

December 13, 2016

STARS Steering Committee
Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education
1536 Wynkoop St, Suite 100
Denver, CO 80202

Dear STARS Steering Committee:

I am pleased to submit this letter affirming the accuracy of information provided in our second STARS report. The data collection process was a valuable exercise, serving as an assessment tool and reaffirming our commitment to sustainability. In the three years since our last STARS submission, we have continued to grow our focus on sustainability.

In April 2016, we opened the new Innovation and Sustainability Hub, centrally located in our campus's Student Center. The space is a collaborative project between our Sustainability Office, the SIU Research Park, the University Innovation Fellows program, and the SIU Center for Innovation, a program of the College of Business. The Hub showcases campus sustainability initiatives and innovation activities and serves as a collaborative space to share information and engage the campus community in innovation and sustainability. It also serves as a work space for Sustainability Office student team members, providing high visibility and engagement opportunities.

Food insecurity of students has become a prominent social issue. In August 2016, we responded to this by opening the Saluki Food Pantry to support the nutritional needs of our students in need. The food pantry provides an opportunity for SIU students to serve other students and engage in conversations and solutions around food insecurity. It is managed by an interdisciplinary team of staff, students, and community members, including volunteers. The space includes a holistic section, helping students to identify other resources to support student success. As the food pantry grows, we plan to expand to include fresh foods and work towards food recovery from internal and external sources.

Food waste diversion is also a priority. In January 2016, we began sending all food waste from both University Housing dining halls to our new Forced Air Compost Facility, which is managed by the College of Agricultural Sciences. It is an example of a cross-

functional collaboration between operational and academic portions of our institution and serves as a model for students and the greater community.

Other new initiatives include the 2015 Tree Campus USA designation, our first recognition from this organization, and bicycle master planning. We have an interdisciplinary team of faculty, staff, and students who are forming a bicycle master plan for the campus. In 2016, we submitted our first Bicycle Friendly University application and await the results. This initiative is an example of a Green Fund project, which is overseen by the campus's Sustainability Council. In April of this year, the Council reached the milestone of having awarded over \$2 million toward campus sustainability projects, programming, and research, since the fee was instituted in 2009.

With the completion of our second STARS submission, we hope to further identify areas for improvement. I look forward to seeing what other initiatives our campus will implement to continue leading our region in a more sustainable direction.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brad Colwell". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Brad Colwell
Interim Chancellor