



STONEHILL COLLEGE

April 22, 2016

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

Members of the STARS Steering Committee,

It is my pleasure to submit Stonehill College's first STARS Report for your review and confirmation. Our faculty, staff and students came together in a spirit of focused collaboration in order to complete the report, which represents an accurate reflection of the steps our community has taken to increase and expand sustainability measures on our campus.

Founded in 1948, Stonehill is a Catholic liberal arts college located in southeastern Massachusetts. Social responsibility, community outreach and service learning are integral to our educational mission, which seeks to educate "the whole person so that each Stonehill graduate thinks, acts, and leads with courage toward the creation of a more just and compassionate world."

In line with that commitment, in April 2012, my predecessor President Rev. Mark Cregan, C.S.C. signed the St. Francis Pledge, which is sponsored by the Catholic Climate Covenant and commits Catholic organizations to a moral call for action on climate change. In April 2014, I followed up on that initiative by signing the Real Food Campus Commitment on behalf of the College. As part of this pledge, we set a goal of sourcing 20 percent or more of our food purchases from "real food" sources, which include those that are locally grown, sustainability produced, humanely raised, and fairly traded, by 2020. I have also signed a statement in solidarity with Pope Francis' groundbreaking encyclical on the environment *Laudato Si, On the Care of our Common Home*, which calls for action in addressing the climate and justice crises threatening the world today.

As part of our commitment to sustainability, Stonehill has established institutional practices that are increasing energy and water efficiency while decreasing waste generation, with the ultimate goal of shrinking both our carbon and ecological footprints. Thanks to these campus-wide initiatives, we have seen our *Princeton Review Green Rating* steadily improve from 73 (2012) to 84 (2013) to 89 (2014), resulting in our being included in *The Princeton Review's Guide to Green Colleges* for three years in a row.

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The College further recognizes that institutions of higher education have a responsibility to use their resources and expertise to not only identify problems and challenges but to also research and discover possible solutions to them. That is why our curriculum currently offers 45 courses with sustainability learning outcomes, including Environmental Ethics, Marine Ecosystems, and Food Politics, to name a few. And, building on the example and effectiveness of our well-established Environmental Studies (BA) and Environmental Sciences (BS) programs, we now offer an Environmental Sciences and Studies minor program.

The sponsor of our annual Sustainability Fair, the members of our Students for Environmental Action (SEA) group, have been diligent, effective advocates for campus wide programs and initiatives that make Stonehill a greener college. For example they are currently working on a campus bike share program which they plan to launch this spring. We take pride in how these students are developing and adopting an environmental ethic as part of their personal commitment to social justice.

The process of implementing our Sustainability Plan and completing the STARS report has helped us to better link academic study and research with real-world impacts, which only enhances our educational mission. Similarly, by being transparent as we evaluated and benchmarked our sustainability efforts, we saw improved communication and understanding among the various campus departments and community partners on how they can continue contributing to the process.

I certify that all of the information submitted in the STARS online reporting tool is an accurate reflection of the steps our community has taken to increase sustainability on our campus. We look forward to further integrating sustainability into our operations and educational outcomes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Denning, C.S.C." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rev. John Denning, C.S.C.
President
Stonehill College