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As a living being, consumption is our forte. From the cells in our body to the ears on the sides of our head, everything we do and have is dictated by the consumption of available resources. We consume resources when we eat, commute, socialize, groom, work... without available resources, we would struggle to do many of the things we consider normal. Furthermore, we would struggle to survive.

The greatest challenge we face in our society nowadays is overconsumption. Over the past 70 years, the consumption of plastic materials has increased 20-fold, whereas the population has only increased 3-fold. Solving this problem from the source is a highly convoluted task, but we must make a change in order to preserve humanity and the satisfaction that comes from being a human in modern society. We must start from somewhere.

Therefore, I find it crucial that we discover how to preserve the resources that are already in our consumption system by innovating and modernizing our recycling systems, using smarter and more sustainable technology. My goal is to translate our societal consumption system from a linear to a circular one by the time I pass my life onto the next generation. Thus, leaving a better planet for them than the one that was left for my own generation.

Currently, only about a third of all resources are recycled in the US, whereas in Florida about half of all resources are recycled. UF has set the ambitious goal of reaching a 90% recycling rate, but they did not specify a deadline. I believe that with proper support, a motivated team, and the new HiPerGator AI Supercomputer, we can improve the recycling rate. The research and development made with the scholarships' funding can help me put the Gators into a circular system by the time I start applying to UF graduate programs, in 2023.

Using these funds, I will begin my research by focusing on the fundamentals of circular systems, then learn about successful ones around the world, interviewing the designers and individuals who live circular lifestyles. I will also work closely with UF faculty services, learning where the pinch points in their operations are. Then, I will combine the practices and methods into a complete model, and present it to the University of Florida for implementation.

Reaching this goal will not only help UF reach their Gator goal, but the discoveries will stretch all across Florida, helping the state reach their Interem goals just a few years later than planned. Furthermore, it should bring the US to the top of the chart of global recycling rates. However, it would not stop there, because as the US rises, we pick up those around us, so worldwide, the recycling rates will increase until the resources cycle through our systems like day and night do around our planet. It will be then, that I will have achieved my dream, and I will be comfortable moving beyond my life, knowing that I created a better tomorrow for future generations, promising them a safe and sustainable planet where they can live, learn and consume better than we did. All in the pursuit of a better tomorrow.