Dan Seed ([00:00](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/n7TfPaauLEMUMIxgvSV1hWXGQrmWp_GeqLtVz8qG9lf4cqwNINjCdgME2FfPnAZDrnFcpuYhfKWc7MkOQ4nIWWQVRm4?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=0.45)):

Hello and welcome to Big Ideas, a podcast from Texas State University. I'm your host, Dan Seed from the School of Journalism and Mass Communication. This month we're joined by Emma Parsley, the sustainability coordinator at Texas State's Office of Sustainability. Emma is here to speak with us about the university's sustainability efforts and a recent recognition the university received for those sustainability efforts. Emma has a bachelor's degree in science and technology with a focus on environmental and environmental health engineering and a master's in sustainability studies. Emma Parsley, welcome to the show.

Emma Parsley ([00:33](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/Lz9Q3WfSF0_j4kkbggJGF3ro2XDCnZP90RA4uq8rkGPCJjh_fgVqOLBOo-JxpIk0G0p0c-lfVeHVWv6ZfXe9a22JVnc?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=33.84)):

Thank you. Thank you for having me.

Dan Seed ([00:35](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/LLhMsT6U7AQzKXH3joZo7spr3t5Fq3btvJZDbAvtIy9oNOrCzt5Evask2dpkB977MMVdhJy-uaZYfdGW1GvzxjqMJzU?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=35.88)):

So Emma, obviously sustainability and the environment. Just hearing from your bio what you do now or important parts of who you are, I'm always curious how people get into their lines of work. So how did this come about for you and what drew you to working in sustainability?

Emma Parsley ([00:51](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/9MH_-R-fEyrkqsGgmgt1-CQ6ifqAFDONgHPDsomJAu-UAXUb18UmBQFMJiOPjF2dl_NuIZvcAbuFWPKAZ0luMTK7Sug?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=51.39)):

Yeah, so I've always been a lifelong environmentalist. Ever since I was a kid. I wanted to be the next Steve Irwin. I always said I always had a passion for animals and the environment and wanting to protect them and seeing how human nature is very much intrinsically tied to the environment itself. So I started my degree here at Texas State, my undergrad degree and wildlife biology ended up not doing so great in some basic biology classes. So I said, you know what? Maybe biology isn't my thing and maybe math is more of my strength. So that's when I switched over to engineering technology and had the concentration of environmental. And actually during one of my engineering classes, the professor had us take a personality test, if you will, just to help identify what careers are best for us. And my careers that were selected for me were humanitarian, mentor, leader, educator, social scientists, environmental scientists, and on the other hand it said worst careers for you was engineer was the first one,

([01:50](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/dAWeI-7uRsk2_imVjx7sRKqQzrTih-DIGUWulZClDjncKxiKpsIF0ymK4Xy5Gv52JxQyepuGDXRJXBlBYs7IsPVE0zw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=110.76)):

Man, I'm in the wrong field. Then coincidentally right about 2018, I was in a class and some folks from utilities operations here at Texas State came in to give a short talk talking about this new internship that had just opened up here at the university with the Office of Sustainability. And of course I applied because when I thought sustainability, I immediately thought the environment, but learning more and diving more into sustainability, I really understood the social aspect of sustainability as well. So that personality test that I took a couple years ago telling me that I should be more of a humanitarian really came into play there because then I was really able to identify a field that had the intersection of human health, human care and wellbeing, plus the environmental health and environmental sustainability, if you will.

Dan Seed ([02:38](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/14CECCil_KBTjZ0M5MAklRjJvvSuFA0nXgw7hbq9K7WPMe12EmnWWwsdTm2idgURASnYAVnX-s2Os_5bXeeeuolBejQ?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=158.49)):

And it's interesting too that you mentioned on that test that humanity was one of the areas that you would be best suited for oftentimes. And we'll talk about the other aspect that you brought up here in a second. But oftentimes when we think of the environment, it's about saving the animals, the trees, the planet, the water, but there is a humanity aspect to doing all of this that I think a lot of people either gloss over or don't recognize.

Emma Parsley ([03:03](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/2d8XRBySHbAFGywrxjP1SlCdbE09NT7lKZFjvwe7LsHXpqdFE4E7-xCTormK1L39-gf6MAhfnzg5Vh0HfWMuxw7z9xM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=183.4)):

Yeah, absolutely. And I love the fact that our common experience this year is systems thinking because that really gets people to think about that mother nature and human nature are very much tied together in the same system of health and that the environmental health, once that starts to decline, so will human health and vice versa. If human health declines, it's probably because of the environments too.

Dan Seed ([03:26](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/KHuv_L9kPxMXh4QTM6bECpFORtzlHrpUmdCU289drhe4D6dj3brZieiJvNXLFRY6JymNgbE42zqs4SQ3xYFpWpI1Vf4?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=206.38)):

And as mentioned in the introduction and in your first answer, you are the sustainability coordinator through the office of sustainability, which is according to what I can find, a relatively new office here. Tell us what the goals and mission are for your office across campus and what sustainability is. What does that mean?

Emma Parsley ([03:43](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/gZWUbvnoEbuVIEt-wR7puNjgw6i6YlZSErr-w4ztY2kOGkxxaujw-ze9cZBM-_5K4EGwYXMGPiirTTWBoZo2pIVDXeA?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=223.75)):

Yeah, so our mission as an office, really we are the bridge bridge of major stakeholders in this university and basically breaking down these silos and having people have these discussions, these conversations, and working together collaboratively. Because sustainability itself is very interdisciplinary. It sits at the intersection of many different fields. So our goals are to be that bridge and bridge together, these departments, these centers, these programs together as a way to help build more sustainable initiatives. And so when I say sustainable, what does that mean? Well, a very broad, basic definition of sustainability is essentially the development that meets the needs of the current population without compromising the ability of future populations to meet their own needs and an equitable and safe manner. So here at the institution, what does that look like? Well, we can look like our energy efficiency, our water usage, and also just the wellbeing of our faculty staff and students. Universities are the size of minor cities, and we definitely operate like one. So it's really important that we have sustainability at the forefront of our holistic planning.

Dan Seed ([04:50](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/p0FN_X_GvoVE6fWEpBJ2wGekz01eZklfTiPG_VyBJ-PIA2a0Wl4T39YvX0IptPlUB9v_6gTth6qYADwGWKse_Ph4xNg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=290.92)):

Is it difficult to work in an organization or are there challenges that you face where you mentioned this is a large place, a lot of different divisions, groups, colleges, universities, et cetera, departments throughout. What are some of the challenges in breaking down those silos to get people to recognize the importance of sustainability in that sense across campus?

Emma Parsley ([05:11](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/vmHJa_0pap2WA2eO9RRdiCOKONcjxZFMM1kACqPrSWXrmESwhJC-9-pPD-fNRiBD_bfMxYltTbDJBwNUzOMjpIue-GM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=311.59)):

One of them is mostly students, but I've run across a couple faculty and staff. They're like, oh, so you'll receive recycling, right? No, no, no, no. That's far from the truth. Sustainability does have three founding pillars, which is the environment, social equity in the economy. So it's, first, it's education. Education is key, and making sure people understand what sustainability is first and foremost, because our future depends on it, our future, whether it be if you decide to have children or not, that reasoning of we should better the planet for our children, to me is kind of, I don't know, it's not personally, I don't think it's the right reason of why, because we should better it for ourselves or right now, our future right now because we are in major decline ecologically across the world because of climate change, because of human impacts and humans influence on climate change. Just put a period right there and let you reiterate the question for me.

Dan Seed ([06:06](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/TMitykvRr4r-AO5KfJdgUTDxKYscjAF9tqjwUuuga2y4Cb6V3J1bYEOaOUlNTUarSrR96oTxaLNM6tx--IdcRExJ3AE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=366.98)):

Yeah, and I was going to say, I think that's a great point too, because that point of, well, let's do it for the future and for the children, it's almost like passing the buck. Yeah, we'll get to it, it's a good idea and eventually we will. But actually having boots on the ground, so to speak, and in doing it now is beneficial not only for the future, but for all of us. So I think that that's a good perspective and a good way to look at it in a new way, hopefully for folks to understand it. So the main topic here that we have you on for is that the university recently earned a star silver rating in recognition of its sustainability achievement. So congratulations on that. From the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in higher education, what does this designation mean for the university and why is it important?

Emma Parsley ([06:51](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/R6u3ZKKpwSmrZsGUcivrMNtWZx65Tc1IAYFhrmCE43Ysmnktvg8TzEpA5oGGRorauIk2ZAY7_tlemXp-2tZvgsBdgSc?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=411.86)):

So essentially the STARS report, the sustainability tracking assessment and rating system, basically a giant report card for universities across our nation, across the globe, to really highlight and benchmark their sustainable practices as a way to not only compete with each other, but also to help support each other because we are all in the same fight of sustainable development. So reach in a silver status has put us up to a new rating, which is great. Our first report was back in 2019. That was the first report the university had ever done, and we earned a bronze title. So this increase is incredible, and the fact that I still have all my hair on my head is also incredible. It's very data intensive and a lot of contribution across the University of Data and providing that information in order to fulfill this report. So we look at purchasing to dining, to grounds, to facilities, to utilities, to even academics and research that's happening here on campus.

Dan Seed ([07:50](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/nFykFPXvUPFzGHiKKlBgDXUy0G6RxFniTXaHBo5q2XzPw90dt-AJRgVbEdxRoY6fcqZW9cwKFhTxReklkrwYslCbY2w?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=470.24)):

And as you mentioned, you kind of touched on the idea that this is a competition in a way among universities and everybody trying to do their best. So Stars does have more than 900 participants in 40 countries, and the university had to report, as you said, sustainability achievements in five main areas, academics, engagement, operations, planning and administration in an innovation and leadership. Let's start with that last one, innovation and leadership, which was kind of what you touched on the research and all that. In what ways is Texas State innovating or leading the way do you see when it comes to sustainability?

Emma Parsley ([08:24](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/MFC4KUmcDpQARB5SiPOHWV78TXM2x-nDF-gFA70TiiNSIh0mh3zCPbHZ2jdVfOlbTe8FSLy-N9IzsIFn5ZEq5_YGk1U?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=504.2)):

Well, for the innovation and leadership section of the report is kind of like an extra credit point, if you will. And so these are very university specific programs and initiatives that very unique to the institution itself. So one that I like to highlight that actually our office and collaboration with Inclusive Excellence student initiatives that hosts is the Open closet. Open Closet is a gender neutral thrift market. And what I mean by that, it's a very inclusive space. It's an opportunity for everyone to, for one, get free clothes because students, especially college students are, for lack of a better word, poor. They're struggling just to put meals on the table sometimes, and having clothing on your back is sometimes the last thing you think about. So providing a safe space for students, not only just students, but bobcats, especially for our non-binary and trans bobcats, to have that safe space to find clothing is incredibly important because clothing is how we first identify ourselves and how we really project who we are as individuals, our individuality if you will.

([09:27](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/g7Eq-u3S9ADeuM-z5qzs7CPmbOAoLoqYICDTEvPItOhcDca5PWFeQ9wJ8WNRfwrRiQB9EqfjESTS-s9Nqcqyh24I2Jg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=567.18)):

So not having a safe space to look through clothing and to find something that best fits your body and how you live authentically is in and of itself an injustice. So providing a space where everyone can come and look through clothing and get it for free is incremental being said. We get donations from alumni and Bobcats across campus as well as community groups. And then we sort all the clothing and we keep it gender neutral, so we don't have clothing that's laid out by the stereotypical women's section and men's section clothing has no gender clothing's for everyone. At the same time, we're addressing an environmental issue by keeping textiles out of the landfill because here in Texas, our landfills are maximized. We are reaching capacity, and it's becoming this issue of also carbon mitigation and reducing the emissions that are stemmed from transportation of waste itself, and at the same time the social equity issue as well. So you can see that even this one program is very interdisciplinary and collaborative by addressing environmental issues and social issues and economics at the same time.

Dan Seed ([10:37](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/RcNxlyHe_9Ncts3ZmxtfHxW9Sqn3VAKPLvzVZ5VkIalQUWzKhsja8Fp6uBXUFkkjGW3wg0HBAcbx5-32NoD9OtDH7NE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=637.74)):

And I think it's a great, great program, great idea, however you want to phrase it. I've sent students to this and they find it wonderful, I guess in the sense that this is available to them. As you mentioned, college students don't have the money, they don't have that opportunity. And so that helps people get on their feet, stay on their feet, however you want to look at it, and gives them confidence, which is really important because when they come in the classroom, if you're confident in yourself, then you're getting people that are more engaged. You're getting people that want to be there. So I think that personally I've seen that effect of that. And again, we're joined by Emma Parsley, sustainability coordinator from the Office of Sustainability. Now, of the other four areas or other areas in the Stars rating, can you speak specifically to any initiatives that stand out that might be unique to Texas State or something that distinguishes the university from other peer institutions?

Emma Parsley ([11:30](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_yUt6Hu2_e_FthV2xqSIwkr9vUoVhhs2Syk8Sco5rBLdGM3sHoyLmb8e6l7Lm-RnjVbmuoVTb3yFF0yMXryqYpbdiJw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=690.57)):

There are two that I will highlight. For one, our Master's of Science program, the sustainability studies program. It was one of the first in the state to really be established, and this is a very, I'm a product of it, so I will highlight it. Of course, it's incredibly interdisciplinary and an incredible program. If folks are out there considering pursuing a master's, I highly recommend this one because it really does give you the freedom to explore sustainability in the field that you're specifically passionate about. For me, it was higher education. For me, education has always been important, and I always wanted to be a teacher, a mentor of somewhere along the lines. So this unique feature to Texas State really were able to produce these sustainability professionals who are able to then lead businesses, companies, teams, if you will, that are in the future after they lead the university, and they have that sustainable holistic mindset.

([12:23](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/VeKc4L73SNboE2h5fMbkrpzH9120P10A_D17holgDLYi_mUB0hAgcz9d3RKpz91CcOqJp1xm__aqGM2GAf5jmrWksHA?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=743.74)):

So we're producing sustainable professionals. And now actually more recently, undergraduates can actually minor in sustainability studies as well. I mean, this really gives students, especially in this climate of moving towards as we see Gen Z really become part of the career as part of the economy and participating in full-time positions. Hopefully that's what they get after graduation. That's what everyone hopes for. But having this holistic mindset really produces more of a sustainable way of thinking throughout industries altogether, because it's not just higher education that needs to be sustainable. It's every field, every industry, if you will. The second one I would like to acknowledge is the Meadow Center for Water in the environment. We sit on a very unique geological ecological center. The San Marcos River is literally born. It starts right on campus. How many campuses get to say that? Not a lot. And also on top of that, we have the Texas Wild Rice. It's an endemic species, meaning it only exists in our river throughout the whole entire world. That is one of the most beautiful, unique features Texas State holds. And I believe Bobcat should have more pride of that.

Dan Seed ([13:29](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/NO44Ylh96ZPqOC6KBxe9HMx6vZ9k8YiJGDvICzO-EtTkmfodTHqTBqvA3Ezzhd9EgfCth8i7Q47RHOTyN6DhXjewV0s?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=809.44)):

Yeah, absolutely. And it's something that is really fascinating to think that on our campus, as you said, that there's not many places, if any places that can point and say, this is here and only here when you see something like that. And with the Meadow Center, we've had discussions with folks from there on this podcast. Does that help kind of hit it home a little bit more maybe to the general population? Because the idea of sustainability, like we talked about, can be this amorphous thing to a lot of people, but having specific examples like that, does that help with your efforts to be able to say, look, the reason we're doing this is this right here, this is only here.

Emma Parsley ([14:08](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/oTTsBHivOW4_s6df787vR5sVZIlfN6AyMtOuc-xvaTjghMQhxjkM8j5OE4zWTm1yhTQKWEKPtTc9e56vv4R_LOw084A?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=848.14)):

Yeah, absolutely. Specific people, especially myself, I learn intangible ways. If I'm able to actually see something or hold something, it has that idea to be more holistic. It really connects those points and being able to really show them, especially after a large flood event, which we haven't seen in some time, I hope we do. Our water levels desperately need it. I digress. However, being able to pinpoint, let's say flood examples and seeing how that can deteriorate water quality because of the pollutants that come from human activities and showing people that water quality degrades because of our human interactions, but not only why we care about water quality also ourself. That's our drinking water. That's what we have recreation in. And if water quality, not just water quality, but if the environment declines, so is human recreation and so is economy and downstream users as well. And what I always like to tell people is that all water flows to the coast. So we all have to think all about our downstream neighbors and how are being good stewards with them.

Dan Seed ([15:12](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/ryTGof7jDXIzt3cEW_sggsoWH6wkG4QldIKWNQTmiz1PfmkhxkzLTm8n2PTGwRGGcUHD5qqg5Sqte3AjZsW2hHBMy80?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=912.2)):

So of the efforts that we've talked about, and you've brought up examples where people see things that are sustainability, but maybe they don't recognize that it's sustainability. Are there ones that we who work here, go to school here? Folks that are alumni are probably most impacted by or see regularly without ever giving it a thought that this thing here or this program or whatnot is sustainability.

Emma Parsley ([15:35](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/AgEag47I5oRn2o_N2hvXELlXdb430ach9y8wW-8ipiJV9WitvDF6XlIhOZy17qPlWM9AdW6CgvP-w-WYtHXG5xlXQrE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=935.66)):

Yeah, I'm going to do a very small example. Keep it very simple. So several buildings around campus have water bottle refill stations. Now, by not only having to rely on plastic disposable water bottles, having that simple station, that simple setup, that mechanism if you will, really encourages the reuse or having a reusable water bottle. Even doing that enforces a way of mindfulness. And that is a key element too. Sustainability is being mindful of our individual impacts and then us as a population as a whole. So every time you do use a reusable water bottle and you use a water station, you can see the count of how many water bottles are saved. Because of that, it might seem very minor, but when you think about the production of plastic water bottles, the fuel, the energies it takes just to make this one product, and then after it's disposed, we hope it's recycled. We don't know if it's an actual going to be recycled, but we hope it's going to be. And because of that, there's also associated fuels and energies that come from the transportation of waste itself. I always like to tell people saving energy saves water and saving water saves energy. So even though it's very minor, it is massive on a grand scale as well.

Dan Seed ([16:50](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/m6ZeCVU0KaJlThxZ5AJx_kuONNEEW-ZB6UMRILhx8ekS7pbDKAVZxj4FieeRq4VX-vJI7kjtEsafqewrZOc7YXxvfEo?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1010.18)):

And I can speak to that. We got our water fill station here on the third floor in Old Maine, the pandemic year 2020. And I was one of the only people that was teaching in person, and we got it, and it started at one or two bottles, and I think I was the only person here on the third floor. And by the end of the semester to see that number was really eyeopening to see how much you would've wasted had you just been bringing plastic water bottles and going through those versus I bring my reusable mug every day or a Yeti or something like that to see exactly how your impact individually. Now multiply that by everybody. It does give you some really good perspective. So I'm giving you a blank check here or a blank space I guess, to tell us where you think the university, if you can, maybe lacking in sustainability and where those areas that you want to shore up are and why that's important and how we can all accomplish that.

Emma Parsley ([17:48](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/OviRhEE1Rs8n6H_Ym-kqLMbFC0cU_Ihi_0goK8Qbpj7SUqgY_CmPGwl6L9T5qFJj0e9B2hNm25nOIzhVO2UHTbFNvIw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1068.96)):

Areas that I believe that are nonetheless at the institution, all of us are doing the absolute best we can, especially in today's climate. We're working with the best of our abilities, with the best resources we are given. And now being said, I believe transportation as a whole, not just for the university, but for all connecting elements of Texas state. So by identifying either a commuter program or having more buses, if you will, or even designing campus and the greater San Marco area with resiliency in mind is incredibly important by not having to rely on personal vehicles is another grand scheme of sustainability. So when we think about building an infrastructure and looking into a campus master plan that is hopefully going to be launched here in the next couple of months, thinking about the future as in a way of how do people mobilize, how can we get people from A to B, not just the quickest way, because that's going to be cars, that's going to be concrete, that's going to be cars, that's going to be parking, but how can we equitably address it all together? Both keeping the environment in mind and social as well, because not everyone can drive a car. Not everyone can afford a car, most importantly, let alone the fuel that goes with it. So by really putting a lot of energy into the planning of greater infrastructure and transportation altogether is incredibly important. And thinking about resiliency and building resilient communities.

Dan Seed ([19:18](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/F7-axQz8ImEH68dQdFEIgwGso4P0NW6HC4XQe7x0g4yok0neCEfBAD5ciwyjuOKvsQRyjb86kKab-7l1PoQgKo3ctYQ?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1158.51)):

And that's one thing. I'm originally from the northeast, from Massachusetts. I went to school in Boston. We would take the train everywhere, the subway, the train, the whole nine yards, right? You're able to fit a lot of people on there and move them throughout the course of a city. That's one thing that moving down to this part of the country was pretty eyeopening, that there's a lack of that community transportation, be it buses or trains. And personally, I think that we would all benefit from those opportunities to get more people to where they're going in a more efficient way. And as you mentioned, to help people as well that may not have the financial resources to get there. And I hear that in class. I couldn't get there. My car is broken, I can't get it fixed. And of course, there's a trickle down effect there.

([19:59](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/EvVAYawGUnDqhSuqE43ms8aiUS0gUnECXTh5TYzdTq8gQITzy7btydYxE6rRudd34N9pNSrnMx8-N9siYRa4BQLDdW0?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1199.85)):

With regard to that, and again, we're joined by Emma Parsley from the Office of Sustainability. Emma is the sustainability coordinator. So switching back to what your office does, but also tying into stars with the academic and engagement components. One of my former students is one of your handful of interns in the office of sustainability, so you actively work with our students. For my class, she produced a documentary on what you guys did. It was really interesting stuff. What is it like for you, right? You're a young alum to be able to work hand in hand with students and allow them to be actively involved in these efforts and to open their eyes to the realities that we face now and in the future.

Emma Parsley ([20:39](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/WcO_xm536UlHoCjuQhuVD9sG8YMZuqZkvgNyS3FxLzKsJx4HuDsqfPpEoa369c6s4FHW236VuM8Nwj5vVFkMDffGVxM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1239.27)):

Oh, it's one of my favorite elements of the position. I mean, I started off as a student intern. I was the first hire, I was the only undergraduate also doing graduate level work as a junior in my undergrad program. So yeah, it's one of my favorite elements to it. And also seeing almost like the light bulbs go off in their head is sometimes the best part because absolutely really addressed not only what they're passionate about, but also in a way tie it into sustainability because that really then not only teaches them, but their peers, their colleagues, and the greater community that wow, sustainability is really interdisciplinary. It does tie a lot of different elements together. We have one focusing on transportation. We have another one focusing on digital and online communication because in today's world, we are very much online and how we communicate that information is incredibly important.

([21:34](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/6n45kEdQeC3bMRrpxk0pCODGCmuo4xEIKFPTTDTSmb24kInSR21CdR-1Xlus9V6cQglC7bR01RQjvRrtKlFP4IkAlx0?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1294.63)):

And at the same time, we have an educational outreach intern whose role is to really outreach this material, this communication to student groups, to faculty staff, to our community at large. And then we also have a community outreach intern, and then she is in charge with working with community groups and our local community because the best way any individual can make a sustainable impact in their community is by actively participating in city groups. And that means through voting, through going to city council meetings, to really raising your voice about issues that are pressing in your community because there is unity in community.

Dan Seed ([22:12](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/wp5TFRBGdzMo1nMHd-awWBE9W1COne3tqBi_O0DNknKQ7T43hQjDTnIisE3vNcLZi-mSk7Od6R-Yji8TR8utxny7Uq4?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1332.52)):

Have you noticed a change in the attitudes among students or maybe the population at large here from your time as an intern to now your time as a professional when it comes to sustainability awareness or making the effort to be more sustainable? And in what ways have you seen that if you have?

Emma Parsley ([22:29](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/krzSpbbpy8jig4XQBc39GTt53oPWIgnB2pyBo1LI5rTt8XA1WTTOeyce_gSJ3I70Kck6cDJY1y3UQF2LCD8Mrtmdml4?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1349.24)):

I have seen a transition from when I was an undergrad until now with this current population, and I really think it's because of the pandemic, fortunately. And unfortunately at the same time, because we were all forced to go online, more information was brought to our attention than ever. And that could be good and bad at the very same time because there is false information out there. But being said, I do believe this new generation that is entering college age is mindful of it and that they're passionate about it and they're ready to hit the ground running with it. So I have hope in this generation coming in.

Dan Seed ([23:05](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/UkbU3CHnaG3sXXp32cRnOnlzyElGVha3WACYi4Lm4cyJouf9bstynyOE8e-TOSCwgS8ImP_2KYfz6Ot7EzfV6o0ljvU?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1385.62)):

So as we're recording this here, we're early in the spring, but of course we know what that means. Summer's around the corner. Last summer was an absolute disaster in terms of the drought. What is something that you want people to keep in mind as we head into the summer as it pertains to sustainability

Emma Parsley ([23:21](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/nF3TATjTgjCclbbDWqmbRRtu5K3K7EHfK-XAhlIgNLrpfgGXRuHSh4l04WAYPPA9aMD1CvaCk2yNQ_iUMVrqvswgS9s?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1401.13)):

For everyone to keep in mind of how much water you are consuming. And that includes from not only just of course, brushing your teeth, taking your showers, washing your cars, watering your lawn, your plants, but also keeping in mind about imported use and imported goods. That also takes water. Energy takes water and water takes energy. So being mindful of how much water you are using, because the state of Texas losing, if you will, a great supply of water because of this high consumption and this high population that's moving into central Texas. So being more mindful of how much water you're using. And I always say, make a short playlist and put it on when you hop in the shower. And once that playlist is up, how to get out roughly a 10 minute shower uses 25 gallons of water to really being mindful of how much water you are using.

Dan Seed ([24:10](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/X8lIXWPxXV0KEFmPd_ZupU8QWTudrW8EEzPsdMkKpPzzvFOSO7uUMxmEylW8bq-1KF4iQbYwexBJKRG50mrjC-T2xJI?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1450.91)):

Yeah, that's very interesting. I think back to the ice storm a couple of years ago when we in Austin, were with a power and water, and even brushing your teeth with the bottled water, it was mind boggling how much of that bottle of water would end up getting used. And it's like we're running low, but then you think going forward, that's an incredible amount of water. So I hope that people do recognize that. And people out there, if you're curious, there are drought maps that are published on a weekly basis, which show you oftentimes, even when we get deluged with rain, it doesn't have to be flood levels where you think this is a lot of rain, this is kind of enough. That drought monitor map doesn't really change all that much. So yeah, I would advocate for that as well. Be aware of your consumption. So Emma Parsley, thank you so much for joining us. Some great information and congratulations again on the Stars Designation Silver Award.

Emma Parsley ([25:07](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/j1YWXxvJ7NlvWEHXuLZVnSKr26zSrxM1im87ynRds4cbQTFFVDb1JPP-xeQ1Utddm63rWZPJCTtCowoi2t8m-wSo0UY?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1507.96)):

Thank you. Thank you for having me. I appreciate it.

Dan Seed ([25:10](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/eU8g422YJa1PhnyLFZBbeL3jlWsr8j1bdSKZ8rtELg1DShoYBeXdoYTfqIGilrLVdo6DDhz344E1AmVrsyluz-nezD0?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1510.58)):

And thank you all for downloading and listening to another episode of Big Ideas. We'll be back next month. Until then, stay well and stay informed.