



**2013 Impact Report &
Vision for 2014**

Jenna Civitello
Executive Director

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Sustany Overview

The mission of The Sustany Foundation is to enhance the quality of life of the Tampa Bay community by promoting sustainability. Founded in 2007, Sustany supports sustainability through education and programs which advance economic prosperity, environmental stewardship, and social responsibility.

Sustany's local initiatives align with the triple bottom line of sustainability:

- Economics- We coordinate the Green Business Designation Program for the City of Tampa and Sustany Sustainable Business Program.
- Environment- We feature local produce and restaurants at the annual Sustainable Buzz and partner with other organizations to host conferences, lead local clean ups and Earth Day activities.
- Social responsibility- We offer Comm[YOU]nity volunteer connection and mini grants to fund small sustainability projects.

By collaborating with individuals and organizations, Sustany is a catalyst for innovative community projects that improve life in Tampa Bay now and into the future.

Highlights of 2013

2013 was a capacity building year for the Sustany Foundation with two major developments. Sustany hired its first Development Director, Jenna Civitello. Jenna joined Sustany in August 2013 with six years of community outreach and fundraising experience. Most recently, Jenna was the Assistant Director of Alumni Relations and Development at the Indiana University School of Public and Environmental Affairs (IU SPEA). She previously worked for the IU Foundation, IU Research and Teaching Preserve, IU Office of Sustainability, and AmeriCorps. Originally from Plymouth, MA, Jenna earned a B.A. in environmental studies from Colby College and received a Master of Public Affairs and Master of Science in Environmental Science from IU SPEA in 2010.

Also in 2013, Sustany received \$20,000 from the Lightning Foundation Community Hero program. Dana Pounds was recognized for her perseverance in her fight against cancer all while serving as the Executive Director of Nature's Academy, a nonprofit environmental education company based in the Greater Tampa Bay Area. Dana designated a portion of her Community Hero award to the Sustany Foundation in acknowledgement of our collaborations over the years. Sustany dedicated the funding to create the Sustainable Business Program and launch a volunteer management software, Comm[YOU]nity.

Green Business Designation Program and Sustany Sustainable Business Program

Prior to 2013, Sustany certified 13 businesses as completing the self-guided City of Tampa's Green Business Designation Program under the leadership of Sustany Board member Janet Harrison. In the summer of 2013, Sustany worked with the Tampa Downtown partnership to create an eight week workshop to guide organizations through the sustainability assessment process. **DLA Piper, Tampa Bay Times Forum, Tampa Downtown Partnership, City of Tampa, and Sykes Enterprises** shared best practices and completed the certification.



Recognizing the value of the workshop model and with funding from the Lightning Community Hero program, Sustany developed a new framework, the **Sustany Sustainable Business Program (SSBP)**. The SSBP is a **12-week program with three workshop meetings and a student experiential learning component** managed by an executive committee. Through the program, **businesses receive technical assistance to improve their profitability, environmental impact, and community accountability.**



The first round of the SSBP will run from mid-January to mid-April and include a strategic collaboration with the **Tampa Downtown Partnership** to target of small businesses in downtown. Through a competitive application process, Sustany will recruit local university students and provide training for them to serve as sustainability specialists for businesses. The program will provide students an opportunity to apply their sustainability coursework to a real world experience of auditing a business and developing best practices.

Sustany believes this new framework will be more attractive to local businesses. Business owners will work with qualified specialists to guide them through the sustainability audit and implement best practices, a process they would not typically have the technical expertise or time to pursue. The program curriculum includes: introduction to sustainable business practices, sustainability gap identification and action plan, and waste identification and reduction plan.

Over the first round of SSBP, Sustany will collect businesses' metrics on waste reduction, reduced energy use, and consumer feedback on sustainable practices. In the long term, the Sustany Sustainable Business Program will grow its membership in the business community, enable students to apply their sustainability coursework to real world experiences, and increase profitability of Tampa businesses.

Comm[YOU]nity, Volunteer Management Software

This year Sustany created Comm[YOU]nity, an online marketplace where Tampa Bay students can match their talents with local volunteer opportunities. The **Lightning Community Hero** program grant enabled Sustany to research software, purchase a volunteer management program license, design graphics and begin to market the software to nonprofits and students to source and track volunteers.



Sustany Board member Larry Sullivan lead the roll out phase of Comm[YOU]nity which was geared toward establishing the program infrastructure. By working with student focus groups, Sustany refined the user interface and created easy search features based on themes or by a calendar. As the program ramps, Sustany will be able to measure volunteer hours generated and student leadership experiences.



An important feature of the software is that **students can champion their own project** in collaboration with the Sustany Foundation and other nonprofit organizations. Championing a volunteer project empowers students to identify a problem, coordinate resources to promote the project, lead a team to accomplish tangible goals, and reflect on the results of their work.

Andrew McIntosh said Comm[YOU]nity will be an “effective tool for getting positive results all around.” McIntosh’s daughter, a student at H.B. Plant High School, will lead a coastal cleanup supervised by Sustany and the Sustainable Business Coalition in January 2014.

Sustany’s goal is to support several student championed events and register 20 nonprofits on Comm[YOU]nity in 2014. Sustany believes meaningful volunteer experiences will inspire students to volunteer more and develop their passions and leadership skills.

The Sustainable Buzz



This was the sixth year of the Sustainable Buzz and the event truly was bigger and better than ever. Sustany's focus for 2013 was *locavore* and the Buzz reflected this with a Farm-to-Table theme. Sustany worked with local farmers to donate produce which chefs incorporated into their dishes. The farmers also attended the Buzz to educate attendees about local produce and sustainable farming.

Attendance doubled from previous year with

over 700 guests. The Buzz had its first major media sponsor, The Tampa Tribune, and was featured in cooking demonstrations on Fox13 News and WFLA News Channel 8 Daytime. WMNF and WUSF broadcasted PSAs. Numerous online publications, including [83 Degrees](#), [Going Green Tampa](#), Tampa Downtown Partnership Monday Morning Memo, LocalShops1 and food blogs profiled the event. The Buzz Planning Committee also led a social media strategy to promote the event on personal and business social media platforms. Sustany hosted 43 vendors and recruited 60 volunteers to help the night of the event.



In addition to raising awareness about sustainability and local food in Tampa Bay, the Buzz is Sustany's major fundraiser for the year. Sponsors and donors generously contributed financial or in-kind support valued over \$35,000. For the first time, the Buzz included a silent auction with nearly 30 sustainable and local experiences, from **fishing trips** to **classes on mixology, brewing and juicing**, and an **organic gardening package**.

After the event, Sustany conducted an online survey of vendors, volunteers, and attendees. With over 60 responses, 91% rated the event excellent or very good. Praise for the Buzz is included:

"A variety of foods and drinks crafted locally in Tampa Bay. The price is unbeatable, especially for an event that is truly one-of-a-kind here in Tampa."

"I loved the vendors and their pride in sustainability."

“I am a returning Buzz attendee and this year was truly wonderful...great event production and I was happy to be there!”

“I love how there was live music the whole time and lots of local restaurant and beverage companies.”

“I was a first time attendee. I plan on going to the next one!”

“Wonderful varied selection of local sustainable food, beer, wine and liquor merchants, excellent cause, beautiful setting, great music and crowd.”

“Overall event was outstanding- easily one of top 3 in Tampa Bay.”



Our survey also resulted in helpful recommendations and creative ways to improve the event for the seventh annual Sustainable Buzz in 2014. Sustany’s goal is to secure a presenting sponsor and other partnerships earlier in the year so that organizations may receive maximum exposure from being associated with the event. As a primarily volunteer-driven organization, it is essential that Sustany continues to raise a significant amount of its annual fundraising goals through the Buzz so that the organization can focus on programmatic work throughout the year.



In conjunction with the Sustainable Buzz and our educational mission, Sustany worked with the **University of Tampa student group, Student Environmental Action Coalition (SEAC)**, to host a panel discussion on sustainable business practices in the food and restaurant industry. **From The Ground Up** featured Food Editor/Writer for The Tampa Tribune Jeff Houck, Founder of Local Roots Emily Rankin, Executive Director of Morning Star Fishermen Phil Reasons, and Vertical Farm Owner Farmer Dave Smiles. Over 55 attendees enjoyed the morning discussion.

Sustany Mini Grant Program

The Sustany Foundation facilitates the exchange of ideas and resources to individuals and organizations committed to environmental and social responsibility. As a small, volunteer-run organization, Sustany is proud to maximize its impact by supporting mini-grants to fund innovative projects which promote sustainability in Tampa Bay. In 2013, Sustany's mini grant program funded:

- Science literacy projects for Palmetto and McNeal Elementary Schools at long-time Sustany partner **Nature's Academy**, a nonprofit environmental education company based in the greater Tampa Bay area.
- Enhancements to the Davis Island Dog Park.
- Assistance with strategic planning and the 501(c)3 application process for **Housing First Steps Forward**, a new nonprofit with the mission of addressing chronic homelessness in the Tampa Bay area by providing housing and services for the most at-risk street homeless population in Hillsborough County.
- Sponsorships for the first annual **InterDisciplinary Exchange in Action (IDEA), University of South Florida** conference focused on sustainable energy and the first FarmRaiser for **Edible Peace Patch Project**, a nonprofit dedicated to building a sustainable urban farm-to-school food system in south Pinellas County.



In 2014, Sustany would like to fund more projects, especially those pursued by individuals who need under \$500 to start-up a sustainability project in their local community. Sustany will refine the application process but will keep the application simple and open throughout the year in order to capitalize on unique opportunities.

Sustainability Awareness and Action

The Sustany Foundation prioritizes collaborating with partner organizations, media, and other communications channels to promote sustainability. Sustany works with Great Green Editing and guest bloggers to produce **ThinkSustany**, posts about sustainability issues in the news and relevant to Tampa Bay. From green gifts for the holidays, profiling sustainability practices of Buzz vendors, to facts about food waste, a new net-zero energy building in Tampa, ThinkSustany keeps readers informed about the latest trends and topics. In 2014, Sustany plans to continue publishing thought provoking articles and recruit guest bloggers to share different perspectives.



In the summer of 2013, The Sustany Foundation partnered with Stetson University to help promote their efforts in establishing the university as a world recognized home for sea turtle protection. The ThinkSustany blog highlighted Stetson's proposal to become the permanent home of the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC). The IAC represents the regulatory body of an international treaty, recognized by 15 countries in the Western Hemisphere, that works to protect sea turtles and the environments they inhabit. Stetson University presented their proposal, with support from the City of St. Petersburg, other regional universities, and local nonprofits like Sustany, to the IAC convention in July 2013. The decision to give the IAC a permanent home has yet be decided, but Stetson University is still in the running with support from Sustany.

In 2013, Sustany also continued its stewardship of the **Davis Islands Sea Plane Basin** hosting volunteer days in partnership with Keep Tampa Bay Beautiful. Sustany coordinated the September volunteer day with the **26th Annual Hillsborough River and Coastal Cleanup**. There were more than 100 people from various groups including the Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Plant and Robinson high schools, Community Montessori School on Webb Road and the Davis Islands Yacht Club. In 2014, Sustany will promote Davis Islands Sea Plane Basin stewardship through Comm[YOU]nity and offer high school students the opportunity to lead a cleanup.

Strategic Outlook for 2014

With its first full-time staff member, dedicated Board of Directors, and growing volunteer base, the Sustany Foundation is preparing for a groundbreaking year in 2014. Sustany will focus on the programmatic goals and metrics for the Sustainable Business Program, Comm[YOU]nity, and mini-grant program. We will work diligently to refine our branding through the website and grow our social media presence on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Linked In](#).

Going into its eighth year, the Sustany Foundation's outlook has never been brighter. As a small, volunteer-driven organization, Sustany will focus its efforts on producing a few high quality programs and quantifying results. However, our vision does remain big. We believe Tampa Bay can become known for its commitment to sustainability, boast a high quality of life in a beautiful natural environment, and have a vibrant and engaged community.

Special Thank You to Sustany's Most Involved Supporters

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