



STARS (Sustainability Tracking Assessment and Rating System)
Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education
2401 Walnut St., Suite 102, Philadelphia, PA 19103

December 5, 2016

To whom it may concern,

In my capacity as the Board Chair of Wanuskewin Heritage Park I am pleased to provide a letter of affirmation for the University of Saskatchewan's Building Reconciliation Forum. This historic initiative was unique in many ways: it engaged First Nations and Métis leaders, student leaders, Aboriginal scholars, and scholars dedicated to timely research that is meaningful to Aboriginal peoples as a response to the incredibly important Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. As a leader in the cultural preservation of Indigenous history, Wanuskewin is pleased to see the University of Saskatchewan take such a strong position in this work.

The University of Saskatchewan, situated on Treaty 6 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis, is uniquely positioned to address Indigenous issues as a key element of social sustainability. The role it plays in fostering reconciliation with Canada's Indigenous community is not taken lightly, and we are proud that the U of S has chosen to take leadership through initiatives like the Building Reconciliation Forum.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) is a Canadian federal initiative that aims to document the events and effects of the Indian Residential School (IRS) system in Canada and to inform all Canadians through the truth of survivors, families, communities, and anyone personally affected by the IRS experience. One of the results of the TRC was a statement of 94 Calls to Action, in which the TRC called upon the Canadian government and population to take action to recognize, reconcile, and remedy the ills caused by the legacy of residential schools.

From Nov. 18 to 19, 2015, the University of Saskatchewan was honoured to host a national forum entitled *Building Reconciliation: Universities Answering the TRC's Calls to Action*. The forum focused on how universities could respond to the urgent calls to action directed at post-secondary institutions, following up on Universities Canada's 13 principles on Indigenous education. As a part of this forum, the U of S, along with all other post-secondary educational institutions in Saskatchewan, declared its commitment to closing the education gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. It was a well-attended event with representation from across the country and was followed up with a similar forum at the University of Alberta on Sept. 28 and 29 of 2016.

The Forum provided great benefit not only to the U of S community, but to the greater Canadian community by facilitating important discussions on how to meaningfully act on the recommendations of the TRC. The forum was able to identify five powerful underlying themes in its discussions, including the need for immediate, long-term, and sustained change backed by concrete resources, recognition of Indigenous viewpoints, and the full inclusion of Indigenous students in university people, spaces, and values.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Candace Wasacase-Lafferty". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and a long, sweeping underline.

Sincerely,
Candace Wasacase-Lafferty