

Sept. 27, 2013

STARS Steering Committee
Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education
213 ½ North Limestone
Lexington, Kentucky 40507
USA

Dear Steering Committee members,

RE: Niagara College Canada STARS Submission

As Niagara College Canada President, it is my pleasure to provide this letter to affirm the accuracy of the Niagara College Canada Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System (STARS) submission.

Niagara College is an institution driven by a desire to lead by example and meet the expectations of our environmentally-aware student body. We have a focus on environmental issues and are continually working towards building a responsible, sustainable College community. This is a direction that makes sense for Niagara College as it reduces costs from utilities to paper and it puts the College in line with the local communities we serve.

Our three campuses are located in the Niagara Region which aspires to be a hub for “green” industries in a province that is looking to renewable energy technologies as the key to future prosperity. As educators, we provide comprehensive programs in environmental education and renewable technologies, and our graduates are making positive contributions in all areas of this emerging sector.

We submit that the following information provides examples that correspond to our STARS submission including:

- Sustainability is an important component in our Strategic Plan;
- The Establishment of a Sustainability Committee along with the positions of a Sustainability Coordinator and Energy Manager on staff;
- Setting reduction targets for waste diversion and carbon emissions along with reducing the consumption of paper, electricity and water;
- Naturalization projects at both our main campuses;
- The use of geothermal, wind and solar energy systems on campus;
- The first Canadian post-secondary institution to have a Carbonzero Certified building.

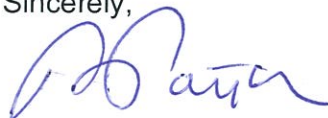
Sustainability has become a strategic priority for Niagara College. In 2009 we integrated sustainability into our Strategic Plan, demonstrating a commitment to developing a culture of sustainability and integrating it within the College community. To support this mandate, Niagara College established a Sustainability Committee, with a goal to improve and extend current environmental practices, while being mindful of the need to balance ecological, social and economic imperatives in an open and transparent decision-making process. In 2013, the Strategic Plan took this commitment one step further by adopting a goal to achieve and maintain a Bronze rating in STARS and adopted the targets set out by the Sustainability Committee. The targets include a 50% reduction in paper consumption, 10% reduction in electricity consumption, 10% reduction in carbon emissions, 5% reduction in water consumption and to achieve a 65% diversion rate.

In 2008, Niagara College embarked on a \$90-million expansion, the largest capital expansion in our history. By 2011, six new buildings at the Welland Campus were opened and two new buildings, as well as an expanded culinary facility, were completed at the Niagara-on-the-Lake campus. Major improvements were also made to Welland campus' grounds, including the construction of more than six kilometers or 3 miles of walking trails and the planting of tens of thousands of shrubs, trees and plants to assist in naturalizing the campus. The redevelopment saw the installation of a geothermal heat pump in our Rankin Technology Centre and 500 solar panels on our Voyageur Wing roofs as part of the Ontario government's Feed In Tariff (FIT) program. The upgrading of the Welland campus's HVAC system has dramatically reduced energy consumption, as the two highly-efficient, chillers use oil-less technology and magnetic bearings to reduce friction and increase electrical efficiency, and eight high-efficiency boilers use aluminum heat exchangers to minimize natural gas consumption.

Not only are we realizing significant cost savings due to some of the innovative aspects of our buildings' designs, but sustainability aligns with our organizational goals. Along with a focus on incorporating green technologies into the campuses' redevelopment, there is a desire among our students to see environmental responsibility in the day-to-day operations of the College. In particular, students in our environmental programs wanted to ensure that the lessons that are taught in the classrooms reflect the way things are done at the College.

The completion of the STARS submission is a first for Niagara College, as we look forward to using it as a framework in our environmental management system. The following submission has been completed with accurate information to the best of my knowledge.

Sincerely,



Dan Patterson, Ph.D.
President