

January 11, 2023

Meghan Fay Zahniser  
Executive Director  
Association for the Advance of Sustainability in Higher Education  
P.O. Box 824583  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19182-4583

Ms. Zahniser,

Inspired by the State of Minnesota, the University's Systemwide Strategic Plan, MPact 2025, reflects our deepened commitment to research, teaching, and service, access and opportunity, and forward-thinking innovation to advance the University's land-grant mission and impact the world. As part of this vision, we have set a goal to "Build a Fully Sustainable Future," and I am pleased to present the University of Minnesota Twin Cities STARS report as evidence of our commitment to and progress toward that goal.

Transformational work to advance sustainability is being done every day across our campus, the breadth of the University mission, and within our operations functions. Some highlights covered by this report include:

- Addressing the Climate Crisis The whole campus community has pitched into this effort with personal energy, advocacy, and action. Over the past decade, the University [reduced greenhouse gas emissions by more than 50%](#) from campus operations by making our buildings more energy efficient and obtaining energy from clean and renewable sources. At the same time, our researchers are leading with new climate science and solutions, and bringing those discoveries to communities through collaborations like the [Climate Adaptation Partnership](#) and [MBold](#).
- Advancing Sustainable Development The University's [Sustainable Development Goal Initiative](#) is [building partnerships](#) at the international, state, and local level to advance implementation of the global goals for impact at all scales. Through our [Public Engagement Footprint Map](#), Minnesotans are able to see where the University is working in their community by SDG. The SDG Initiative also led the University's first submission to the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings, placing No. 5 in the U.S. for its work related to combating hunger and No. 2 in the U.S. for work on good health and well-being.
- Building Organizational Capacity We've taken tremendous strides in building the organizational capacity required to accelerate the pace and increase the scale of our

sustainability impact. We launched Committees at the University System and Twin Cities Campus to steer and provide coordination for sustainability efforts and in May 2022 we hired the [institution's first Chief Sustainability Officer](#).

This is a small sample of the tremendous work that has been done to advance our commitment to sustainability. And more is to come including new climate plans for all of our campuses, growing our partnerships and engagement to enhance impact, and furthering our efforts on diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice.

With warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Gabel', followed by a period.

Joan T.A. Gabel  
President, University of Minnesota