



January 2, 2020

STARS Steering Committee
Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education
2401 Walnut Street, Suite 102
Philadelphia, PA 19103

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to submit this letter of affirmation that the information presented for Lehigh University's STARS Innovation Credit is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. This letter affirms that in the 2018-2019 academic year, under the mentorship of Professor David Casagrande, there was a continuing effort to implement a permaculture park on campus. Beginning in 2017, students participating in the Creative Inquiry Mountaintop Experience began to create the Southside Permaculture Park at the Eco-House on campus.

The Southside Permaculture Park was designed and built based on principles of permaculture as an educational, agricultural, and community gathering space. The South Side Permaculture Park is designed to be an experimental laboratory and learning center for teaching about permaculture theory and practice, while serving as a model for rebuilding society in a way that is not just sustainable, but regenerative. The Permaculture park also demonstrates low-maintenance, perennial, self-regulating production systems for providing decentralized food, medicine, and materials while sequestering carbon from the atmosphere to build soils, increasing biodiversity, and beautifying the community.

This space encourages interaction with the surrounding community, sustainable agriculture, and a connection with nature. By looking at systems as a whole rather than as individual parts, the largely self-sustaining permaculture park can provide a space for the appreciation of nature in a majority urban area, while also providing food and resources for the campus and surrounding communities.

The creation and maintenance of the Southside Permaculture Park emphasizes Lehigh's commitment to engage students in sustainable principles that go above and beyond the campus community.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David J. Casagrande".

David Casagrande, Ph.D.
Professor of Anthropology
Joint Appointment with the
Environmental Initiative