



June 1, 2018

STARS Steering Committee  
Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education  
2401 Walnut Street, Suite 102  
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Dear STARS Steering Committee members,

We are pleased to submit the University of St. Thomas' first report to support a STARS rating by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education. We look forward to employing STARS as an essential tool for underscoring our commitment to sustainability.

My predecessor, the Reverend Dennis Dease, signed the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment in 2008. In 2010, he endorsed a Climate Action Plan outlining our university's steps to achieve carbon neutrality by 2035. In the decade that has followed, this commitment to sustainability has permeated nearly every aspect of campus life at St. Thomas. Today, it is firmly supported by our strategic plan, "St. Thomas 2020: Living Our Mission, Expanding Our Horizon," as sustainability and environmental stewardship so perfectly express our university's mission: "Inspired by Catholic intellectual tradition, the University of St. Thomas educates students to be morally responsible leaders who think critically, act wisely, and work skillfully to advance the common good."

We have made remarkable progress toward our sustainability goals: Sustainability components are now present in nearly 100 courses in 31 different disciplines at St. Thomas. More than 70 courses have engaged in the Sustainable Communities Partnership, in which our students collaborate with municipal and governmental organizations to advance their sustainability goals. A new academic minor in sustainability, housed within our Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, has attracted more than 50 students in its first seven months. A \$50,000 budget supports sustainability-related student-faculty research collaborations; over half of our academic departments have at least one faculty member engaged in sustainability-related research. One hundred percent of university technology leases meet the Green Electronic Council's EPEAT Gold Standard. A Stewardship Garden supports urban agriculture and has yielded more than 8,000 pounds of produce for local food shelves. "Pollinator Path" gardens on campus allow students, faculty, staff and visitors to study pollinator activity and learn how to support declining pollinator populations.

In collaboration with staff and faculty throughout our institution, preparation of our STARS assessment was led by assistant director of campus sustainability, Amir Nadav, M.E.M (Master of Environmental Management) and the faculty director of the Office of Sustainability Initiatives, Elise Amel, Ph.D. (professor of psychology). We are confident that it accurately reflects the university's commitment and practice.

Thank you for this opportunity to assess our progress, continue to build on a strong culture of sustainability on our campuses, and determine new strategies to further strengthen our efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Julie H. Sullivan".

Julie H. Sullivan, Ph.D.  
President