The University of Georgia Center for Continuing Education & Hotel (Georgia Center) is pleased to welcome all the attendees and participants to the 2018 a2ru Conference!

In 2017, the Georgia Center completed its five-year strategic plan which includes a strategic directive to improve its environmental sustainability. We are focused on reducing landfill waste, increasing recycling, installing passive energy-efficient design features, and leveraging our services to become better stewards of our resources. In the following sections are a number of recent initiatives and accomplishments.

**Facility Improvements**

Throughout renovations to the property, we have incorporated products that reduce landfill waste and installed fixtures that reduce water and energy consumption.

We have incorporated recycled carpet in the first floor lobbies and zero-waste flooring in the hotel guest rooms. Plumbing fixtures in the restrooms and hotel guest bathrooms are low-flow and equipped with water-conserving technology.

We are replacing single-pane windows in hotel rooms with new double-pane, solar-insulated windows to improve energy efficiency and reduce heat transfer.

New lighting fixtures use energy-efficient LED bulbs and include occupancy sensors that turn off the lights when they detect spaces are no longer occupied.

We have installed six refillable water bottle stations throughout the building, and since those installations, we have eliminated nearly 60,000 twenty-ounce plastic water bottles from the waste stream.

**Food Service**

Our Food & Beverage department emphasizes locally-sourced ingredients as much as possible and features many local ingredients in the Savannah Room Restaurant.

We are in the process of eliminating all single-use plastic products in our food and beverage outlets, and soon we will be using biodegradable to-go packaging, including boxes, utensils, and straws.

Also in the works is a kitchen composting program that, once in place, will divert nearly all food waste from the landfill to a UGA composting facility.

Through a partnership with a local food recovery program, we have donated nearly 15,000 pounds of perishable food items that are used to prepare meals that are served to homeless and low-income individuals in the Athens-Clarke County area.
Hotel Initiatives

Our Hotel’s Housekeeping department participates in the Project Planet program, an international initiative that encourages guests to voluntarily reuse towels and linens during their stay.

We offer a bike sharing program to hotel guests that allows them to park their cars and borrow a bike to cruise around campus and the local area.

We are also finalizing an agreement with Clean the World to implement a recycling program for used soaps and shampoos/conditioners. Clean the World sanitizes and recycles these hygiene products into usable soaps that are distributed to children and families in countries with a high death rate due to pneumonia and cholera.

We hope you recognize the progress we have achieved so far, and we look forward to showcasing our future sustainability initiatives with you during your next visit to the Georgia Center!