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Sustain Interview Project

██████████ (B) interviewed by ██████████ (H)

Interviewed on 4/16/13

G: Ok, so I'm here with ██████████. Tell me everything. So when I met, with these conversations what's been interesting is that anything that you want to say about what it was like for you to go through Sustain or any of your thoughts now, kind of the question of our hearts is, what's happened to all of you?

B: Yeah.

G: You know, where have you come, and so anything on your mind like that is great to share and then I'll ask some questions as we go maybe.

B: I think um, looking back at like, kind of taking that um, thinking about like, more of like when you take a class, what are you getting out of the class not just what grade can get in the class and what does the school benefit from you taking the class. What do you want to learn? What are you interested in? Um, what's important to you? And really learning that. And it's been interesting like, great, you know I haven't been like, lots of times it's like, is this really important for me to know? Or is it just something they recommend I should know as an engineer or something? But is it really anything that's important to me? Most of it, lots of it, like not really. Um, and it's been interesting because lots of my other roommates they're mechanical engineers and taking sophomore year they're all like (mumbles) classes. And so, taking classes with them and everyone's like, oh you didn't do that? You don't understand that? And like, oh my gosh you're going to fail the class. This is like your future and it's like this is your guy's future. I'm not doing like, I've kind of pretty much narrowed it down I really want to go into heavy civil construction. And, um, a lot of it is just kind of like project management based. And um, you know lots of times, like I don't want to go into like designing things. I want to go into building things. And um, and so it's one of those like really I'm learning to do all this stuff and going to do site tours with engineers and talking with engineers on the project. Even when you ask them about things they don't know any of the design stuff. They don't remember it. It's something you learn in college and if you're going to go into design then you keep continuing it. If you're not going into design it's like, great you passed your EIT exam and that was the past and that's about all it is so. I don't know I'm kind of using that, all my classes, I've been putting a lot more effort into the classes that shouldn't matter as much but to me they matter more. Like there's the surveying class and the concrete lab and they're supposed to kind of be your side support courses not like your main support courses but your main support courses aren't really my future and I've kind of--

G: Hmmm.

B: So like the surveying class is just like a random four unit you can take any of the four years but I'm probably going to be doing more surveying than designing I-beams in my future.

G: Right.

B: So that one's going to be more important for me. And so I've stayed on top of those classes and I'm taking concrete lab now, which is really interesting. And um, it's just, helping narrowing it down and being able to see through a lot of the bullshit they give you and um, and, just kind of seeing that like, you're not really just a (mumbles) in the system, like we're here to get what we want to get out of Cal Poly not for them just to have us go through their cookie cutter program. I don't know, so that's that. That's just kind of been what I've taken out of classes wise at least. Just kind of using, looking ahead at the future and looking at like um, what do I value out of what I'm learning here and there? I mean last quarter with Dynamics I got a D in the class, but I passed. So, it's one of those, I already knew at the beginning of freshman year I wasn't going to like that class, and, that about the first day of the class I realized I wasn't going to like the class and I don't know people say, oh, a D is a bad grade, but a D is passing. Like all my other classes, I still have a fine GPA, it's still a little bit below a 3.0 but it's still fine, I'm still managing. Move on with my life. I'm not going to look back on it. It's a letter on paper. It doesn't really mean much.

G: Have you always had this perspective? About grades and how you see them? The way you're describing them as separate?

B: Um, in college yes. High school, no. High school was like, I know like last night I stayed up until 2:30, 3ish doing homework. I slack off on my homework pretty bad. (both laugh) And it's due tonight, do I'm going to go back--

G: (laughing) You really (mumbles) did to be with me right now.

B: (laughing) Yeah, yeah, yeah. But um, um, but in high school it was always like, I mean I remember there were times when, my mom was always like, I want to be the last one to go to bed like I'll stay up until you go to be and then by the end of high school she was like, like she'd come in and I'm in my room at 2am doing math homework, and she'd be like, I'm going to bed.

G: Yeah! (laughs)

B: And there would be times where she'd come in and I'd be like face down passed out on my homework. And she'd wake me up so I would go to bed and I'd like, no I have to finish this problem. And it was like, because everything was always about I need to get the highest, at least mostly through junior year at least because that was for entering into college I was like I need to have the best I can possibly get into so I can have all my options open. And then once I got accepted for college now it's just been kind of like, once I got to this point, it's all totally flipped around. Now it's about, high school it was get as good as you can to get to the next level and now it's like, college is like, you're pretty much at the high level. Um, you know thinking about so I want to do a masters? Do I don't want to do a masters? Not really sure but um I've heard from people at least for the 4 plus 1 for civil engineering they accept most people. And as long as you're not

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failing out, as long as you're doing fine and trying hard you'll make it in. So I haven't been really worried about that. And um, it's um, hearing about when my parents talk about college it's always one of the those things like once you got to this point it's like you're using this to really move along for your own personal future not just--

G: Yeah.

B: And so that got totally flipped around. And Sustain really did a good chunk of that too. Just realizing like, it was one of those like I kind of like inside I kind of remember first quarter of freshman year it was like taking my Econ class I was like, do I really care what I get in this class? Like, not really. I'm learning how to calculate the GDP. Do I really, do I honestly care? Not really. Is it important? Not really. It's a number on a paper. Um, and, I think it was one of those, never really, I just kind was like, eh, whatever, it's just a grade. And if I get a B, I was trying for Bs. And now it's mostly if I get Cs or better. And, um, as long as I enjoy my time. As long as I'm learning, that's been a lot more now. Also with concepts. I think a good thing that helped me solidify the fact that I can, that learning concepts is much more important than the math, was taking ██████████'s physics class, I realized both with physics and chemistry both the classes, the night before the midterm when we're all here in the library in one of the fish bowl rooms, there's 20 of us in the room all studying for the physics test the next day. I go in there and I don't even know half the equations. This is the night before the test. I maybe know like one from the beginning of the chapter. I don't know any of the equations, any of the math behind anything. And I'm sitting there and they're putting problems on the board and I don't even know how to start the problem. But then going through it all I need to see is the problem done once or twice and it just clicks for me. Because as long as, the whole quarter, as long as I've been paying attention, I know all the concepts behind what's going on I just don't know the math behind it, the math just comes like that. As long as you understand what's going on, so that's been, lots of this stuff, it's been really nice this quarter taking a fluid dynamics, and she even said straight up at the beginning she's like, this is a very concept- heavy course, it's really abstract dealing with fluids and things and it's some weird concepts. But then whenever, at least so far, all the examples we've been doing, once you figure out how to apply the concepts of the problem to the math itself it isn't that hard. And, so,--

G: It's nifty you've discovered that about yourself though. Have you always known that about yourself?

B: Um, yeah, it's been more clarified. It's always been, even like in the beginning of high school they always say take really good notes. I wrote my notes, but I never looked at the notes. Even like, before the test I would open them up and look and then, ok, that's what we learned about yeah ok, yeah, lets go, let's do it. And it was never a problem as long as I paid attention every day in class. It wasn't one of those you know like for my history and English classes I was never, (mumbles) I was on the math/science route so I was never taking the AP history or English tests and um so for just taking a regular history class most questions are pretty basic on the tests or quizzes. So it's like, it's one of

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those, as long as you're not stupid and you're paying attention you're going to do fine. And it was like, on the history test, it was always like, oh man I didn't get 100% on that (██████████ laughs) and I'd get a 99% on it and then look around and people were getting like 70s or 80s and I was like, well, I'm just going to, and even like freshman year they were saying oh, do you want to do honors English, do you want to go, and it's like, I really don't want to, it's not me--

G: Yeah.

B: Like taking history classes, I really like learning about history but I don't like learning the little nit-picky things and the test you on every little, I just like learning about what happened. And that's cool. That's really interesting to know. Do I really need to know every detail of every little thing? That war, what type of gun were they using and how many bullets they used, I don't care. What were the main things? What was the objective? What was going on? What were the major bullet points? And that's what I got out of it.

G: Yeah, bullet points.

B: Yeah, so that's um, I don't know I guess it's helped clarify, like, balance my classes, you know I'm taking the concrete lab like right now. First day we go in and I mean its a 2 unit lab class learning about how to design and mix concrete. One of those things where it's like for the rest of my life I shouldn't need notes for it, like this is stuff I should know. I want to get into the concrete canoe, like I've been helping them out, like paddling for them this year, I'm actually going right after this, I have my bathing suit on, so--

G: Wow! Cool! I thought you just ran out of laundry. (both laugh)

B: Yeah, so I want to do that senior year. And so for like senior project, that and like surveying and that's like things like as a civil engineer who wants to work in the field on projects, that's like something I shouldn't have to take out notes to remember. That's just something I should know. So like surveying, I think the only day I took notes is the one day we were learning about how a GPS works and all the abbreviations of all the mechanical systems of how it actually operates which he didn't really test us on that part because you don't really need to know that unless you're actually designing it. Because you don't need to know how to use it. But that was just the one day we were learning about it and I was writing down all these abbreviations for things, trying to remember those but other than that, hour long lecture, I'd sit there every day and just sit there, recline back and just listen. And concrete lab now, you go in the first day and everyone takes notes and I just sat there and listened. Now I take out notes just because it feels awkward not taking notes because looking around waiting for everyone to copy it down, it's like, ok I'll copy it down. But it's like, uh, really? Do I really? I just want to listen to the, I don't just, understanding the concepts is a lot of what I got out of Sustain. Which is kind of I guess learning how you learn it and so I guess that's helped me--

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G: That's really striking me as I listen to you is that you really, it sounds like to me that you know how you learn, and that you're pretty confident about it. How did your friends respond when you, you told me at the beginning that they were like, you got to know this!!

B: Oh, they were--

G: And you said, no I don't. Or you said to them, that's your future.

B: Yeah, that's um, it's interesting, because especially like um, in taking CE 204 last quarter and like um--

G: Which one is that?

B: Um, it's the strength and materials, so it's all learning about like if you have a beam and analyzing the moments and compression and tension and all that stuff and um, one of those where it was like the homework was due every week and I kinda did it the night before, like oh crap there's 8 problems so that's like 8 hours worth of work.

G: Wow.

B: And so it was like, well I only have like 4 hours before I'm going to bed and so I'd do like 3 of the problems and turn that in and get like 40%, which is better than zero! (██████████ laughs).

You know homework is only worth like 10% of our overall grade anyway. By the end of the class the whole thing was curved anyway. So it was like does it really matter if I don't do that one homework problem? Not really. 5 or 6 problems of the same thing but with different numbers? Do I really care about it that much? Not really. And then my other roommate he'd be the one that all Saturday he'd wake up in the morning and at 10am he'd start doing homework and I've never done homework on a Saturday. I can't do it. I just can't get myself to do it. Sundays I don't even start until 9pm. Like ok, great, that's as much as I got done on the weekend. It's just I don't know how, like all day doing homework? It's just like, I can't do that.

G: Are you enjoying yourself?

B: Absolutely. Yeah. So, I don't I guess it's just, and then also thinking about it and talking to my roommates, they were like, in high school I didn't really care that much, you take your classes and move on. I was the opposite in high school. I was like I need to do my homework, I need to turn this in, I need to get every point possible, and then I realized, I don't know, by the end of senior year of high school I'm like I'm over this. Like I've put so much effort in and looking around it's like the people weren't putting half as much effort in. And we're all at the same point. And it's just like, you know, did I, I don't know, do you really need to put based on what you're doing, there are some things

that just don't need as much effort. And, um, I don't know it's also something, they all want to go into design and stuff, one of my roommates who's ME and um, he's already been working for North (mumbles) and he's got the company computer with them and he's working on like cube stat satellite stuff. And that's like truly design work, like calculating stuff like, I remember last quarter we were learning like about gears and stuff and then like our teacher he's also taught like some 400 level stuff so he's showing us, in the future you can apply this to design this gear box for something. I look at him and it's like this doesn't look fun at all. My roommates like, that's really cool! I'm like, why would you want to design a gear box, like? That doesn't sound fun. And then of course we go into the ME labs because we were printing out some stuff before a class because they have free printing (laughs) so it was like, ok, and we go in there and there's like people with like 3D modeling designing gear boxes and it's like, yeeeeeeah, I'll stick to like autocad designing a layout of a building and it's like, do I actually want to design the building, no. But what I actually did for the last two summers was um, I worked at a place where they did a lot of site planning for projects. So it'd be like they plan out sidewalks and all the utility connections and how the parking lot graded out--

G: Yeah.

B: Basically everything but the building. There'd be a giant this thing in the middle of the project--

G: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

B: And it would say building A, square footage this and it would be all hashed out. And then there's like stuff everywhere or all around it. And um, that's pretty cool. Didn't like working in the office every single day, I wanted to get everything, kind of like they're all, oh and someone's going to this project site and I was like I finally get out there and I realize when they say they're visiting the project site it's, they're visiting a random warehouse in the middle of downtown Irvine. So you use a tape measure to measure the edges of curbs so they can make a top view plan of it and it's like, this is pretty boring. (both laugh) And then for (mumbles) and civil engineers we've been going on these site tours like actually just Friday we went to um all the 101 improvements up by Prunedale, and all the over passes and stuff and they're digging out mountain sides and rerouting the roads and everything and it's like, this is cool. Put on a hard hat, wear like boots and jeans like this is what I want to do and it's like, and I don't know, it's just like one of those things where I looked at it and looking at like different companies and things and lots of, even other people in civil engineering it's like well do you want to go into designing structures or designing water resources things or designing geotech foundations stuff and it's like, I'm going to go, and like they have those like the big main ones that they teach here and then it's always that fifth category of construction that's just never really, because it's one of those things where it's like, it's not really something they teach much in classes because it's just project management mostly. You don't need, lots of the stuff is like, well the company I really want to work for, Shimmick, they do a lot of presentations of projects in the Bay and everything. They even, in talking to one of the

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guys who came out with them some other time and he's like, everyone who works for them is a licensed engineer. I was talking to him and was like do you guys, but they don't do any design work, they're all construction and they're like, we're all engineers. We all graduated in civil engineering we all got our PE license and the thing is we use it as one of those because they're the contractors on the project they have to talk to the designer and it's a lot easier to have the conversation, with why are you doing this? Can we do this instead? If both of you are licensed engineers. Because generally the design guy is always going to say, I know my stuff better than you do, I'm going to do it my way.

G: My dad is an architect and I know what you're talking about.

B: Yeah, and so it's like when both of you can say you know like looking at it, I may not know the numbers but I know the concepts of what's going on. I'm a licensed engineer too. Let's have this conversation about what's going on--

G: Interesting.

B: And um, so they're generally the lead ones on the project site. Like you go out there and they're the ones wearing um, they're the ones wearing a button up shirt on the project site.

G: Right, right, right.

B: Or whatever so um that seems like something really cool to get into because it's just one of those we say, even the couple of times we do need to do a calculation or number we check it, we do it to see what we get but if there's ever actually any design work we need we do, we kind of look at it for what it roughly should be but then we hire out a design firm to do the numbers because they do this stuff every day for 20 years. We can trust their numbers a lot more than ours. (laughs). So it's like, we'll punch the calculator here and there but other than that like, we get other people to do that. Becoming a licensed engineers just to kind of show respect for everyone else that you know what you're talking about too which is where I want to go with it. So it's taking all these classes like, oh that's nice to know the math and then I know once I pass the IT exam it will be like, phew, ok got that off the chest because--

G: Yeah.

B: And even the PE exam it's mostly a lot more, do you know your ethics, do you know your, or what are you supposed to do in this situation, not what's the tension on this bar with this compress--

G: Yeah.

B: There's not much of that as much. So it's one of those, I don't know, lots of my classes people are like, oh, this is the basics for the more advanced structures and all the

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stuff in the future and it's like, I really don't want to go into that.

G: Did you say that you're in Mechanical right now, though?

B: Civil.

G: You are in civil, oh, ok.

B: Yeah, lots of my roommates are mechanical.

G: Oh, I see. I see, ok.

B: Yeah, so. It's been interesting because they all want to go and do like design stuff so all their, like, these are like, these are like their main courses, and these are my main courses--

G: Right!

B: Like freshman year it was calc 3 and calc 4. Calc 3 I got a D in. Calc 4 I didn't even understand what vector were by the end of it. And it was vector calculus. I didn't understand how to use vectors or lots of the concepts behind vectors by the time I finished the class. Vectors didn't truly make sense to me until now that I'm taking dynamics which is two quarters past calc 4.

G: What do you think that was about? Why do you think you never grasped that?

B: It was just--

G: I mean I'm not saying I know it! I'm just curious about you.

B: Yeah it's just one of those things where it's just like, I don't know it's kind of interesting because looking back on it especially the calc 3 stuff, um, because I took calc AB in junior year of high school which is supposed to be like, it's supposed to be 2 quarters worth of college calculus. And then I took calc BC senior year which was a full year so 3 quarters worth senior year and then basically coming back and starting calc 2, 3, and 4. So calc 2 and 3 were supposed to be review for me. Calc 2 was fine. That stuff I understood. Calc AB test I got a 4 on it. And it was like, ok, I know this stuff. And then it came to the BC test and I got a 2 on the test. But they still have the sub score because BC, the BC all it is is the AB test plus a little more material. So they have a AB sub score, what would you get if you just took the AB test and what's your BC score?

G: I see. Right.

B: Well my AB score was still a 4. So I still knew all the stuff from the year before but I still got a 2 which means I probably got a 1 on the BC material or basically probably a

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zero on the BC material and averaged out to a 2.

G: Huh.

B: So looking back on it, it was one of those, all the stuff right after calc 2 which is all the calc 3 material, I don't get it. And then what's great is talking to other, is, that's mostly stuff the electrical engineers and computer scientists use and that's a lot of the calculus involved in programming and infinite series stuff and all this abstract stuff and in talking to other like seniors and stuff and they're like, past calc 2 you don't use any of it. It's like, great, you learned it, you took your calculus series but it's not really that important. And it was one of those like, after calc 4 my roommate said, you don't understand vectors? This is important stuff! It's like, I may not understand vectors right now but I'll get them at some point in the future which I finally actually, after last quarter I was like, oh wow this is, ok, mental like light bulb, why didn't I not get this earlier? But um, It's just one of those, like, lots of this stuff I may not understand it now, but um, it's going to come back in the future, and if it's important it will come back and I will get it again in the future. It's like looking at lots of freshman year courses its not really meant to be like you're supposed to master the material in freshman year courses, it's the freshman year courses give you an intro to the material so that when it comes back in the future you've had an introduction to it, and you can learn it faster. But you're going to forget it a couple weeks after the final anyway. It's like, most the stuff from calc 2 I don't remember the advanced integral stuff. But, you don't really ever have to do it. Especially now looking at it, the only time they ever use it is when they're proving equations. Which, great, you sit there, you watch the teacher do some fancy calculus and then they pop out the equation and that's what they use to do your homework and it's just algebra. (laughs a little) So it's like, calc 1 and 2 important to know what the teacher is even talking about, calc 3 and 4, for me, not a big deal. Like that's just, so it's kind of, I don't know, lots of the classes just kinda, I'm thinking what do, what do I need to get from the class? Am I taking the class just to pass it? Is it just one of those like, I don't know so, especially like in physics uh, physics 133 which is all about electricity and magnetism. That's not my future. Like zero interest. Whatsoever. Civil engineering it's like concrete and wood. There's like no magnetic theory of how to rotate and charge electric motors. Doesn't grasp. I don't get it. I don't want to know it. Don't really care about it but I have to take the class. Conveniently my teacher put up a study guide the day before which was half the same as the final so I was able to pass that way, 2 days before the final my roommates, I was asking them like basics of like voltage is current times this and they're like, that was week 3 material. Like, the basics of how do you analyze a circuit. And I was like, just checking, make sure I've got that. (laughs) Ok, thank you, and they look at me like, oh boy, you're screwed. (Laughs)

G: I love that you say that with a huge smile on your face.

B: It's one of those, I mean I know I don't know the material nearly as anyone else in the class. I mean most of the time I sat there in class and played games on my phone because she was up there proving equations and not teaching us anything that was practical to

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solving the problems. She was a bad teacher, very bad teacher.

G: Huh. How do you define that?

B: Oh, everyone in the class, basically a third of the class ever showed up, she didn't teach us anything important in class. She didn't really grasp how to teach concepts. She was really smart, like she did all this advanced particle neutron theory stuff at Davis, I mean she knows her stuff--

G: Ok.

B: But she can't teach. There were times when the class was like, um professor, we don't understand the metaphor. She was like trying to describe like, the stuff about atomic theory with protons and neutrons and electrons and stuff. But she was trying to use an analogy for people walking around a lake and they're trying to get to the little island in the center of the lake that's charged (██████████ laughs) and we're like, we are college students, we know what protons and electrons are. You can use pluses and minuses or instead of using this abstract theory about how you cross the lake without swimming across the water it's like, it's an atom. (██████████ laughs) There's protons and then it's like, we're not stupid. We're all like 19 years old. Like college engineers, like you can use, and she still went on with the metaphor for like 20 minutes. That's her way of teaching. A lot of stuff like that during the quarter. But. It was one of those when looking at it, I don't know when it comes down to it, it's like, I'm learning all this math stuff for the class and it's like, I'm learning it to pass the test. I'm not learning it to know it. I'm never going to use it again. All my roommates, they're taking a EE class right now about circuits and stuff because that's one of the things they have to take. I don't have to take that class. And it's just something that, I don't know, just like not really interested. And it was pretty interesting then too was actually taking Pete fall quarter freshman year. Lots of stuff he was doing about like um, kinetic work energy things like that, and it was like, uh, not really grasping it. But then at the very end he's like we're going to have an introduction to statics. And it was like just two wires supported by a, and there's like a weight on there and you find the tension on each of the wires and it was like, wait everything, like all the forces equal zero like this is the basics of civil engineering here like, right here, like statics is like, and all of us were looking around and 90% of the class was civil engineers. Why, I don't know. Scheduling was really convenient freshman year, they take all the freshman CE's and it's like, oh they need this class and they put us all in one class and I was like, ok, that's convenient. But um, most of the class didn't care for half of the material but like, kinematic things launching through space, and it was like, ooooohkay, whatever. And then all the sudden at the end we get one week of the statics and it was like, this is stuff I'm interested in, this is stuff I understand, and this is stuff I actually want to learn. I was putting the effort in. When we were studying for the test it was like, we were doing like four of those problems, and it was also the stuff we had just learned so it was we still needed practice on it--

G: Yeah.

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B: But um, it was one of those, I'm really interested in keeping doing those problems but it was one of those, it's those things that keep affirming you chose the right major. Like, this is the stuff you're interested in--

G: Yeah!

B: I don't know and then it was interesting like after doing, when we went up the 101 to the Prunedale site I took pictures on the side and the bridge was still under construction and they had the bottom of the chord and they were setting up all the rebar and they were going to be pouring all the things and there was scaffolding everywhere and we were walking across it all and stuff and taking pictures of everything and my roommate was like, how did it go? And I was showing him the pictures and after like one or two, he looked at me, he's like, you know this looks really boring. And I was like, this is really interesting! This is really cool! This is like, they're in the middle of the project right here and it's like 20% done and then we walked over to the next one and it's like 80% done and we walk across that and see the difference and comparing them? And he's like, yeah, no not interesting whatsoever. And that's why you're a mechanical engineer and, there we go.

G: (laughing) yeah!

B: Because all the stuff he's working on, like he's making this little cube satellite so they can measure something up and space and throw it up there and it's like, yeah, no, not really interested.

G: So, what of all this, if any, um, cause I'm hearing both thing, both things being, let's see, I'm hearing you talk about really grasping your own sense of your learning style--

B: Yeah.

G: And I'm also hearing a lot of confidence around that which I've said I think is very nifty to see. Makes me excited for you. Is there any connection about that kind of journey for you to Sustain? Or, if there is, what is Sustain's role in that journey for you? Maybe that's a good way to ask the question. Or how would you characterize it?

B: I think it's having a different perspective in school. Seeing teachers who aren't just there to see what grade can you get in their class and move on to the next level. And just having not just the students in the class but the teachers themselves say, let's take a second and look at what we're actually doing here. And, um, let's look at this in a different way. Or, let's do this differently. And just seeing that like there's a different way to do it. Just having, just seeing that there isn't just one mold that we all live in and that's just how it is. You kind of make it what it is and it's your experience and, and it's been interesting, seeing the Sustain program this year and it's like completely different from last year. Like we just went to one of the check outs last week. And it was like

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they were all doing arts and crafts projects for one of the things because apparently the students took over and annexed the whole check out and made it their own because they didn't want the teachers running it or something and it was like, I remember our check outs were really business oriented like here's the stuff we need to know, let's check on this, what are we working on here, what are we talking about here, what are we working on next week, we'd have announcements. Theirs, they had like some orange juice in the morning, they all got around and kinda talked for a bit, like a hang out get to know each other session, it's really different! And it's one of those, it is what you make it. And so everyone has a different experience and um, I think, um, I was actually talking to ██████████ at that one, and I think she made a comment about something like it's just different every year and as long as they're understanding that they can make it what they want then that's all we're trying to get at here. And that kind of hit me as like, you know, maybe if you're not doing it the way Sustain was designed, as long as you can see that there's a different way to do things, because whether the classes themselves, whether the actual material you learn, it's like all just freshman year stuff. It's not that complicated. It's basically just a repeat of high school. Um, you know. Just seeing that there's a different way to do things and that you can make it your own, was kind of really a big thing like that. I don't know. Getting lots of connections to like, I never realized how much like for me personally it was like of stuff like environmental stuff, for me, like at home, I was the one who got my parents to start recycling home.

G: Huh.

B: I've always been interested in (mumbles) cars before there was any talk about sustainability, like you know in 2006, when I was 11 years old. (██████████ laughs) I was like, this is cool! I didn't even know why I just liked it.

G: Yeah.

B: And it was like, um , then after doing, working with the Gen-Up (?) and going to visit with them all in San Francisco for the weekend--

G: Oh, yeah!

B: And um, just seeing all that, and actually being able to experience with people who are truly into it, it was one of those things--

G: "It" being sustainability?

B: Yeah--

G: And that was your community project you're saying?

B: Yeah. And it was interesting because I can remember I would always watch the news with my mom, all the um, the rallies, and she would be like, I don't care what you do, I

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just don't want to see you end up on TV like that. (██████████ laughs) But then I realized, I go there, to San Francisco and half the people there I was hanging out with, they were the one's doing that and I was like, this is the crowd I fit in with, like (laughs) this is the interesting stuff. Actually just being exposed to it and learning more about what I value and things like that, um, really eye opening. Just having a different perspective. Because growing up in southern Orange County, one of the only places in the entire state that votes republican. Everything is very like, you like, everyone goes to like the big church, everyone is super proper, it's just coming here and everything is completely changing it up and hanging with a different crowd of different perspectives and it was really eye opening and just that I wouldn't have gotten as much by taking just normal classes. It would have just been a lot more, just the same, the rigid structure, this is how it's been done for years, and this is how it is done. A lot less thinking through change and things like that, um, I don't things like, just kind of learning about that really eye opening. I definitely think um, meeting people from the Transition house and getting involved with that, like I never would have met any of them without Sustain program--

G: Yeah.

B: So, it's really helpful.

G: Have you kept in touch with any of them?

B: I've tried to. I was trying to help at the beginning of Sustain this year, I was trying to help the divest group because they were trying to, they were kind of like the gen-up, but evolved to the next year working on something else but it was kind of like the same lines, working with the same people. Um, and they're doing phenomenal. Sophomore year has kicked me in the ass so I haven't had time--

G: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

B: And of course they changed the time for check outs to be early in the morning which is when I have my classes, so I can't go to one of those, and I've been trying to TA with them which I really want to do but I just don't have the time for it, but I've been trying--

G: Yeah. I'm only curious if any of that hung on relationally. You know?

B: Yeah, and you know. Since I haven't been working on some of the projects as much, when I see them I definitely, we still like catch up and see how it's going and everything.

G: Yeah.

B: So, um, it made for a really good experience freshman year. Really just eye opening and learning, seems like a lot during freshman year, at least for me looking back it wasn't as much like the academics as much as like the personal growth. Just like earn about yourself, you're finally living on your own away from parents. Kind of developing your

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own life and it's just a lot of growth and I think Sustain did help with that.

G: That's great. I'm glad to hear. I'm glad to hear you're doing so well. Yeah. And appreciate you taking this time particularly when you need to go paddle a canoe. It's concrete canoe paddling time.