

# COLLEGE OF MENOMINEE NATION SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

**TRADITION OF SUSTAINABILITY** College of Menominee Nation (CMN) was founded in 1993 on principles and values of the Menominee Nation environmental stewardship. Our College continues this dedication of sustainable stewardship and to grow sustainably. For years, College of Menominee Nation has been integrating sustainability initiatives. The teachings of the Menominee people are the essence of our educational philosophy, values, and practices. CMN degree programs, research, and student activities are committed to addressing contemporary problems through modern science and methodologies that are informed by ancient knowledge. This is most evident in sustainable development programs at CMN that draw on resource management philosophies tested over centuries in the great Menominee forest. Native and non-native students and visitors from across the world come to CMN to pursue higher learning and to learn the history, systems, and strategies of the Menominee and other First Americans.

## AMERICAN COLLEGE & UNIVERSITIES PRESIDENTS' CLIMATE COMMITMENT

In March 2007, College of Menominee Nation President Dr. Verna Fowler signed the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment (ACUPCC). The framework for the ACUPCC implements comprehensive plans to pursue climate neutrality. The Commitment recognizes the unique responsibilities of higher education institutions as role models for their communities and in educating the people who will develop the social, economic and technological solutions to reverse global warming and help create a thriving, civil and sustainable society.



## AMERICAN COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS CLIMATE COMMITMENT

### MISSION

Accelerate progress towards climate neutrality and sustainability by empowering the higher education sector to educate students, create solutions, and provide leadership-by-example for the rest of society.

- Establish an Institutional Structure
- Sustainable Development Institute already in place
  - Must include faculty, staff, and students

- Measure Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG)
- Must be done in the first year
  - 2007 used as benchmark year for CMN/SDI

- Developing a Climate Action Plan
- Two years after Commitment is signed
  - Includes target date and interim milestones

- Must make progress reports publically available
- Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE)

### GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS INVENTORY

**Greenhouse Gas Emission-** Any atmospheric gas that contributes to the greenhouse effect by absorbing infrared radiation produced by solar warming of the Earth's surface. The list of gases include: carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), Methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), nitrous oxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), sulfuric oxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) and water vapor.

Conducting a greenhouse gas emissions inventory includes: collecting, analyzing, and presenting data on the emissions of greenhouse gases attributable to the existence and operations of an institution.

#### GHG Protocol Scopes

- Scope 1-Direct emissions from sources that are owned and/or controlled by CMN
- On Campus Stationary Sources
  - Direct Transportation Sources
  - Refrigeration and other Chemicals
  - Agriculture

Scope 2-Indirect emissions from sources that are neither owned nor operated by CMN, but whose products are directly linked to on campus energy consumption; electricity, steam and chilled water are included in this scope.

Scope 3-Includes emissions from sources that are neither owned nor operated by CMN, but are either directly financed or are otherwise linked to the campus via influence or encouragement.

- Solid Waste
- Directly Financed Outsourced Transportation
- Commuting

### WHAT IS CLIMATE NEUTRALITY?

Carbon neutrality refers to achieving net zero carbon emissions by balancing a measured amount of carbon released with an equivalent amount sequestered, avoided or offset. When the net greenhouse gas emissions associated with an organizational unit, product, service or process are zero, through a combination of internal emission reducing actions and external offsetting actions, carbon neutrality or having a net zero carbon footprint is achieved.

## ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SUSTAINABILITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION (AASHE) SUSTAINABILITY TRACKING, ASSESSMENT & RATING SYSTEM (STARS)

The Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System (STARS) is a voluntary, self-reporting framework for recognizing and gauging relative progress toward sustainability for colleges and universities. STARS was developed by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). STARS is intended to be used by large and small colleges and universities. This system helps the institutions to gauge where the school is at in terms of sustainability. It also provides a type of "roadmap" that allows the institution to see what opportunities exist for a more sustainable future. STARS requires institutions to benchmark past achievements so that the effectiveness of current projects and activities can be measured.

STARS is a tool that measures all aspects of an institution. The areas measured include; curriculum and research, campus operations, and planning, administration and engagement. Within each of these categories are several subcategories. Measurement of all these categories is intended to encompass all of the possible activities within the campus community that impact the sustainability of the institution.

As with any measuring framework, it is difficult to make all categories applicable to all institutions. For this reason, STARS designers encourage feedback so that newer versions may be developed and tailored in such a way as to not exclude any participants. Currently, STARS only incorporates those points that are applicable to the institution. STARS only considers positive points. Omission from point categories will not have an adverse effect on the institutions rating. All of the categories are scored through a point system. The points vary depending on the importance and overall impact on the institutions sustainability. The lesser the importance or impact, the lesser the value of the possible points. All of the points add up to achieve different levels within the system. The levels and associated points are; STARS Bronze- 25 pts., STARS Silver- 45 pts., STARS Gold- 65 pts., and STARS Platinum- 85 pts.

Currently there are 264 STARS participants from the United States and Canada. Of those that have already submitted for a rating, 22 attained the gold level, 61 were silver and 24 have attained the bronze level. No institution has attained the platinum level, as of yet. The College of Menominee Nation (CMN) is the first tribal college to participate in STARS.

- Some of the activities that the College of Menominee Nation will submit for consideration include;
- Mass Transit- CMN has an agreement with Menominee Public Transit that allows students and employees to ride the regular routes free of charge.
  - Curriculum- CMN has made the Introduction to Sustainability course a general education requirement for all degree seeking students.
  - Undergraduate Program- CMN offers an Associate's Degree in Sustainable Development.
  - Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory- CMN has made its greenhouse gas inventory publicly available on the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment reporting site.

The measurement of CMN's activities has also revealed opportunities that are attainable and may be used to raise the rating in the future. These include;

- Vendor Policy- Creating a policy that would give preference to vendors that practice sustainability.
- Participation in National Organizations- the College may look into participating with such national organizations as the Arbor Day Foundation Tree Campus USA.
- Retirement Plans- Offer and encourage socially responsible investment options for employee retirement plans.
- Community Service- Reporting a student's community service participation on their official transcripts.

STARS helps higher education institutions begin the sustainability conversation within their campus community. Once this dialogue begins, it can allow for possible improvements and movement towards a more sustainable future for all those involved.



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**SUSTAINABLE**  
DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

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