

Office of the President

July 24, 2012

President's House
910 West Franklin Street
P.O. Box 842512
Richmond, Virginia 23284-2512

804 828-1200
Fax: 804 828-7532
TDD: 1-800-828-1120
president@vcu.edu

STARS Steering Committee
Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education
1536 Wynkoop Street, Suite 100
Denver, Colorado 80202

Dear Committee Members:

It is with great pleasure that Virginia Commonwealth University submits its first Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System (STARS) *Summary of Results* report. We are proud of our accomplishments and progress to date, and look forward to using STARS as a roadmap to continue our journey toward the goals described in the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment, as well as those laid out in our strategic plan, *Quest for Distinction*.

In just four years of engagement, VCU has made substantial progress in regards to sustainability. During this time, we have instituted a VCU Sustainability Committee, an Academic Sustainability Committee, achieved an A- on the last Sustainable Endowments Institute's College Sustainability Report Card, and were cited as having outstanding sustainability programs in Peterson's Survey of Sustainability Efforts in Higher Education and the Princeton Review. We have instituted an LEED Silver construction standard and have constructed eight certified LEED buildings, with one being the first certified LEED Platinum building in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

VCU proactively looks to engage our students in sustainability issues, and the results have been phenomenal. Our student-led projects have included a bayscaping project, a vegetated roof, a wind turbine, a community garden, a rainwater garden, solar photovoltaic installations, and many others. While the individual projects are significant, what has truly been rewarding for us is the clear demonstration of compassion and commitment by our students, who aspire to improve not just VCU's sustainability posture, but their own and that of their peers as well.

We appreciate your time and effort in the development of STARS. We look forward to receiving regular updates from you, as well as using STARS as a tool to gauge our on-going sustainability efforts.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,



Michael Rao
President