



# 2021 Sustainability Highlights







## 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.



# 2021 Sustainability Highlights



August 24, 2022

Texas A&M began charting a sustainable path in 2008, when the Office of Sustainability was founded. In Aggieland the 12th Man stands ready to serve in times of need. Right now, the world needs a sustainable future and Texas A&M is prepared to lead the charge through cutting edge research and education.

Our dedication to sustainability can be seen most clearly in the pages of our Sustainability Master Plan (SMP). The SMP solidifies Texas A&M's commitment to creating a more sustainable world. Implementing the SMP's recommendations to ensure a sustainable future in College Station on a campus of 70K+ people becomes an impact multiplier as Aggies spread across the globe.

Thirteen years ago, Texas A&M demonstrated our loyalty to the future by formalizing our commitment to respect, protect, and preserve our financial, environmental, and people resources to ensure future generations of Aggies have a sustainable home. Completing our eighth Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS) submission has helped our campus recognize, celebrate, and advance our sustainability efforts.

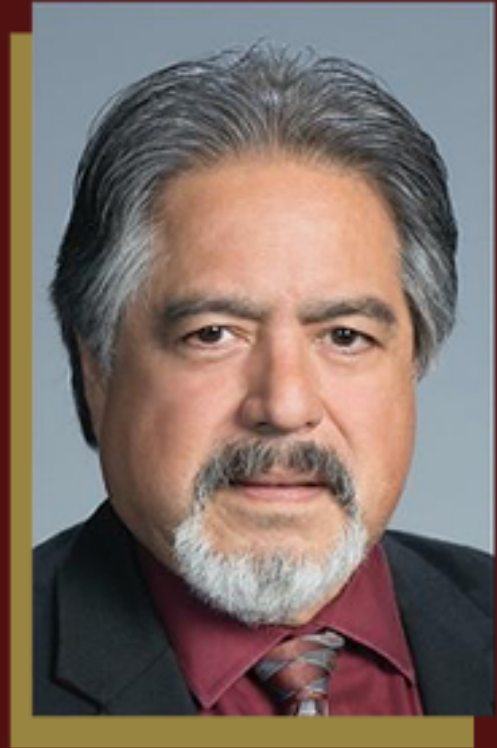
Respectfully,

*Susan Ballabina*

Susan Ballabina, Ph.D.

Vice President for Academic & Strategic Collaboration

# Letter from Leadership



The Department of Engagement for Sustainability are proud leaders of the TAMU sustainability movement. Effectively caring for our environmental, social, and economic resources is both the critical foundation and the essential path to a stronger, more prosperous future.

The information in the report represents a broad cross section of work that happens across the flagship campus to ensure that Texas A&M remains at the forefront of sustainability related educational, research, and operational excellence. TAMU strives to address the grand challenges, and through example, it is leading the way to a thriving global future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jorge Vanegas'.

Jorge Vanegas, Ph.D.

Associate Vice President for Department of Engagement for Sustainability

## About This Report

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 2021 highlights in this report come primarily from the campus' most recent STARS submission, where Texas A&M University earned its sixth 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 [STARS AASHE 2021](#).



# ACADEMICS



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  
Ecosystem Science & Management

## MINORS & CERTIFICATES

Climate Change  
Earth Sciences  
Environmental Geosciences  
Energy Technology, Law, and Policy  
Sustainable Architecture & Planning  
Sustainable Urbanism (Graduate)  
Women and Gender Studies  
Watershed Certificate  
Urban Planning

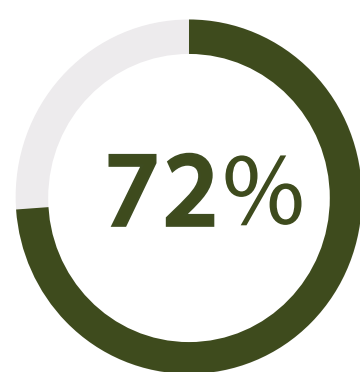
**UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES** maintains a voluntary open access policy that ensures all scholarly articles produced by faculty and staff are accessible. This policy helps address the barriers that undermine global access to products of TAMU's scholarly and creative work.

In addition, **University Libraries** now tags faculty research on campus that advances the United Nations Sustainability Development Goals in the Scholars@TAMU database.



More than **36%** of sponsored researchers on campus are engaged in sustainability-related research.

**24%** of the university's offered courses focus on or relate to sustainability.



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

More than **75%** of departments with sponsored research conduct sustainability-related research.



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

# 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. **203 INTERNSHIPS** have been provided since 2011.

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



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

With a grant from the Aggie Green Fund, Eppright Hall installed V-Kool Film. The film reduces heat within the building and allows access to light without altering the temperature of the surrounding area.

The Athletics Department is developing an Athletics Sustainability Plan that is expected to be released by December 2022.

**25%** of continuing education courses offered by TAMU Extension agencies address sustainability.

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

TAMU actively supports the **Texas Regional Alliance for Campus Sustainability (TRACS)**, a network for higher education institutions looking to enhance sustainability efforts. The 9th Annual TRACS Summit was hosted by Dallas College in 2021.

The Department of Residence Life hosts the "U Challenge", wherein teams of students (graduate & undergraduate) study utility and energy consumption for assigned residence hall communities as well as student engagement patterns. Their recommendations are reviewed by department leadership for implementation.



# OPERATIONS

Even though full-time equivalent students, faculty, and staff increased by almost **39%** and gross floor area of building space increased **136%**, TAMU has reduced total annual water use on campus by **66%** since 1991.

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

Today, TAMU uses **15%** less total energy than it did in 2000, even though campus has grown **70%** over the past 20 years.



**The Gardens** is a **27-acre** public teaching garden focused on expanding Texas A&M's research and outreach by building a living classroom for educational, inspirational, and recreational experiences.

It has been recognized by the Professional Grounds Management Society (PGMS) for implementing initiatives that sustain our environment.



TAMU is 1 of only 8 universities in the nation to earn a **4 Star accreditation** from the PGMS.

**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 certified recyclers.

**35%** of the annual food purchases by Chartwells for TAMU are plant-based.



of janitorial paper products are eco-certified.



**91%** of all the construction and demolition waste produced by TAMU was diverted from the landfill.



**SSC Grounds** minimizes chemical application by using integrated pest management on **99%** of managed grounds.

# PLANNING & ADMINISTRATION



**TAMU** has committed to representing a broader cross section of the Aggie community in public spaces in both the **Campus** and **Sustainability Master Plans**. The Matthew Gaines Society worked to dedicate a statue honoring **Senator Matthew Gaines** in 2021. His inclusion in **Academic Plaza** demonstrates that any Aggie, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, religion, or background can make a lasting impact on our campus.



The **Aggie Green Fund** empowers students, faculty, and staff to take action and bring about creative sustainability initiatives to campus. Since 2011, more than \$2.1 million has been granted for projects making campus more sustainable.



The **Sustainability Master Plan (SMP)** identifies **9 themes**, **16 evergreen goals**, and **47 targets** to move Texas A&M toward a more sustainable future. The four working groups which helped create the SMP were reconvened as the implementation teams.



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



In 2021, TAMU achieved designation as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) from the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities.



**TAMU** strives to make being an Aggie accessible and affordable. **81%** of students receive some form of financial aid.





# 2021 SUSTAINABILITY AWARDS

The **Office of Sustainability** hosted the **Awards Ceremony** in **April 2021** to recognize members of the Aggie community who have demonstrated outstanding commitment to making TAMU more sustainable.

## CHAMPION AWARDS



**MS. RHIAN**  
Murphy  
Psychology

*Student Sustainability  
Champion*



**DR. MARCIA**  
Montague  
Educational Psychology

*Faculty Sustainability  
Champion*



**MS. JEANNE**  
Prestwood  
Dept. of Electrical and  
Computer Engineering  
*Staff Sustainability  
Champion*



**ENGLISH 210**  
Open Educational Resources  
Committee  
Dept. of English  
*Team Sustainability  
Champion*

## STARS AWARDS

### STARS Top Performer

**Office for Diversity; University Libraries; Residence Life**  
Earned the highest percentage of available points for stakeholders with multiple credits.



### STARS Most Improved Transportation

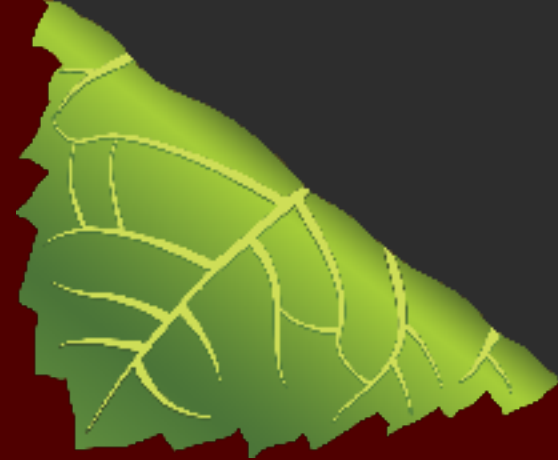
Making the most progress in their assigned credits.

### AASHE Top Performer Division of Research



## OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY

Division of Academic  
and Strategic Collaborations



# 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

229 Pavilion  
424 Spence St.  
College Station, TX 77843-1245  
Telephone: 979.845.1911

[sustainability@tamu.edu](mailto:sustainability@tamu.edu)



@sustainableTAMU

