



**USC**

Office of the Chief  
Sustainability Officer

---

Dear USC community,

Our university leadership has made a fundamental commitment to sustainability and has taken specific actions to make USC more sustainable today while also focusing on the changes needed for the future.

Earlier this week, we released the [final progress report for the USC Sustainability 2020 Plan](#), which encompassed five years of work toward the university's overall sustainability goals.

**Today we received our official report card for all that hard work.**

The industry standard for measuring higher education sustainability efforts is the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS), coordinated by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). STARS is a transparent, self-reporting framework for colleges and universities to assess their sustainability performance across academics, operations, engagement, and planning and administration.

In the university's first ever STARS submission for AASHE review, **we have officially earned a [STARS Silver rating](#)**. (See full report from AASHE [here](#).)

A Silver rating is higher than we were initially expecting and reflects the hard work that many members of our community have put in over the last few years. It also reflects the tireless efforts of our many campus partners who provided the necessary data for our STARS assessment. Their efforts and this assessment are part of our commitment to data-driven transparency and rapid progress.

The report submission was a collaborative, yearlong effort between the Office of Sustainability and teams across the university, including Athletics, Facilities Planning & Management, Hospitality, the Presidential Working Group on Sustainability, University Relations, and the USC Research Council, among many university participants. We are extremely grateful for the many students, faculty, and staff members who actively support our commitment to advancing sustainability at USC and who helped make the changes necessary to achieve this level of certification.

In completing this rigorous STARS assessment, USC joins a community of higher education sustainability leaders, including Stanford, MIT, Princeton, the UC system, and our other PAC-12 peers that regularly conduct STARS assessments.

Periodic STARS reviews are one of several ways we will measure our progress in supporting President Folt's strategic vision for sustainability at USC, and they

provide critical checkpoints for USC's 2028 Sustainability Plan, which will include aggressive goals focused on climate neutrality, zero waste, single-use plastics reduction, inclusion, engagement, and enhanced sustainability curriculum and research efforts.

While silver is not the pinnacle, it is a major accomplishment for our first submission. I wanted to take the time to make sure the community received credit for all the hard work done to date. Realize that this is only the starting point; we are setting much more lofty goals for achieving sustainability across our institution and will continue to work towards new and innovative ways to achieve those goals.

Thank you all for contributing to our success as an institution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mick Dalrymple". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mick Dalrymple  
Chief Sustainability Officer

---

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

University Park • Los Angeles, CA 90089

---