

# COLGATE UNIVERSITY

February 21, 2022

Meghan Fay Zahniser, Executive Director  
Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education  
2401 Walnut Street Suite 102  
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Dear Meghan Fay Zahniser:

On behalf of Colgate University, I am pleased to once again affirm and submit our Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System (STARS) report to the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE).

Completing Colgate's STARS report was a truly campus-wide collaborative effort led by the Office of Sustainability and the University's Sustainability Council, a process that included consultation and contributions from many faculty, students, and employees over an extended period of time. I am grateful to the many members of the Colgate community who once again demonstrated their ongoing commitment to sustainability on campus and more broadly in higher education.

The process of completing STARS was challenging as the global pandemic disrupted routine campus operations and placed profound stresses on our campus community. However, the STARS framework continued to foster many important conversations across all institutional levels. I commend the AASHE STARS team for compiling a data-driven assessment based on feedback and responsiveness from many voices across the higher education landscape. Throughout this process, we learned more about our institution and discovered new opportunities to advance our sustainability program and strengthen our University.

As it was completed with both care and integrity, I am confident the information provided in Colgate's STARS report, as provided to me, is fully complete and accurate.

Highlights of Colgate's 2022 STARS report include the following:

- The 2021 Sustainability Plan is a key guiding document to the University's overarching *Third-Century Plan*.
- Over 12 percent of the courses offered at Colgate are sustainability-focused (4 percent) or sustainability-inclusive (8 percent) courses.
- Over 45 percent of Colgate's food purchases are ethically/sustainably sourced and/or plant-based.
- The University has a long-term forest stewardship plan and over 1,000 acres of Colgate's forests have been third-party certified for long-term sustainable management. We developed an innovative program to manage our campus forest for carbon sequestration and ecological integrity.
- Last year, with leadership and expertise provided by the University, the Town of Hamilton and the Village of Hamilton received New York State Climate Smart Community certifications. Our campus and community are working together to mitigate the impacts of climate change while building community resilience to local weather extremes.

These are just a few of the many initiatives Colgate does to advance the concept and practice of sustainability at our institution and beyond.

Colgate University achieved carbon neutrality in 2019, becoming the first college or university in New York State to achieve such status. In the years ahead, we will continue to be an active leader in sustainability and climate action. Along the way, we will engage the minds and hearts of our students, faculty, and staff as we implement new strategies to support a just, sustainable, and low-carbon future.

We value AASHE STARS as the defining measure of sustainability in higher education and will continue to use STARS to track and monitor our progress towards a more sustainable campus.

Sincerely,



Brian W. Casey  
President