



BONITA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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NEWS RELEASE

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Bonita Unified Grads Learn Importance of Recycling Organic Waste through Waste Management Internships

SAN DIMAS/LA VERNE – Three recent Bonita Unified graduates looking to learn more about protecting the environment and the importance of processing recycling materials and organic waste spent the summer as interns for Waste Management (WM), assisting the Baldwin Park-based company in its efforts to ensure corporations and businesses are complying with green waste mandates issued by the state of California.

San Dimas High School Class of 2025 graduates Jacob Hidalgo and Krishna Ramnani teamed up with Bonita High School Class of 2025 graduate Isabel Rodriguez for the one-month internship, working with Waste Management representatives to canvass areas and contact companies that have failed to comply with Senate Bill (SB) 1383, which requires all residents and entities to put green waste – such as fruits, vegetables, and coffee grounds – in yard waste containers.

“When I applied for the internship, I had no idea what SB 1383 was,” Rodriguez said. “It’s a huge task. Every service that generates green waste must comply, including businesses, fast food restaurants, everyone, for the good of our environment. What I’ve learned is that trash collection is amazingly complex and vital to our society. It’s something most people don’t think about.”

Rodriguez, along with Hidalgo and Ramnani, assisted WM by sending letters to businesses who are delinquent in their compliance, and by shadowing WM reps out in the field, taking pictures, and assessing the sheer volume of recyclables and green waste generated.

“The volume is incredible. It’s so much more than people realize,” Ramnani said.

The environmental impact that waste has on society is what interested Hidalgo in applying for the internship. Hidalgo intends to major in environmental science and is looking to pursue a career in that field or industrial engineering. He currently attends Mt. SAC and will eventually transfer to Cal Poly Pomona.

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“Our job is to engage with businesses that aren’t following the rules, or are generating excessive waste,” Hidalgo said. “For example, there are food vendors that regularly throw out all their unused, uneaten food. It’s a waste of money and bad for the environment. We try to steer them to organizations who can ensure the surplus food gets to those who don’t have enough to live on.”

Rodriguez, Hidalgo, and Ramnani also assisted in staffing Waste Management booths at public events, such as the City of Baldwin Park Summer Concert series and the City of La Verne National Night Out, providing residents with tips on how to correctly separate their trash and recycling, and supplying youngsters with crayons and “ECO Superheroes” coloring books.

“The interns have been a tremendous help. They come in with a clean slate about trash diversion and recycling,” Waste Management Recycling Compliance Representative Yvette Pineda said. “They’ve learned a great deal about organics and the back end of the business.”

Like Hidalgo, Rodriguez and Ramnani have plans for college. Rodriguez will attend the Otis College of Art and Design, focusing on her art and looking for a career in the entertainment industry. Ramnani, who likes coding and recently built his first computer from scratch, will attend Mt. SAC to study computer science.

The opportunity for WM internships is provided by the Bonita Unified career technical education (CTE) department, which offers current and former BUSD students a wide variety of summer internships and volunteer services with District partners like Cal Poly Pomona, Citrus College, and the Claremont Colleges, as well as local businesses.

PHOTO:

BUSD_WM_INTERNS: Bonita High School Class of 2025 graduate Isabel Rodriguez (left) joins San Dimas Class of 2025 graduates Jacob Hidalgo (second from right) and Krishna Ramnani (right) at a Waste Management information booth during an event in Baldwin Park in August, as part of a one-month internship assisting the company in its efforts to ensure corporations and businesses are complying with green waste mandates issued by the state of California.

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