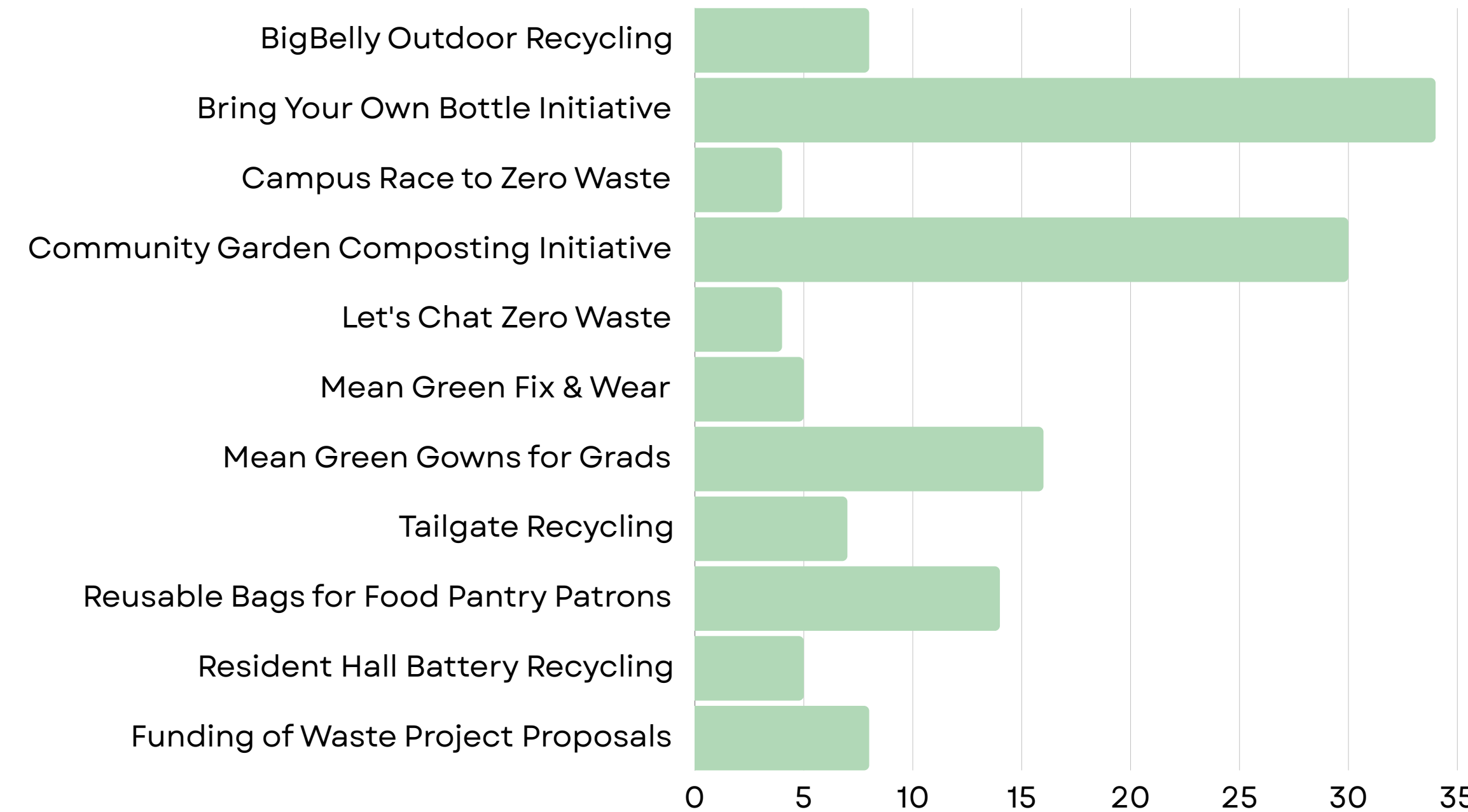
Findings: 87% never heard of it

Crucial questions:

1. If the WMGF runs the campus activities and drives students to care about recycling, then why the disconnect?
2. If students remain unaware of UNT's participation in the competition, how might this impact their
 - a. recycling knowledge
 - b. their involvement in WMGF sustainability initiatives
 - c. participation in broader zero waste activities?



Which WMGF Waste Reduction efforts are you aware of:



QR Link



URF Paper with Full Citations:

Recommendations

From Students:

- Improve Event Advertising: additional platforms, advance notice, emails and alerts.
- Incentivize Attendance: food passes, swag items, flex money, and tuition rebates/scholarships.

Additional Recommendations:

- Redirect WMGF engagement: increase advertising methods and timing
- Foster additional event opportunities for participation: more events over more days.
- Post campus recycling guidelines at point of waste/recycling disposal sites.
- Collaborate with campus organizations for events, including clothing swaps, clean-ups, move out day swap meets.
- Plan events for the CR2ZW competition, both before and during competition weeks.
- Offer informational recycling meetings for dorms and during new student orientations.
- Support research into areas on campus with high recyclable contamination rates.