

Sterling College

Working Hands. Working Minds.

February 17, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

The past three years have been a time of renewal and advancement at Sterling College. Sterling has embraced its fifty-seven year evolution and confidently asserts that today it is *the* leading environmental stewardship educator in the United States. Timidity has never been our nature. At our founding, a small group of faculty created a revolutionary model of experiential education focused on our relationship with the natural world. The College has always emphasized what is important and what is real.

By educating stewards of the planet's soil, water, food, energy, and climate, Sterling is engaged in the most important work of the 21st century. Through the work of our faculty, Sterling is an authentic and revolutionary educational model. We have been since our founding and we will continue to be so in the future. It is worthy of recognition from those committed to protecting the natural world.

This is our first report to AASHE using the STARS reporting tool. I am affirming that all of the information in our submission has been checked for accuracy. We chose this moment for our first submission as it both caps a remarkable three years at Sterling College and serves as a baseline as we move toward greater gains in sustainability. In 2013, we became the first college in Vermont, and the third in the nation, to divest its endowment from fossil fuels. We also became the first college to offer a minor in Draft Horse Management, and we offer our students a true mixed-power model for sustainable agriculture.

In 2014, we were ranked by the Real Food Challenge as #1 in the nation for eating food that was just, sustainable, local, and fair-trade—and did so by a wide margin. We also launched the Rian Fried Center for Sustainable Agriculture & Food Systems, with its Alford Draft Horse Barn, vegetable wash station, and composting station.

As we look ahead to the near future, we anticipate being one of only a small number of institutions producing as much solar energy on campus than it uses in a year; to raise our consumption of real food from 76% to 78%; and to move forward in eliminating fossil fuels to heat our buildings.

Thank you for your review of our submission.

Sincerely,



Matthew Derr
President
Sterling College