



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

June 26, 2017

Re: Messiah College STARS Submission

To Whom it May Concern,

I am pleased to submit this letter of endorsement for Messiah College's inaugural AASHE STARS submission. This review process brought clarity to our current campus sustainability efforts and a focus for future years. We are excited to use this tool to further incorporate sustainability education and practices to the College's mission and values.

Messiah College has a long tradition of land stewardship, but more recently began emphasizing sustainability when I signed the President's Climate Commitment in 2007. In the past decade, the College has advanced the goals of sustainability through curricular, co-curricular, and operational improvements; all the while engaging students every step of the way. Some of these advancements include a robust community garden program, the addition of a Sustainability Studies Major, and the installation of 112 panel solar thermal array, to name just a few of our accomplishments. These programs highlight the value of a Messiah College education, in which our students develop a sense of social and ecological citizenship in order to serve, lead and reconcile in a broken world.

The Messiah College Sustainability Committee, tasked with assessing campus sustainability work, utilized the STARS framework to provide the College with an ability to begin assessing and benchmarking our educational and operational practice. While assessing our current work across campus is important, the STARS process is stirring a sense of excitement for what should come in the not too distant future. In the upcoming year, I have asked the Sustainability Committee to develop a Campus Sustainability Commitment document to be adopted by all areas of the College. We look forward to seeing how STARS will factor into the framework and assessment of these commitments and goals.

Messiah College has a history of environmental stewardship in its Brethren in Christ religious faith tradition; however, we are in a critical time where local universities must do more to educate and better practice ecological stewardship. We are grateful for AASHE's leadership in resourcing institutions to promote sustainability and we value the STARS tool that assesses and focuses institutional efforts.

Sincerely,

Kim S. Phipps
President