



February 7, 2022

STARS Steering Committee
Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education
2401 Walnut St #102
Philadelphia, PA, 19103, USA

Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to present Luther College's Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating Systems (STARS) submission to the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). We believe that this submission is an accurate reflection of Luther's progress to date and our ongoing commitment to sustainability. All across campus, from our Board of Regents and senior leadership team to our faculty, staff, and students, sustainability is woven into the mission and the very fabric of Luther College, as you will read in this report.

This is Luther's fifth STARS submission indicating our longstanding commitment both to sustainability and to public reporting and accountability within the higher education sustainability community. Since 2008, when Luther College made sustainability one of three pillars of its institutional strategic plan, we have worked to make sustainability a part of every student's learning experience while making our operations as sustainable as possible. That plan, with the support of generous donors, helped launch Luther's Center for Sustainable Communities, which continues to coordinate and lead sustainability efforts on campus and throughout the region.

As you will read, sustainability is infused throughout all aspects of Luther College, but we call attention to a few highlights of our recent sustainability accomplishments:

- Installation of a 950 kW solar array with 360 kW of storage. Luther was featured in Environment America's "Top Colleges for Renewable Energy 2020" as one of the top five schools for percent of electricity that is generated by energy projects that are owned and operated by the school.
- Completion of a new Energy Master Plan, which contains proposals to migrate our HVAC systems away from fossil fuels toward geothermal energy.
- New engagement efforts with students and staff including "green teams" in all residence halls and staff sustainability champions in each academic building.
- Intentional efforts to address diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the institution including DEI Action Plans for all college divisions including our Center for Sustainable Communities.

As we look ahead, we are focused on many priorities, but here I highlight two for Luther in the next few years:

- Enhancing efforts on diversity, equity, and inclusion. DEI is a top priority for Luther College as we seek to diversify our student body and staff, make Luther more accessible

to a wider range of students and create a more welcoming and inclusive campus. This is integral to our mission but also a fundamental element of our sustainability vision to create a more just, equitable, and ecologically healthy world.

- Implementing our Energy Master Plan. Luther remains committed to our Climate Action Plan and the goal our Board of Regents set to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030. We are currently working to integrate our Energy Master Plan with a larger Campus Master Plan and determine the proper phasing for implementation. Reducing our dependence on fossil fuels and achieving long term reductions in energy expenses is a challenge that we must meet for our students and the larger world.

Luther College has a deep and abiding commitment to sustainability. This STARS report lays out some of the ways the College is meeting this commitment and how it plans to do more in the near future. Our goal is to integrate sustainability into all areas of campus life and to make it a central organizing principle for Luther College. Indeed, one of the four themes I have included in my vision framework for Luther in the coming years is Stewardship. While the specific initiatives outlined in this document represent progress to date and current plans, we will constantly seek new ways to reduce carbon emissions, increase opportunities for sustainability education, model stewardship and sustainability in college operations, and be a catalyst for change within our region. By achieving these goals, Luther College will improve the education of our students while also doing our part to address climate change, systemic racism and the many challenges we face in the 21st Century.

I support the information presented in this STARS report and am appreciative of the work it took to complete this comprehensive assessment. It is not an exaggeration to say that dozens of people contributed to this report and that it provided an opportunity for a clear-eyed look at our progress and places where we need more work. I am proud of Luther's sustainability achievements but also mindful of the ongoing work that is needed as we seek to enhance the learning of all our students while we respond to the many challenges in our communities and our world.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jenifer', followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Jenifer K. Ward
President