

ASU grad sees the potential for technology to advance sustainable futures

Outstanding Undergrad Zoe Winick researched food systems during time in the School for the Future of Innovation in Society

By Jasmine Cataño Mata, ASU News
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Editor's note: This story is part of a series of profiles of notable [spring 2026 graduates](#).

Growing up in the 2000s, where it seemed to Zoe Winick that technological innovations were being constantly introduced, she was always interested in how humans interacted with these emerging technologies.

What had started as playing Brick Breaker on her father's BlackBerry and being part of the first generation to use Promethean boards for interactive educational technology quickly developed into a sincere love for innovation and society.

"I was brought up to think that technology is always a good thing, so learning about how it helps design equitable, sustainable, healthy futures seemed like a no-brainer," Winick said.

Winick is the spring 2026 Outstanding Undergraduate for the [School for the Future of Innovation in Society](#), a unit within the [Rob Walton College of Global Futures](#). She will be graduating with a [Bachelor of Arts in innovation in society](#) along with a sustainable food systems minor and an energy and sustainability certificate from the [School of Sustainability](#).

As Winick continues to celebrate this milestone, she knows her journey with ASU has not yet ended. During her last year as an undergraduate student, she began taking graduate-level courses to pursue an accelerated [Master of Science in global technology and development](#).

From completing sustainable farming research in Indonesia to working with Peoples 1st Global Food and Land Reclamation Foundation as a [USDA NextGen intern](#), Winick has kept herself busy with career-development opportunities throughout her undergraduate program.

“Apply to everything you can, even if you seem underqualified,” Winick advised other students. “There are always opportunities to learn at ASU; you just have to ask or find them yourself.”

She cited Associate Professor [Jennifer Richter](#) as faculty who inspired her during her studies. Richter’s perspective on technology justice taught Winick that optimism can go a long way in keeping students and scientists alike motivated to make the necessary changes within the fields of sustainability and technology.

Read on to learn more about Winick’s experience at ASU.

Question: Were there any events, programs or experiences that you participated in while at ASU that have had a lasting impact?

Answer: Last summer, I participated in a three-month [SURE \(Sustainability Undergraduate Research Experience\) Global Research Program](#) in Lombok, Indonesia. This was a partnership between ASU and the University of Mataram in Lombok, Indonesia. I researched the economic viability of sustainable farming practices and the environmental impacts of different food production methods in Lombok, Indonesia.

During this program, I worked with local farmers, agriculture experts and researchers from the University of Mataram. I wrote a research report based on interviews with local farmers, and I learned basic Bahasa Indonesia to communicate with my peers. This had a lasting impact on me because I had never been to a developing country before. Being immersed in their culture, lifestyle and food was eye-opening. It taught me that terms I thought were set in stone, such as “organic farming,” are actually classified differently in the “American way.”

Q: What impact do you want to have through sustainability, and how are you working towards that?

A: I want to have a positive impact on sustainability through community events, eating locally, taking public transportation, eating plant-based, buying used, and working in the sustainability sector to reduce my carbon footprint and hopefully encourage others to do the same.

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Text image(s)



Zoe Winick. Courtesy photo