

May 19, 2017

AASHE Stars Steering Committee
Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education
1536 Wynkoop Street, Suite 100
Denver, CO 80202

Dear STARS Committee:

I am pleased to be submitting this Sustainability, Tracking, Assessment and Rating System Report (STARS). I affirm that this report reflects our best assessment of sustainability activities and accomplishments over the past three years at Western Technical College.

I would like to highlight some of the recent accomplishments contained in this report.

Operations

- Over the past three years, as part of the Vision 2020 Strategic Plan, we have built and/or retrofitted buildings to meet or exceed the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED™ Silver Certification standard. Western Technical College now has a total of eight buildings that exceed this standard (four facilities are LEED™ certified Silver, two are certified Gold, one is certified Platinum, and one is a certified Passive House). In addition, two recently completed projects are anticipated to be Silver certified. The investment in these new and upgraded facilities exceeds \$90 million.

Engagement

- Our integral support of – and engagement with – the Sustainability Institute (a regional non-profit 501c3 corporation) represents a transformative partnership with the local community and positions Western as a leader in sustainability and resilience.
- Western has a notable record of engaging community stakeholders. The La Crosse Medical Health Science Consortium (LCMHSC), the Dairyland Power Cooperative Partnership and Get Growing (a partnership between Western, the Mayo Health System, and Hillview Urban Agriculture Center) are just a few of the many formal partnerships we have with local organizations.
- Western students participated in 32,251 hours of community service during the 2015-2016 academic year, saving the community an estimated \$717,000 dollars.

Planning and Administration

- Our coordination, planning and governance structures are sound, putting us in a strong position to continue driving sustainability forward.
- As an open access institution, our mission is to help all students achieve, regardless of background. Our strong scores in the diversity and affordability category indicate our commitment to this ideal. Moreover, participating in the Achieving the Dream network both reinforces the importance Western places on equity and propels our equity initiatives forward in the years to come.

Western is a proud recipient of the 2015 Green Ribbon Award from the U.S. Department of Education, and the 2015 recipient of the Climate Leadership Award from Second Nature in the two-year college category. We believe STARS is a true asset for colleges committed to sustainability. We feel it will aid us in our journey as we seek to establish improved benchmarks for our efforts. Furthermore, it will aid us in our efforts to network with other national leaders. We thank you for this opportunity to participate.

Sincerely,



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President

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