**Information about Sustainability at John Abbott College for New Employees**

***Sustainability at John Abbott College***John Abbott College defines sustainability in a pluralistic and holistic way, so as to encompass human and environmental health, social justice, quality education, and a better world for future generations.

The College’s commitment to promoting sustainability and fighting climate change are reflected Strategic Orientation 10: “Responding to the Science”which states **“**JAC takes leadership in addressing the climate crisis in operations, policies, learning activities and community outreach, and is reducing its carbon footprint and environmental impact.” We recognize that the climate crisis is a key global challenge for today and the future, and that "Leadership" implies both concrete local action and advocating for structural change.

***Guiding Framework and Approach***The UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are used as a guiding framework for the school’s sustainability initiatives. The SDGs provide a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. They are a series of interconnected global targets to end poverty and hunger, advance education, protect the planet and ensure prosperity by 2030 through peace, justice and partnerships. Institutions of higher education have an essential role to play in the achievement of the SDGs through their task of educating societal leaders and shaping cultures. More information on the SDGs can be found in the **Sustainability Community** in the portal.

In Canada, between 15 and 25 percent of youth experience at least one mental health challenge or illness before they turn 19, and we know that anxiety and other mental health issues among post-secondary students has become increasingly common in recent years. At JAC, addressing sustainability means that tangible actions to address the climate crisis are also supported and complimented by the existing and future initiatives that promote well-being at our school. This well-being approach capitalizes on the positive effects that the natural environment has on mental health. In addition, our “living laboratory” approach to sustainability promotes student development and enhance their potential for success in society by providing them with the tools and awareness that they will need to participate in our constantly changing world.

***JAC’s Sustainability Committee***The Sustainability Committee is made up of representative members from across the college. The mandate of the committee is to build a college community that works together to address sustainability issues with a specific focus on addressing the climate crisis, and to make recommendations that foster responsibility and accountability of all members of the college community regarding sustainability activities and the reduction of our carbon footprint. The committee reports directly to the Director’s Table. Those who are not on the committee but wish to participate in sustainability projects can join a Working Group. These ad-hoc groups are formed every year to move forward specific sustainability projects at the school. For example, a working group to address biodiversity on campus grounds or to promote the SDG’s on campus. All students and staff are welcome to participate in these groups.

***Measuring for success***JAC reports to the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS) in order to benchmark and measure our sustainability accomplishments. STARS is used by hundreds of higher educational institutions around the world, who earn a rating based on their accomplishments in sustainability. STARS reporting is a collective process that requires input from staff across multiple departments, subsumed under four core areas: operations, academics, engagement and planning & administration. JAC also submits a sustainability report to Cégep Vert, which is an environmental certification and support program for colleges in Quebec.

***Key contacts***If you are interested in learning more about Sustainability at JAC or wish to get involved, please contact one of the employees below based on the core area that they represent.

* Catherine Scheer, Manager in FMS (Operations)
* Ronne Dorsnie, Student Services Assistant Director (Planning & Administration)
* Roger Haughey, Dean of Arts and General Education (Academics)
* Shannon Coulter-Low, Student Life Counsellor in Student Services,
Chair of the Sustainability Committee (Engagement)