

White Castle Environmental Sustainability Internship

Charles Graves

Background

From August until December of 2021, I will be working at the White Castle home office. The home office is conveniently located in Columbus, Ohio, near the OSU campus. White Castle does not have a typical mission statement. However, they do have an initiative called Castle Social Responsibility. The three branches that make up this initiative are Castle Shares, Naturally Focused, and Diversity & Inclusion. Castle Social Responsibility is the guiding initiative for the company.

The White Castle slide.



Interesting Facts

- White Castle is the first fast food hamburger chain in the world (White Castle, n.d.)
- White Castle still operates as a family owned, private company (White Castle, n.d.)
- In 2021, White Castle celebrated its 100th year anniversary (White Castle, n.d.)
- The quickest way to get to the first floor from the second floor is the super fast slide, shown below

First White Castle established in Wichita, Kansas.



White Castle volunteers at a local park in Columbus.



On the Job at the Castle

From day one, I have been busy. I started by creating an Excel file that kept track of all the applicable material bans. For example, seven Castles will have to stop using plastic bags in Cincinnati due to a plastic bag ban. I compiled Supplier Conduct and Diversity survey data and summarized key points. I was a contributing member on a Plastic Bag/Bagging Procedures Task Force. This task force was created to brainstorm solutions to upcoming material bans throughout the country. Along with my supervisor,

Shannon Tolliver, I attended meetings with internal White Castle departments and outside stakeholders.

Reflection

My experience with White Castle directly relates to my future career aspirations. Before White Castle, I thought working in corporate sustainability would be interesting and a possible avenue for me. Now I know corporate sustainability is what I want to do. I have several recommendations for future students interested in corporate sustainability. Being able to use Excel is a must. Thankfully the EEDS coursework adequately prepares students for this. Secondly, being passionate about sustainability is useful because it leads to learning opportunities. Building off that, ask as many questions as possible. Lastly, as general advice, stay positive throughout the internship search. Covid-19 has made finding internships difficult, but if the preparation and effort are put forth, the results will come.

Bibliography

White Castle. (2021). *Castle Social Responsibility Report*. <https://www.whitecastle.com/pdfs/2020-21-white-castle-social-responsibility-report.pdf>

White Castle. (n.d.). *White Castle History*. Retrieved October 5, 2021, from <https://www.whitecastle.com/about-us/our-history>

All photos are either mine or were found at the White Castle website cited above.



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