

# THE *Current*

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## **Zero Waste Committee launches shoe-recycling drive, June 2-13**

With the annual year-end moveout approaching for UC Santa Barbara students, the student-led Zero Waste Committee (ZWC) is spreading the news that old shoes need not get thrown out — instead, pitch them into special collection bins for reuse and recycling.

The shoe drive runs June 2-13 at the Rec Cen (Recreation Center), the ICA (Intercollegiate Athletics Building) and every campus residence hall. Only sneakers, casual street shoes and hikers will be accepted.

“I’m super excited to see how this drive goes,” said ZWC co-chair Matthew Schoen, an avid runner and third-year environmental studies major. “Reaching our goal of collecting 750+ pairs of shoes is going to be a challenge, but it’s one I know we’re capable of.”

Schoen [launched the program](#) in April of last year through the [Environmental Leadership Incubator \(ELI\)](#), a nine-month mentorship that helps undergraduates develop hands-on leadership skills to pinpoint an environmental concern and implement a solution.

Since then, Schoen said, the reuse and recycling program has diverted more than 600 pairs of shoes from Santa Barbara County’s Tajiguas Landfill, where their slow decomposition would have produced nearly 16,000 pounds of carbon dioxide (the

equivalent of roughly half a dozen transatlantic commercial flights).

“I’m proud of the work the team and I have done and continue to do, and take pride in the fact that it is having a genuine impact on campus,” said Schoen, who was recently approached by UC Santa Cruz to help set up a similar program.

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## **About UC Santa Barbara**

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.