

SPOTLIGHT ON:

# BRITTANY ROWLES

## USF Nurtures a Green Change Maker



Brittany Rowles '11 had her heart set on studying in San Francisco. She originally intended to study anthropology, but upon acceptance to USF, she gravitated toward the environmental studies program, where she immersed herself in the culture of how we relate to the earth. At USF, Brittany found fertile ground where her interest in the environment was nurtured

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and her leadership skills blossomed, maturing into a green change maker and community leader.

As a freshman, Brittany was an integral part of transforming a vacant, weedy lot on campus into a vibrant urban organic garden and outdoor classroom. Studying with Melinda Stone and Seth Wachtel, she was part of the Garden Project, which explored food production from the perspective of climate change, water rights, food security, and social and economic justice. Brittany shared, "That class really opened up my mind to the environmental world and it catapulted from there." She was president of the Back to Da Roots Campus Club and launched USF's first Earth Day, which has flourished from a small event to a celebration that today attracts hundreds of students to learn about environmental sustainability and social justice issues.

Today Brittany is Director of Sales and Customer Service with Rock the Bike, which provides music festivals and sporting events with human-powered energy. Her position with Rock the Bike aligns well with her passion to inspire solutions and make a real, lasting impact in the ongoing climate crisis. At the 2015 USF Earth Day celebration, Brittany's energy and enthusiasm were evident as she rode one of her company's bikes, powering the music stage—no pedaling, no music.

Looking to the future of sustainability at USF, Brittany shared, "Over the years I have seen USF take more environmental action and responsibility. I have seen Bon Ap-petit offer more local options, the Urban Agriculture minor get started, and—of course—the new addition of the Office of Sustainability. From what I've heard, the new President is also very keen on making great strides towards a greener campus. I can't wait to see what's next!"

Brittany won't have to wait long. Building on the vision and leadership of USF faculty, staff, and students, USF launched the Office of Sustainability on [Earth Day 2015](#). It will lead the effort on campus to integrate sustainability into USF's day-to-day operations and support faculty, staff, students, and alumni to champion green initiatives.

When asked what one message she would send to the USF community, Brittany responded, "I would love for people to eat more locally sourced food, start their own gardens, and genuinely get more connected to the food they nourish their bodies with. We know the name of our dentist and our doctor, so why not our farmer?"

Building on her interest in sustainable food, Brittany is currently working on a new Bay Area-based seed-to-fork restaurant concept that will source 100 percent of its vegetables, fruits, and herbs from a farm owned by the restaurant.

She is refining her concept as part of the USF Alumni Mentorship Program. Food runs in her genes—her great-great grandmother used to own a restaurant on 3rd Street in Bayview (a neighborhood in the southeastern corner of San Francisco) in the 1930s.



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*You can follow Brittany's journey on her blog, [Sustainivore](#).*