

Cuba Skate: facilitating the youth skateboard revolution in Habana, Cuba  
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## **ABSTRACT**

### **Background**

The FUSE Grant from the College of Agriculture Life Science (CALS) enabled me to pursue an independent study venture in Havana, Cuba during the summer of 2011. My primary goal was to study the effectiveness of implementing a sustainable skateboarding initiative to better serve Cuban youth.

### **Problem Statement**

The current U.S. embargo and travel restrictions contribute to the country's lack of available resources (instructional and material) to sustain the growing skateboard movement in Havana.

### **Approach**

I worked with three American students to develop a sustainable framework for Cuban skaters. We employed a Community-Driven Development (CDD) approach as well as Community Based Initiatives and Asset Based Community Development. Equity and inclusiveness were achieved through our process of working with the community to viably determine the community needs and jointly work toward a solution of 1) setting up an exchange network, and 2) renovating Havana's only skate park. Efficiency was gained through the joint-effort approach between my group's supply of raw materials and the participation of the skateboard community. Additionally, we took an ethnographic approach, recording visual documentation of the lack of resources and tribulations of the Havana skateboard community.

### **Results**

Havana's only skate park was renovated via CDD approach. By connecting skaters and individuals across the skateboarding world, a sustainable exchange was established, thereby diminishing the Cuban dependence on tourists bringing skate gear and supplies. Additionally, we have video documentation of the project (problem, joint work with the skateboarding community, and results).

### **Conclusion and Goals**

Despite the lack of informational and material resources, the Havana skateboard community employs all sorts of ingenuity and resourcefulness to maintain skateboarding as part of their culture. The two main goals of the project are to complete renovations on Havana's only skate park by 2015, and continue to create sustainability for the Cuban skate community by further establishing the exchange network.