



COLORADO COLLEGE - OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY

# STATE OF SUSTAINABILITY **2020 REPORT**



MAY 2020// PREPARED BY IAN JOHNSON, SARA DIXON '22, AND GILLIAN LASHER '23

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2020 will very likely be remembered as a year of tumult and uncertainty brought about by the Coronavirus. Colorado College (CC), too, has been profoundly impacted by the virus in many ways, as were all of our students, faculty, and staff. Though the focus for the college in 2020 has largely shifted to coping with and responding to the virus, early 2020 marked a milestone of substantial proportions for the college. As of January 1, 2020, CC has achieved the goal of carbon neutrality – a goal that was officially established in 2009.

At the same time, the college continues to make incremental improvements throughout the rest of its operations; in its academics and research as they apply to and support sustainability; to the way it provides for engagement with its decision-making processes; for improved transparency in its investment strategies – and more. The broad topic of sustainability encompasses a host of environmental, social, and economic goals as outlined by the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#). As we continue to make strides towards these goals, the new reality brought about in 2020 by the Coronavirus makes these goals all the more poignant.

Much of the work that went towards the goal of carbon neutrality was informed by the annual Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System (STARS®) reports compiled by the Office of Sustainability and the subsequent State of Sustainability Reports which condense and disseminate the vast amount of information contained within the STARS® reports. Similarly, these reports offer insights into progress the college is making on the many other areas that fit beneath the umbrella of sustainability, as well as areas where the college is making less headway.

The 2014 State of Sustainability Report established the initial baseline that subsequent annual State of Sustainability Reports have routinely referenced and updated. This 2020 State of Sustainability Report provides a new baseline, complete with detailed information about each credit in STARS®, rather than the abbreviated update the past several reports have provided. It should be noted that, although carbon neutrality was achieved as of January 1, 2020, this document references the college's most recent STARS® report, based on the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019. Performance updates due to the achievement of carbon neutrality will begin to appear in the 2021 State of Sustainability Report.

This report does, however, outline the impressive achievements the college has made as a result of its dedicated work through the Campus Sustainability Council, Facilities Services, individual academic departments, student efforts and persistence, support from the administration and the Board of Trustees, The CC Office of Sustainability, and countless individuals who are dedicated to making Colorado College a model for sustainability at all levels.

# LONG-TERM GOALS

The overarching goals guiding all sustainability efforts in the next few years have been created by the Steering Committee of the Campus Sustainability Council. These goals inform many of our sustainability initiatives and one has already been achieved!

## 1) Achieve Carbon Neutrality by 2020 - Completed

Colorado College achieved Carbon Neutrality on January 1, 2020. The goal was set in 2009 and over the past decade, CC has worked diligently to achieve this milestone.

\*This year's STARS® and State of Sustainability report does not reflect carbon neutrality as the data is collected from the prior fiscal year, July 2018 - June 2019.\*

## 2) Reach STARS® Platinum Rating

Colorado College is working to achieve STARS® Platinum. In efforts to reach this goal, the Office of Sustainability created the Impact Awareness and Project Planner internship. This role is responsible for creating a report based on STARS® data to determine areas in which CC can improve upon. The report acts as a guide for the college to reach STARS® Platinum.

## 3) Increase Funding to \$1 Million Per Year

Colorado College is working to increase Renewal and Replacement funding dedicated to sustainability projects by \$250,000 annually while restoring historical Renewal and Replacement funding levels. This was first proposed by the Campus Sustainability Council in 2016. The college is also working to quantify savings from sustainability projects and redirect towards this increased funding.







# OUR CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS

## ACADEMICS

Colorado College aims to educate students about sustainability through formal education programs, courses, and research.

### 51

sustainability-related courses meet at least one sustainability learning objectives

### 35

sustainability-focused courses meet three or more sustainability learning objectives

### 24

academic departments offer sustainability-related or sustainability-focused courses



80% of CC students study off-campus at least once for academic credit during their time at CC.

### Environmental Studies Program

The Environmental Program aims to prepare its majors and minors to understand their connection to the environment, acquire the skills to explore scientific and human interrelationships in the global ecosystem, and pursue interdisciplinary approaches to problem solving.

### Faculty Sustainability Scholars

This program aims to expand sustainability curriculum offerings at Colorado College by inviting professors to attend an annual faculty development workshop entitled Sustainability Across Curriculum. The program supports faculty who want to incorporate sustainability objectives into their curriculum. A stipend is awarded to faculty who participate in the Sustainability Across Curriculum workshop and redesign a course to include sustainability learning outcomes.





**36** out of 177 professors conduct research focused on aspects of sustainability

### Open Access Repository

The current repository collects and preserves student theses, faculty works, and digitized collections from Tutt Library's Special Collections Department that reflect the history of the college.

### State of the Rockies

Each summer, State of the Rockies hires a group of Colorado College students to gather data for, compose, and publish the project's annual State of the Rockies Report. The State of the Rockies Project seeks to increase public understanding of vital issues affecting the Rocky Mountain West through research, reporting, and public engagement via educational and outreach initiatives.

## ACADEMIC INITIATIVES

- Colorado College is exploring ways to deliver climate change content to all students through an all-college general education requirement.
- The college works continuously to increase the number of courses that are sustainability-focused and sustainability-related.



State of the Rockies Director Corina McKendry teaching a class focused on urban issues around climate change.



# ENGAGEMENT

**100%**

of new employees are offered orientation, outreach, and/or guidance materials that highlight pertinent sustainability topics

**77%**

of students are served by one or multiple peer-to-peer sustainability initiatives

**55,155**

hours of community service were contributed during the 2018-2019 academic year by students

Colorado College’s vibrant campus offers a variety of sustainability-focused activities that involve and educate the student body, faculty, and staff through intentional community engagement. Engaging in sustainability issues through co-curricular activities allows students to deepen and apply their understandings of sustainability principles. Faculty and staff are equipped with the tools and knowledge to motivate daily behavior changes that promote sustainability.

**3**

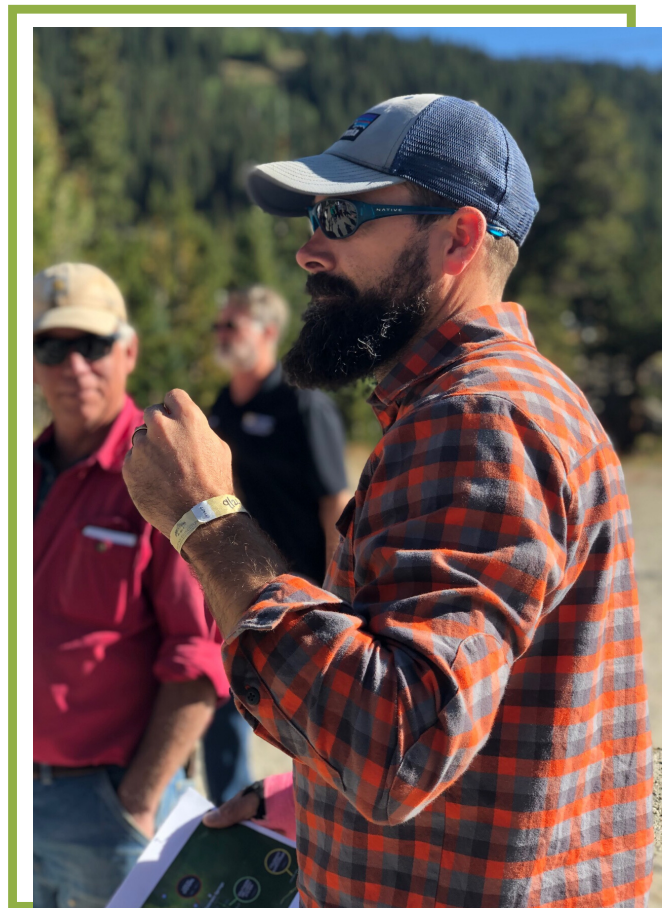
notable sustainability-related outreach campaigns are held that are directed at students and employees: Recyclemania, the Real Food Challenge, and the Bon Appetit "Ditch Disposal Campaign"

**8**

active on-campus student groups are committed to environmental justice, equity, and sustainability, such as EnAct and FEMME in STEM

**10**

sustainability focused courses offered to staff and faculty through the Excel@CC Program.





## ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVES

- Colorado College is exploring opportunities to meet with different military, government, and faith-based groups in an attempt to bridge the gap between demographic groups and bring thoughtful, fact-based information about climate change to groups may not otherwise engage with the topic.
- The college is working to increase overall sustainability engagement in the greater Colorado Springs community.



### Excel@CC

Started in 2014, Excel@CC is a multi-faceted professional development program that focuses on a variety of topics that relate to the workplace. One of the topics offered is sustainability. This certificate program has greatly increased the number of staff members who receive information and training about sustainability topics and the college's goals and efforts as part of their professional development. Topics covered include Carbon Offsets and Renewable Energy Credits, Colorado Springs Water 101, Sustainable Travel, and Zero Waste.



#### Program Highlights: 18-19

- 10 programs offered
- 92 sessions held
- 269.5 training hours completed
- 508 employees participated
- 297 participants earned at least one certification
- 356 certificates awarded

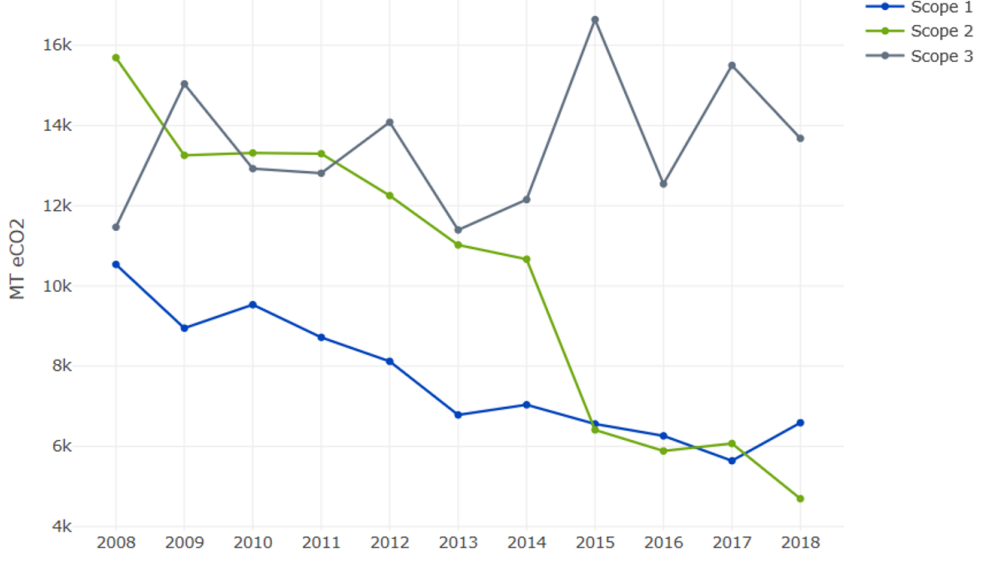
The Office of Sustainability with a group of students, faculty, and staff during their annual Excel@CC Sense of Place Water Tour during first block break.

# OPERATIONS

Colorado College has made sustainable changes in its purchasing, energy and resource usage, and disposal of materials.

## AIR, CLIMATE, AND ENERGY

Carbon Emissions Since Baseline Year



Graph: Carbon emissions by scope from 2008 to 2018 from SIMAP

### GHG Emissions Per Campus User

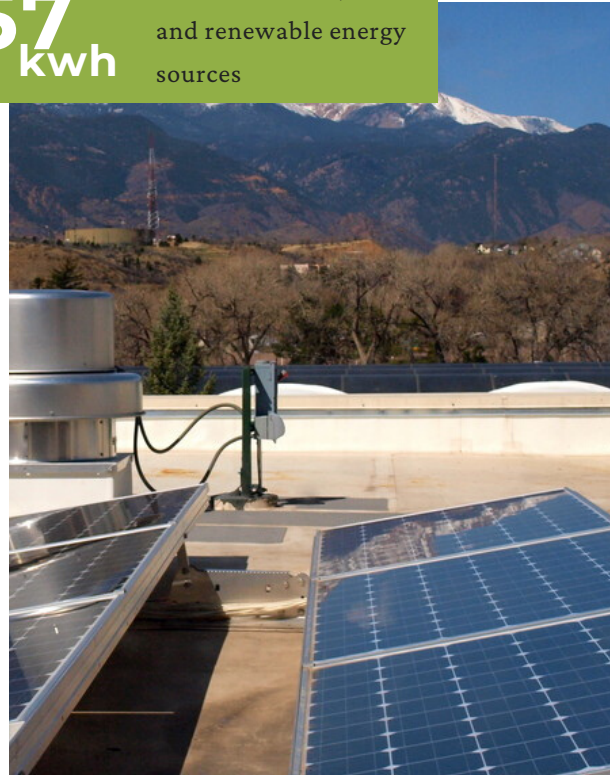
Adjusted net Scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions per weighted campus user:

- 2018  
5.47 metric tons of CO2 equivalent
- 2008  
10.98 metric tons of CO2 equivalent



**50%** reduction in adjusted net Scope 1 and Scope 2 GHG emissions per weighted campus user from baseline in 2008

**680,057 kwh** are from on-site, clean and renewable energy sources



Tutt Library at Colorado College is the largest academic library to achieve net-zero energy through the installation of solar panels on the building, use of natural gas, efficient building design elements, the use of geothermal heat exchange, and more.



## BUILDINGS, GROUNDS, AND TRANSPORTATION

**100%** of CC students use sustainable commuting options

**42%** of CC employees use sustainable commuting options like walking, biking, and carpooling

### PikeRide Partnership

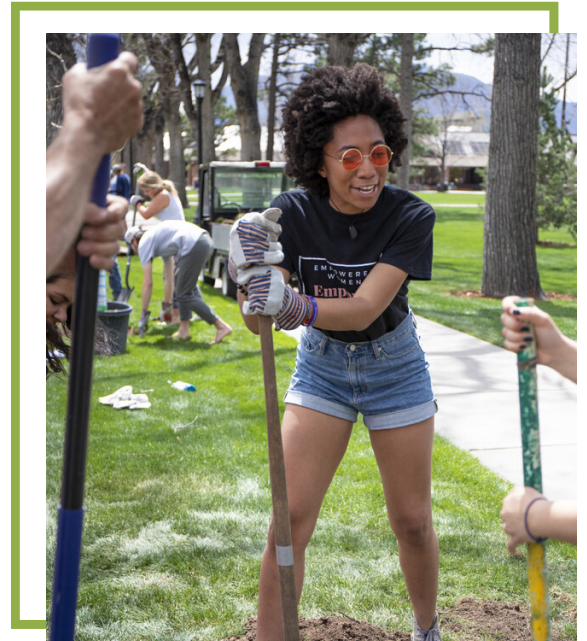
CC partners with PikeRide, a city wide bike share program that allows CC students, faculty, and staff use the electric bikes at a highly discounted rate.

### Student Ride For Free

Mountain Metro provides FREE shuttle service for getting around the CO Springs downtown area for CC students.

### Offsetting Our Fleet Vehicles

In 2018, the college worked to implement a carbon offset price for all rented CC fleet vehicles at one cent per mile. Since then, over 3,000 have been collected and invested in reducing emissions.



### Integrated Pest Management

**38.32** hectares out of the 40.04 hectares of the CC campus are managed in accordance with an Integrated Pest Management program (using selected chemicals only when needed). The other 1.72 hectares are managed organically, without the use of inorganic fertilizers, pesticides, fungicides, and herbicides.



The LEED rating system gives credit to buildings based on five primary sustainability categories. The college has two buildings that meet LEED certification requirements: The Russell T. Tutt Science Center, 2003 (on the left) and the Edith Kinney Gaylord Cornerstone Arts Center, 2008 (on the right). Even though only two buildings are LEED certified, Colorado College has many more buildings on campus that were built with sustainability in mind.



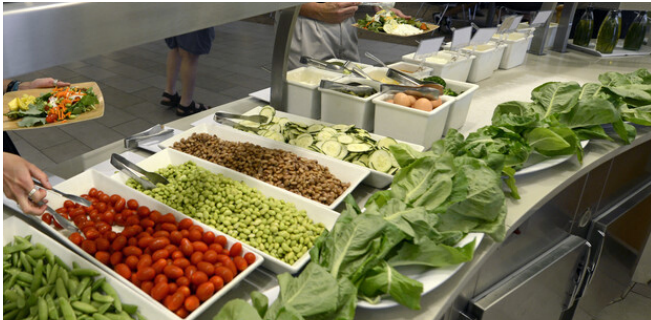
# PURCHASING AND FOOD

## Procurement and Purchasing

Colorado College has a written Procurement and Purchasing Policies document, which is intended to help the college practice sustainable purchasing across many categories.

**83%**

of the total quantity of office paper purchased is made from agricultural residue, 30-49% post-consumer recycled material, and/or FSC certified content



**22%**

of annual food and beverage expenditures consist of products that are sustainability or ethically produced

## Colorado Springs Food Rescue

The Colorado Springs Food Rescue, a student and community run organization founded in 2013. This organization uses bike trailers to transport perishable food that has been thrown away in the community, including the buffet leftovers from Rastall Dining Hall, to charities and non-profits that serve at-risk or hungry individuals.

## Food and Waste Recovery Initiatives

- Colorado College chefs reduce, reuse, and compost food products.
- Colorado College has implemented tray less dining to reduce the number of plates used.
- Rastall Dining Hall offers take-away boxes to reduce waste.



## WASTE AND WATER

**36%** decrease in annual waste since the baseline year in 2009

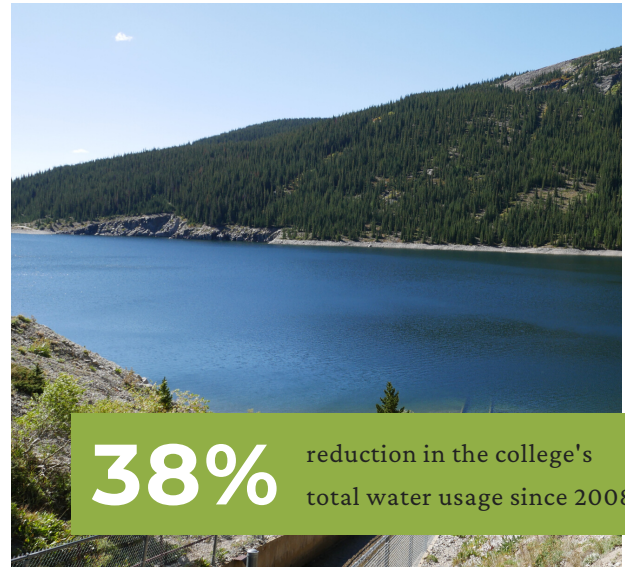
**2009** → **2019**  
 1224.398 tonnes → 789.614 tonnes  
 amount of waste in tonnes decreased



### Waste Contamination

Green For Life allows up to a 15% contamination rate. If the rate exceeds 15%, then the Recycling Coordinator works directly with those responsible to address the contamination issue corrections immediately.

### Water Highlights



**38%** reduction in the college's total water usage since 2008

In 2019, Colorado College was named a top performer in the Water Category on the STARS® Report thanks to positive changes in its water use through the installation of a smart irrigation system, the recovery and reuse of grey water, the installation of low-flow faucets, and more.

## OPERATION INITIATIVES

- CSC continues to encourage individual staff and faculty engagement under its Green Office Program.
- Guide future campus landscape projects to ensure planting areas favor xeric and native species over water-intensive Kentucky Bluegrass.
- The Office of Sustainability is pursuing an updated waste management contract that will require waste haulers to measure and weigh all loads picked up from the campus year-round.
- The college introduced a transportation offset option for employees and students that travel during their time at Colorado College. For a small price, students and faculty can voluntarily offset their commuting, study abroad, and business travel.



# PLANNING & ADMINISTRATION

Colorado College prioritizes sustainability by dedicating resources to help offices and stakeholders organize and implement sustainable initiatives throughout all of the departments on campus. Staff and other resources help CC organize, implement, and publicize sustainability initiatives. CC's people define its character and capacity to perform; and so, its achievements can only be as strong as its community.

## Diversity & Affordability



**100%** of students are awarded need-based aid

Since 2018, CC has focused on our antiracism initiative is a college wide effort to actively examine and oppose the ways that racism exists and persists at CC. With antiracism central to our mission, our faculty, staff, and students will experience greater equity and inclusion, our teaching will be more impactful, and our students will be better prepared to make positive change in the world.

**\$20,627** have been invested through Portfolio 21, a portfolio dedicated to making green investments. The funds align CC's values for a sustainable world with institutional investment decisions.

**76%**

of employees responded to the bi-annual campus climate survey to assess the college's progress toward achieving its sustainability goals

**85%**

of students from low-income backgrounds graduate, demonstrating CC's ability to serve historically marginalized groups

**95%**

of employees receive a living wage at \$16.88/hour for a family of four

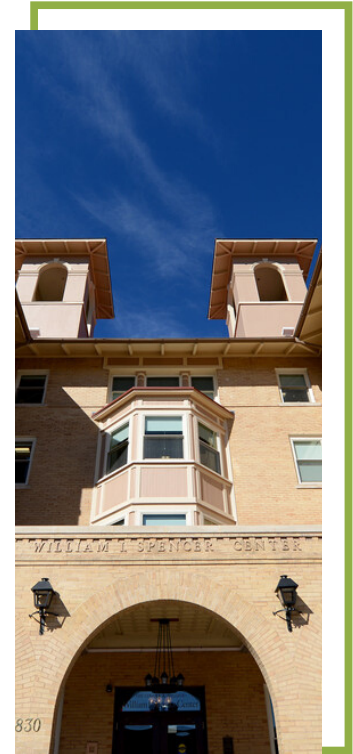


## Wellbeing & Work

CC offers a variety of wellness programs for the CC community from the Wellness Resource Center to the Boetcher Health Center to the Employee Assistance Program.

## PLANNING & ADMINISTRATION INITIATIVES

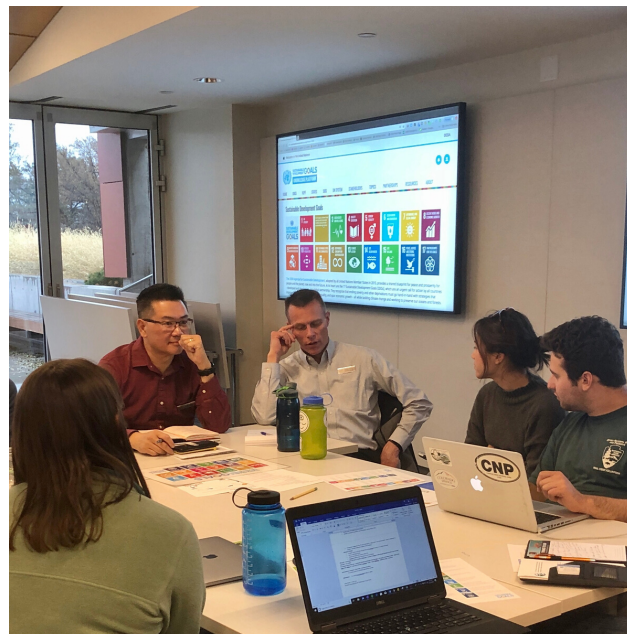
- Staff, faculty, and other resources provide the infrastructure that fosters sustainability within Colorado College. CC focuses on sustainability planning efforts, which clarify its vision of a sustainable future, establish priorities and help guide budgeting and decision making.
- CC has bolstered the strength of its community by making fair and responsible investments in its human capital. Such investments include offering benefits, wages, and other assistance that serve to respectfully and ethically compensate workers. It acts to protect and positively affect the health, safety, and well-being of the campus community.
- CC's strategic planning and internal stakeholder engagement in its governance are important steps in making sustainability a campus priority. These efforts help advocates to implement changes to achieve sustainability goals.



### Campus Sustainability Council

The mission of the Campus Sustainability Council (CSC) is to make Colorado College a model for campus and community sustainability.

The CSC, an advisory committee appointed by and reporting to the President's Office, works to design, promote, and implement initiatives that are ecologically viable, economically sound, and socially just, now and for future generations. The CSC plays a key role in raising campus awareness and keeping sustainability issues at the forefront, reminding us all to live up to Colorado College's core value of nurturing a sense of place and an ethic of environmental sustainability.



**50+** dedicated staff, student leaders, and faculty serve on the Campus Sustainability Council which is overseen and appointed by the President's Office to address pressing sustainability issues



# INNOVATION & LEADERSHIP

STARS® Innovation Credits recognize institutions that have come up with innovative solutions to sustainability challenges and have demonstrated leadership that was not documented in the STARS® Report.

## Dining Services Certification

Colorado College is a part of a food “waste” recovery program called the Colorado Springs Food Rescue. It was started by CC students and is dedicated to food access, food education, and food production.

## Green Events Certification

Colorado College has a Green Events Certification Program that provides sustainable resources like transportation, catering, paper consumption, waste minimization and diversion, and signage.

## Grounds Certification

Tree Campus USA (Arbor Day Foundation)- Colorado College has been honored by the Arbor Day Foundation with a 2018 Tree Campus USA recognition due to their commitment to effective urban forest management. Since 2018, CC annually hosts an Arbor Day event, in which students volunteer to work with CC staff in planting and maintaining trees and gardens on campus.

## Natural Wastewater Systems

Colorado College employs Colorado Springs Utilities to ensure that natural wastewater systems are used to treat and manage 100% of the institution's wastewater.

## Student Living Wage

All students who are employed by Colorado College are paid a wage of \$12.00 or more an hour, which is equal to the living wage for a single adult in the state.

## Sustainability Projects Fund

Colorado College has a Sustainability Projects Fund called the Eco Fund, where students can get funding for sustainable projects on campus.





# COLORADO COLLEGE THANK YOU

## CONCLUSION

Colorado College has made exemplary strides in sustainability performance within the past year, and sustainability continues to be a centerpiece of our strategies to remain relevant to our students and the world moving forward. Indeed, sustainability is a prominent piece of our strategic plan and the master plan. Our STARS® Gold benchmark rating is evidence of the ethic and practices that permeate the administration, faculty, staff, and students at our college. By using this widely accepted and comprehensive metric, we have made solid improvements in our performance, and have a clearer map of where to head in the coming years.

The Colorado College State of Sustainability 2020 Report provides an overview of Colorado College's sustainability efforts over the past few years. Our status as a STARS® Gold institution validates many of the efforts begun over the past years as well as re-focuses our efforts in new areas as we strive to become a STARS® Platinum institution and a premier sustainability example while providing the finest liberal arts education in the country.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This year's report is brought to you by the Colorado College Office of Sustainability in close collaboration with the Campus Sustainability Council, the Provost's Office, Facilities Services, and the Office of Sustainability Interns. This document has been co-authored by Ian Johnson, Sara Dixon '22, and Gillian Lasher '23. The STARS® data used in this report has been compiled by: Ian Johnson, STARS® Intern Sara Dixon '22, and the STARS® Volunteer Gillian Lasher '23.



# CAMPUS SUSTAINABILITY COUNCIL

## CO-CHAIR

Student: Max Kronstadt (CCSGA)

Staff: Luke Cammack (Patron Experience Manager – FAC)

## STUDENTS

Hugh Alessi (CCSGA)

Daniel Cortes (Sustainability Intern)

Ben Kirchman (Sustainability Intern)

Quinn Yawger (Sustainability Intern)

Madison Wilkinson (Sustainability Intern)

Paige Shetty (Sustainability Intern)

Brandon Ewert (Sustainability Intern)

Westly Joseph (Sustainability Intern)

Zach Benevento-Zahner (Sustainability Intern)

Benjamin Swift (Sustainability Intern)

Sara Dixon (Sustainability Intern)

Sofia Moreira Infante (Sustainability Intern)

Kevin Barry (Investment Club Co-Chair)

Nick Shulkin (Investment Club Co-chair)

Jordan Schrage (EnAct Co-Chair)

Emma Fetterly (EnAct Co-Chair)

Madie Alexander (Sustainable Community Development CO-OP Co-Chair)

Margot Flynn (Sustainable Community Development CO-OP Co-Chair)

Brita Mackey (Sunrise Movement Co-Chair)

Jane Hatfield (Sunrise Movement Co-Chair)

## FACULTY

Rebecca Barnes (Environmental Program)

Eli Fahrenkrug (Chemistry)

Tyler Cornelius (Environmental Program)

## STAFF

Ian Johnson (Director of Sustainability)

Mae Rohrbach (Sustainability Paraprofessional)

Lori Hamacher (Executive Assistant to the President)

George Eckhardt (Campus Planner)

Karen To (Director of Web & Digital Media)

Dave Barfield (Sodexo)

Meghan Yingling (Major Gift Officer)

Darren Ceckanowicz (EV Program Technical Director)

Mark Ferguson (Campus Operations & Plant Manager)



## STAFF CONT.

Cecelia Gonzales (Horticulturist)

Eddie Siow (Bon Appetit)

Tyler Dexter (Bon Appetit)

Eddie Siow (Bon Appetit)

Tyler Dexter (Bon Appetit)

Keith Beck (Housing Maintenance Supervisor)

Alex Guido (Housing Lead Maintenance Worker)

John Lauer (Associate Vice President – Student Life)

Tess Powers (Director of Faculty Research Support)

Michael Brubaker (Mechanical Services Engineer)

Katharina Groves (Director, Applications & Security – ITS)

Julia Barrett (Assistant Director, College and FAC Events)

John Thornburg (Career Coach)

Amy Hill (Director of Campus Activities and Student Orientation)

Tiffany Kelly (Director of Alumni and Family Relations)

Mateen Zafer (Coordinator of Mentorship and Diversity Initiatives)

## COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Alicia Archibald (e-Tech Recyclers)

Stephen Payne (Account Manager – Colorado Springs Utilities)

Ryan Trujillo (Sustainability Director, Colorado Springs)

Linda Kogan (Sustainability Director, UCCS)

Jane Ard-Smith (Sierra Club)

