



The PRINCIPIA

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Dear Members of the AASHE STARS Steering Committee,

Principia College is proud to submit its first Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS) report, for which we have earned a Silver rating. The report was completed by our Center for Sustainability, with the support of academic, administrative and operations directors institution-wide. I confirm that all of the information provided herein is accurate and representative of our campus sustainability initiatives.

Principia is a residential liberal arts college dedicated to providing our students with transformative opportunities, a challenging curriculum, and character education. As a community of outward-looking, inspired learners, we see sustainability as not simply a roadmap to energy efficiency, zero waste and carbon neutrality, but as key element of our progressive curricular and co-curricular landscape.

The mission of our Center for Sustainability is "to educate, promote, and inspire Principia College's students, faculty and staff to become more responsible local and global environmental citizens", and the hiring of a full-time director in 2012 is only one of many steps that we have taken to ensure that our students are prepared to solve the most complex and urgent challenges of the 21st century. Our early milestones include:

- 2009 – Transitioned to 100% renewable power
- 2011 – Formed a Sustainability Council to "invite greater co-ordination, collaboration, and dialogue on sustainability plans, implementation actions, and assessments"
- 2011 – Launched an academic degree in Sustainability
- 2012 – Recognized as a Bronze College by the Illinois Governor's Campus Sustainability Compact
- 2013 – Planted a 670-tree native Food Forest on campus
- 2013 – Transitioned to single-stream recycling
- 2013 – Students start an apiary, aquaponics demonstration project, and campus-wide book recycling
- 2014 – Recognized by the Illinois Food Scrap Coalition for 100% pre- and post-consumer composting by Dining Services
- 2014 – Recognized as a Gold Partner by the U.S. EPA Green Power Program for using more renewable power than any other college in our athletic conference
- 2014 – Installed electric car charging stations on campus
- 2014 – Sustainability is recognized as a mission-driven "key organizational activity" in our Strategic Plan, with zero waste and carbon neutrality among our operational targets
- 2015 – Adopted a Green Cleaning Purchasing Standard
- 2015 – Dining Services achieves an 89% landfill diversion rate; 45% campus-wide
- 2015 – Submitted our first college-wide STARS audit

The Sustainability degree program is already one of the most popular on campus, providing a multidisciplinary framework for our students to develop their academic and problem-solving skills in preparation for their role in envisioning a more sustainable world. Principia is pleased to join the global family of STARS institutions, and we look forward to utilizing the STARS report to evaluate and advance our sustainability programming in the years to come.

Sincerely,