

2018

# SUSTAINABILITY HIGHLIGHTS



## OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY

Division of Finance and Operations

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# SUSTAINABILITY

Texas A&M University defines sustainability as the efficient, deliberate and responsible preservation of environmental, social, and economic resources to protect our earth for future generations of Texas Aggies, the Texas A&M University community, and beyond.



**SUSTAINABILITY**  
RESPECT. PROTECT. PRESERVE.

# 2018 Sustainability Highlights



May 23, 2019

Stemming back to the institution's first Sustainability Master Plan (SMP) in 2010, the university has evolved with the growing discipline of sustainability. Throughout the years, the campus community has remained committed to its definition of sustainability: the efficient, deliberate, and responsible preservation of environmental, social, and economic resources to protect our earth for future generations of Texas Aggies, the Texas A&M University community, and beyond.

The university embarked on a journey to update its 2010 SMP following the creation of the President's Sustainability Advisory Council (SAC). The SAC defined a number of core goals the update would need to address in order to renew Texas A&M University's commitment to sustainability. We are pleased to announce this journey has resulted in the launch of the 2018 Sustainability Master Plan (SMP). The 2018 SMP is a collective product of the leadership of the Office of Sustainability, the guidance of the SAC, the support of outside consultant Ayers Saint Gross, and the contributions of countless campus stakeholders. The 2018 SMP identifies nine themes, 16 evergreen goals, and 47 targets to move Texas A&M toward a more sustainable future. We are pleased with the results of this highly collaborative update and look forward to implementing the SMP's recommendations to further Texas A&M's overall sustainability performance.

Texas A&M strives to be a leader in sustainability and to increasingly embed our commitment to respect, protect, and preserve the financial, environmental, and people resources that support our community not only for today, but for future generations of Aggies.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael K. Young".

MICHAEL K. YOUNG  
President, Texas A&M University



## About This Report

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From its inception as a land-grant institution in 1876 to the addition of sea- and space-grant designations, Texas A&M University (TAMU) has been a leader in research and education for how we interact with — and impact — our world. In March 2008, the Office of Sustainability (OS) was founded and charged with creating a culture of sustainability in Aggieland to enhance these efforts.

Through OS coordination and with guidance from the President's Sustainability Advisory Council (SAC), TAMU monitors institutional sustainability performance using the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS). STARS is a program managed by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE).

The 2018 highlights in this report come primarily from the campus' most recent STARS submission, where Texas A&M University earned its second STARS Gold rating. STARS evaluates institutions based on performance in the following four categories, and this report provides highlights for each. To view the entire submission, visit:

<https://reports.aashe.org/institutions/texas-am-university-tx/report/2018-12-28/>

### ACADEMICS



### ENGAGEMENT



### PLANNING & ADMINISTRATION



### OPERATIONS







## ACADEMICS

*TAMU demonstrates initiative by turning our campus into a **Living Laboratory**. Examples include class projects, Howdy! Farm, Utilities & Energy Services tours, and a variety of internships.*

The university offers sustainability-oriented degrees, minors, and certificates. Examples include:

### UNDERGRADUATE DEGREES

Ecological Restoration • Environmental Design • Environmental Studies • Environmental Geosciences • Renewable Natural Resources

### GRADUATE DEGREES

Natural Resource Development • Water Management & Hydrological Science

### MINORS & CERTIFICATES

Climate Change • Earth Sciences • Environmental Geosciences • Sustainable Architecture & Planning • Sustainable Urbanism (Graduate)

**More than 90%** of **departments** with sponsored research conduct sustainability-related research.



**More than 42% of sponsored researchers on campus are engaged in sustainability-related research.**

**17%** of the university's offered courses focus on or relate to sustainability.

**UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES** maintains a voluntary open-access policy that ensures all scholarly articles produced by faculty and staff are accessible. This policy helps address both the price and permission barriers that undermine global access to products of TAMU's scholarly and creative work.



**78%** of academic departments (or equivalents) offer at least one course related to sustainability.

TAMU offers Geography 380 (Workshop in Environmental Studies) and the Texas Target Communities Program (TCCP) as immersive student sustainability opportunities.

The Office of Sustainability collaborated with the Service Learning Fellows Program to offer funds to faculty members who agree to enhance their courses with a food security or sustainability focus.



**22%** of continuing education courses offered by TAMU Extension agencies address sustainability.



## ENGAGEMENT



*The goal of the **Internship Program** coordinated by the **Office of Sustainability** is to bring people from a variety of backgrounds and academic disciplines together to create a team that educates the campus community about sustainability issues. To date, the program has served **77** students.*

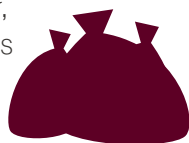
Over a 5-month period,

# 510

campus members were engaged in the development of the Sustainability Master Plan.

### Environmental Health & Safety

coordinates a volunteer program in which staff and students spend a Saturday once per year cleaning creek banks. Last year, **67** volunteers removed **50** bags of trash from creek banks.



### Aggie Eco

**Reps** is an organization coordinated by **Residence Life** in which students educate their peers about how to live a sustainable lifestyle.



TAMU actively supports the **Texas Regional Alliance for Campus Sustainability (TRACS)**, a network for higher education institutions looking to enhance sustainability efforts. The 6th Annual TRACS Summit was hosted by Tarleton State University.

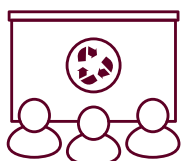
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AGGIE STUDENTS

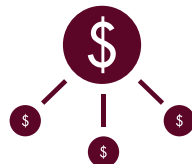
donated more than **10 MILLION**

hours of community service in 2017

At least **50%** of staff members participated in sustainability-themed training or professional development.



### The AGGIE GREEN FUND



empowers students, faculty, and staff to take action and bring about creative sustainability initiatives to campus. Since 2011, more than **\$1.87 MILLION** has been granted for projects making campus more sustainable.

**Residence Life** hosted the **10th Annual Sustainability Challenge** during Fall 2018 to encourage on-campus residents to incorporate sustainable behaviors into their daily routines.

This past November, **Residence Life** and **Dinner with a Prof** partnered to host the 5th Annual Sustainability Dinner. Chartwells caters the locally sourced dinner and the event provides a networking opportunity for students to engage with faculty and staff that live, research, or teach sustainability. Attendance has grown each year and is expected to continue to grow as students become more involved with sustainability efforts.

The **Texas Target Communities Program** in the **College of Architecture** develops partnerships across the state to advance sustainability. Partnerships include: Houston Independent School District, Charity Productions, Tyler County, and the City of La Grange.

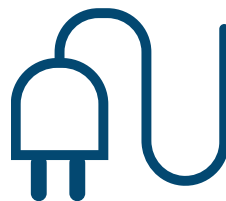
The **Institute for Sustainable Communities** works closely with the Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Services to investigate issues related to pollution and environmental justice along Houston's Ship Channel.



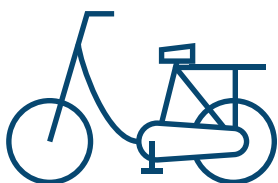
## OPERATIONS



With **Utilities & Energy Services** leading the way, TAMU has reduced energy consumption per gross square foot by **47%** from FY 2002 to FY 2018. This has resulted in a cumulative **\$249 million** purchased energy cost avoidance.



**18.02%** of the food and beverage options **Chartwells** provides for TAMU are sourced locally and/or third-party verified. Chartwells also provides sustainability-themed meals and vegetarian and vegan options at numerous campus locations.



The **League of American Bicyclists** recognized TAMU as a

**Silver Bicycle Friendly University** in 2018. A large part of our success is due to **Transportation Services** coordinating the largest University bike-share system in the nation.

At least **65%** of students utilize TAMU's available sustainable transportation options. Methods include the Aggie Spirit Bus, biking, walking, and carpooling.

In 2018, **Chartwells** donated **1,500** pounds of leftover food to the Food Recovery Network to help those with limited food resources.

Even though enrollment and occupied space have increased, TAMU has reduced overall annual water use on campus by **54%** since 1991.



**90%** of runoff from local and regional rainfall events is retained on-site using low-impact development practices and green infrastructure.



### SSC Grounds

uses a four-tiered integrated pest management approach on 100% of managed grounds.

In FY 2018, **UES**, **Chartwells**, and **SSC** helped divert **64%** of campus waste from the landfill. This is up from 10% in FY 2010.



**100%** of waste from TAMU-owned electronics is disposed of through **Logistics Services' University Surplus Property Program**. Electronics are either re-purposed or recycled sustainably through Responsible Recycling (R2) certified recyclers.



**89%** of all construction and demolition waste produced by TAMU was diverted from the landfill.

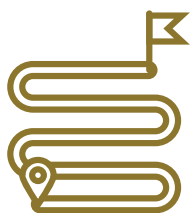


## PLANNING & ADMINISTRATION

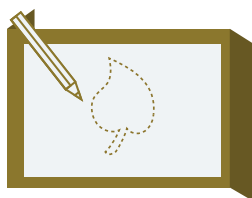


*TAMU strives to make being an Aggie accessible and affordable. **29%** of students directly benefit from policies and programs that support low-income and non-traditional students.*

The Department of Residence Life worked with Ayers Saint Gross to develop the **Residence Life Sustainability Master Plan**. Research indicates it is the first plan of its kind in the U.S.



The **2018 Sustainability Master Plan (SMP)** is a collective product of the leadership of the Office of Sustainability, the guidance of the Sustainability Advisory Council, the support of outside consultant Ayers Saint Gross, and the contributions of countless campus stakeholders. The 2018 SMP identifies **9** themes, 16 evergreen goals, and 47 targets to move Texas A&M towards a more sustainable future.



The **Office for Diversity** coordinates extensive campus diversity initiatives. Numerous programs, such as **STOP HATE**, work to prevent discrimination on campus and to provide support to students, faculty, and staff from under-represented groups.

### Human Resources & Organizational Effectiveness

coordinates the **WELLNESS WORKS!** program, designed to encourage employees to live healthier lifestyles, to support a healthy workplace, and to create a culture of wellness throughout the campus community.



TAMU has been a **Fair Trade** campus since 2017 and is also the largest U.S. Fair Trade university.

As the campus environment evolves to include additional **public and civic spaces**, the University committed to developing interior and exterior spaces to represent a **broader cross section** of the Aggie community.





## 2018 Sustainability Awards

At the **4<sup>th</sup> Annual Sustainability Breakfast** held in March, the **Office of Sustainability** hosted the **Sustainability Awards** ceremony to recognize members of the Aggie community who have demonstrated outstanding commitment to making TAMU more sustainable.

### CHAMPION AWARDS



MS. MICHELLE  
**ALVAREZ**

*Aggie Eco-Reps*

Received the **Student Sustainability Champion** award for her campus engagement and community service efforts as president of the Aggie Eco-Reps.



DR. NATALIE  
**JOHNSON**

*Dept. of Environmental & Occupational Health*

Received the **Faculty Sustainability Champion** award for her work fostering student sustainability engagement and green building practices in the School of Public Health.



DR. CAROL  
**BINZER**

*Dept. of Residence Life*

Received the **Staff Sustainability Champion** award for her efforts promoting sustainable practices, infrastructure, and engagement throughout campus residence halls.

### STARS AWARDS



**STARS Overall Top Performer:** Office for Diversity; University Libraries

*Earned the highest percentage of available points for stakeholders with multiple credits.*

**STARS Most Improved:** Transportation Services

*Making the most progress in their assigned credits.*

## OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY

Division of Finance and Operations

# VISION STATEMENT

Every member of the Aggie family works together to champion environmental stewardship, encourage healthy living, and improve social and economic opportunities and outcomes locally.

# HOW YOU CAN HELP

The Aggie Sustainability Alliance identifies ways for individuals to contribute to a more sustainable campus and world.

Visit the [individual checklist](#) to learn more about:

- Energy & Water
- Transportation
- Food & Purchasing
- Social Sustainability
- Waste Minimization

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