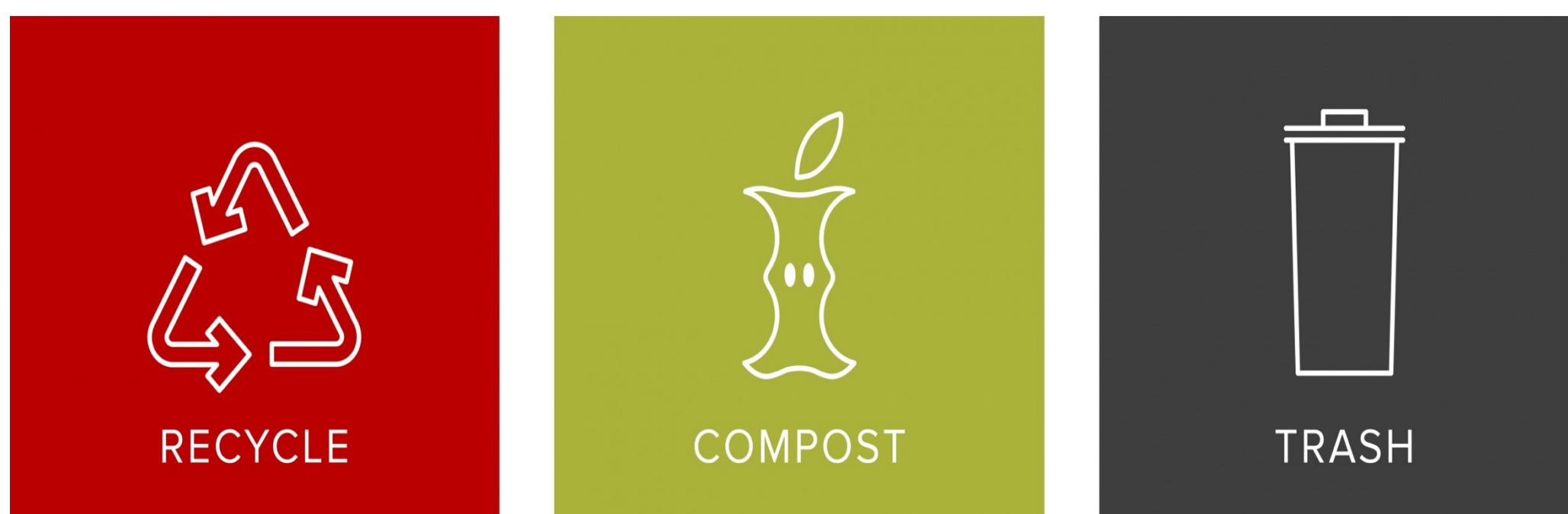


Zero Waste Internship with FOD

Devon Hale, EEDS

BACKGROUND

I found this internship on Ohio State's job page on Workday, I applied to this internship in the spring of this year, and I started working at Zero Waste in May. Facilities Operations and Development (FOD), services The Ohio State University with their sustainability, construction, design, and maintenance needs. Zero Waste is part of FOD and deals with the university's waste stream and infrastructure. Zero Waste's goal is to achieve zero waste status by 2025 by diverting 90% of the university's waste away from landfills.



Waste can be sorted into three categories: recycling, compost, and trash. Our goal is to redirect as much waste as possible from the trash.

ON THE JOB

Building Audits: The purpose of doing building audits is to make sure that the building's infrastructure is set up in a way that encourages the diversion and reduction of waste. Some of the things we look for during an audit are: hand dryers in the restrooms, correct signage on waste bins, trash and recycling bins paired together, and habits of the custodial staff.



Expanding Compost on Campus: To increase the amount of waste diverted on campus, we introduced composting to dorm buildings and dining facilities. I helped deliver composting infrastructure to 16 dining locations and 37 residence halls.



Personal Compost Bins: Over the summer we started a program to hand out free compost bins to OSU's faculty and staff. I held multiple tabling events where I handed out bins and signed people up for the program. In the fall we began expanding this program to include students who live in the dorms.



REFLECTION

This internship was a great introduction to the world of sustainability and waste. I got some incredible hands-on experience that will greatly help me in the future. I was able to gain workplace experience in a field that is relevant to my major and it helped me to start thinking about what field of sustainability I want to enter when I graduate. I would advise other students to not be afraid to get their hands dirty when working in sustainability because the hands-on jobs I did were great learning experiences.



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES