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August 31, 2020

STARS Steering Committee  
Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education  
2401 Walnut Street, Suite 102  
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Dear Steering Committee Members,

Dawson College is the largest College in the CEGEP network of Quebec and prides itself as a leader in sustainability. After receiving feedback from over 1000 staff and students in 2015 for the development of the next strategic plan, it was clear that sustainability was still a major topic on the community's mind. This was translated into bold statements within the revised College mission, vision and strategic plan. Our resulting sustainability plan created ambitious goals, one of which was to be a leader in Canada in all sustainability endeavours and to reach for the AASHE Gold Level certification. The STARS Report will demonstrate what the Dawson community has accomplished within academic, operational, engagement and administration sectors, but several initiatives stand out.

Our College is board-mandated to be carbon responsible (neutral) forever. This unanimous vote by the board was a commitment to all students and staff that we were serious in our efforts. We have developed extensive peace and non-violence programs through our Peace Centre and have initiated a peace certificate for students. The Sustainable Happiness Certificate, a concept that explores how being engaged in sustainable projects contributes to well-being for all, was developed here and Dawson will be the Canadian hub for training.

Our Living Campus invites Nature back to our urban landscape and is a place where high-impact learning activities that build positive relationships are interwoven with real-life projects. This has inspired a Living Schools movement in other colleges, high schools and primary schools both here and abroad. In short, Dawson students and staff have gone beyond the bar set with bold goals years ago.

We commit to continuing our leadership in sustainability and to further set goals that reduce our ecological footprint. We will also expand our ability to share best practices with others and support national efforts to strengthen sustainability work in institutes of higher education.

I thank AASHE for its leadership in facilitating this process and look forward to a relationship that strengthens our collective objectives.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard Filion". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "F".

Richard Filion  
Director General