

UNIVERSITY *of* PUGET SOUND

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July 10, 2012

Paul Rowland
Executive Director
The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education
1536 Wynkoop St., Suite 100
Denver, CO 80202

Dear Mr. Rowland:

We at the University of Puget Sound are pleased to submit our STARS report. The entire college and I have been, and remain, thoroughly committed to a sustainable present and a more sustainable future. Puget Sound is an independent, residential undergraduate liberal arts college with selected graduate programs building effectively on a liberal arts foundation. Our mission statement affirms that a Puget Sound education, both academic and co-curricular, encourages a rich knowledge of self and others; an appreciation of commonality and difference; the full, open, and civil discussion of ideas; thoughtful moral discourse; and the integration of learning, preparing the university's graduates to meet the highest tests of democratic citizenship. We regard sustainability as just such a test. Our strategic plan's vision statement makes the point explicitly: "The Puget Sound experience embraces our dynamic Pacific Northwest environment and our independent and pioneering people who are civically engaged, environmentally responsible, and globally focused."

We have institutionalized sustainability in a penetrating way: in strategic planning, organization, teaching, research, operations, construction, and landscaping. Accordingly, Puget Sound has made a range of commitments and created the appropriate institutional structures to address the challenges of sustainability. In February 2005, I signed the Talloires Declaration, the first official international commitment made by university administrators to sustainability in higher education. We follow this ten-point declaration action plan.

In 2005, I also established the Sustainability Advisory Committee, which reports to me through the vice president of Student Affairs and the vice president for Finance and Administration. The committee advises on and implements sustainability policies and programs. It addresses sustainability across the institution and in partnership with our regional community.

In March 2007, I signed the Presidents' Climate Commitment as a founding member of the Leadership Circle. I signed enthusiastically because the commitment's ambitions were consistent in principle with many of Puget Sound's efforts and aspirations. We are strongly committed to supporting the future of our planet and the quality of life for generations to come.

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The STARS program has enabled us to effectively assess, prioritize, plan, and execute sustainability endeavors more effectively to achieve these ambitions. Some of our STARS initiatives include:

- The Sustainability Advisory Committee reorganized itself around STARS to foster comprehensive sustainability assessment. It regularly engages student body leaders, the student sustainability club, and university departments to collaboratively address sustainability.
- We embedded sustainability throughout our curriculum and research. This included conducting retreats and workshops for faculty members across disciplines to foster integration of sustainability into numerous classes throughout the university. Our goal is to educate future leaders, scholars, workers, and professionals to lead others in developing a sustainable future.
- Sustainability is now integral to our weeklong and nationally recognized student orientation program. Before attending their first day of class, students are immersed in triple bottom line learning and living experiences on campus, in our city, and outdoors.

Our future STARS submission goals include continued comprehensive sustainability assessment, strategic planning, and execution of priority objectives. We are committed to success in this area, which will be measured and reflected in higher future STARS scores, including improvements in targeted STARS categories.

In closing, I wish to affirm the accuracy of Puget Sound's STARS submission report. We are pleased to be a part of this important program.

Sincerely,



Ronald R. Thomas
President