

April 22, 2022

Dear Member of the AASHE STARS Steering Committee:

As President of the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV), I take pride affirming the accuracy of the information gathered for our sustainability self-assessment using the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS).

UTRGV is the first major public university to be established in Texas in the 21st century. It was created by the Texas Legislature in 2013 and enrolled its first class in the fall of 2015. Since the establishment of our new university, UTRGV has committed to institutionalizing sustainability across all divisions of the university. We have made significant progress incorporating sustainability in everything we do as shown by our most recent gold AASHE STARS rating, being designated as a Center for Sustainability Across the Curriculum since 2013, earning the coveted Carnegie Foundation's Community Engagement Classification in 2020, receiving the prestigious Seal of Excelencia in education in 2021, and making monumental achievements towards good health and wellbeing through our School of Medicine efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic.

UTRGV is recognized as a national leader in research, institutional advancement, and as being among the top schools for social mobility offering economic advancement for low-income and minority students, with groundbreaking commitments like our Tuition Advantage Program, which cover cost of tuition and mandatory fees for eligible students with a family income of \$125,000 or less and with unmet financial need. These accomplishments derive from our university's commitment to quality education and sustainable development as expressed in our Mission and Strategic Plan. Through these intentional acts, UTRGV is empowering students and the public through initiatives to connect them with sustainable concepts to improve our region and our world. As the number one Hispanic Serving Institution in the state of Texas and second nationally, we promote a culture that celebrates the diversity, value, and potential behind each of our sustainability leaders.

As we begin a new chapter in higher education in the Rio Grande Valley, I look forward to the significant and positive impact our institution will have on our community and throughout the country. I strongly believe UTRGV will achieve all that is needed to steward the environment, protect the health and safety of our people, and operate ethically and responsibly within the communities we serve.

I am grateful for the collective effort that has led UTRGV to its first STARS gold rating within just a few years after its establishment. I would further like to thank AASHE for establishing a means of assessing and reporting our university's sustainability initiatives.

Sincerely,



Guy Bailey
President

Office of the President

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