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CONTACT: Caroline Towbin

917-734-7178

## THE SANITATION FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES THE RETURN OF 3<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL 'ZERO WASTE ACADEMY'

Free educational series empowers New Yorkers to take action and fight climate change.

The Sanitation Foundation, the official nonprofit partner of the New York City Department of Sanitation (DSNY), is announcing the return of “Zero Waste Academy,” a free program that introduces participants to waste management – increasingly one of the most relevant topics in sustainability – and explores how it fits into our city and our world. The Zero Waste Academy will bring together experts from the NYC Department of Sanitation and the private sector to increase awareness and understanding of waste management's environmental, social, and economic impacts. Upon completion of the program, participants will be equipped with the knowledge and resources to create change in their lives and communities.

Running from January 21 through February 17, the 2023 Zero Waste Academy will consist of eight virtual training modules developed and taught by high-level experts on waste in New York City. The curriculum will explore topics such as:

- the current landscape of waste in NYC, both public and private
- the origins of American “throwaway culture” and an introduction to circular economies
- how architecture and the built environment influence recycling and diversion habits
- and a focused look at food waste, the most significant diversion opportunity in our waste stream

In addition to the core educational sessions, the Academy also includes virtual field trips to Cooper Recycling and Sims Municipal Recycling, allowing participants a view of sophisticated material recovery facilities at work. The Academy will culminate with an in-person networking module on February 17, connecting participants with practical ways to make a difference.

“The Sanitation Foundation’s mission is to advance the City’s efforts to reduce waste sent to landfill and engage New Yorkers in the work to create a cleaner, more sustainable city.” said **Julie Raskin, Executive Director of the Sanitation Foundation**. “Our goal with the Academy is to turn these New Yorkers into zero-waste experts who are empowered to return to their communities and continue to bring about change.”

Alumni from past Zero Waste Academy cohorts have shared that the ZWA experience profoundly impacted them personally and professionally.

“Whenever I spin out into a spontaneous speech about sustainability, my love for DSNY, and the exciting secret histories of NYC trash—I always have to back up and explain where it all started.” said **Deb Lohse, a 2022 ZWA alum**. “I signed up for the Zero Waste Academy with the single naive goal of wanting to learn how to recycle better. I unexpectedly found myself falling down a rabbit hole into the fascinating interconnected web of consumption, waste management, and the humans committed to keeping our city clean and safe. ZWA left me feeling more connected to and responsible for this incredible city we live in, and I always say ‘Thank You’ to sanitation workers for their indispensable service.”

“I was part of the first ZWA, and it made such a huge difference in my life.” said **Laura Corona, a 2021 ZWA alum**. “I am so grateful for the Academy, which has led me to many other wonderful opportunities and experiences (the TRUE Advisor certification, the master composter program, and MSWAB). It also led me to a career change and a new job. I am really happy to be working in a place where I can make a positive impact on our environment and, hopefully, on NYC's zero waste goals.”

This year’s Academy is made possible by generous support from Con Edison and Verizon Wireless.

“Verizon is thrilled to once again partner with the NYC Sanitation Foundation and support the work of the Academy in providing unique opportunities for City residents to learn of ways to help promote sustainability and address critical climate change imperatives.” said **April Horton, who is responsible for Verizon grants in New York**. “Working together, we can bring new and innovative sustainability tools to consumers and businesses in New York. And that will help make the City a cleaner and greener place to work, live and raise a family.”

Participation is free, but space is limited, so those interested are encouraged to apply early. Applications are open from December 14 through January 9. For more information and to apply, visit [sanitationfoundation.org/zwa](https://sanitationfoundation.org/zwa).

### **About the Sanitation Foundation**

The [Sanitation Foundation](https://sanitationfoundation.org), founded in 2016, is the official nonprofit organization of the New York City Department of Sanitation. Supported by private funding and in-kind donations, the Foundation leverages non-traditional strategies to promote sustainability and advance the essential services of Sanitation employees.

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