University of Maryland Earns Gold Rating For Sustainability Achievements

College Park, MD– The University of Maryland (UMD) has received a STARS Gold Rating in recognition of their sustainability achievements from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). STARS, the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System, is a program that measures and encourages sustainability in all aspects of higher education.

The Gold rating positions UMD among the nation’s top schools for sustainability. This inaugural submission to AASHE STARS was the result of a collaborative effort between UMD faculty, staff, and students who provided data for the rating system. These stakeholder contributions proved critical to the successful completion of the STARS process and advanced stakeholder engagement in campus sustainability initiatives.

“As evident in our STARS Report, a culture of sustainability is integrated into many aspects of our institution. The 2008 University Strategic Plan, Transforming Maryland: Higher Expectations, firmly establishes sustainability as a part of the university’s mission and sets forth our goal to be ‘a national model for a Green University.’ We are proud of the progress that the university is making,” said University of Maryland President Wallace Loh.

STARS is comprised of four credit categories:

- Education & Research (E&R)
- Operations
- Planning, Administration & Engagement (PAE)
- Innovation

“STARS was developed by the campus sustainability community to provide high standards for recognizing campus sustainability efforts,” said AASHE Executive Director Stephanie Herrera. “University of Maryland has demonstrated a substantial commitment to sustainability by achieving a STARS Gold Rating and is to be congratulated for their efforts.”

The Gold rating is an important highlight in UMD’s sustainability efforts, which were formalized with the development of the Climate Action Plan in 2009. The Office of Sustainability distributes an annual Sustainability Progress Report in the fall, which compiles and publicly reports the university’s sustainability performance. In 2013, UMD was ranked the thirteenth greenest university in the nation by Sierra Magazine.

“Achieving a Gold rating under the AASHE STARS program is a milestone achievement for our university’s sustainability effort. It could not have been possible without the significant effort of many people across campus who have provided support, participated in workgroups and furthered our performance through their leadership positions. We must also recognize that this was a two year effort that was supported by several student interns who provided important research and data collection,” said Scott Lupin, Director of the Office of Sustainability and Associate Director for the Department of Environmental Safety.
The University of Maryland STARS Report can be found here.

AASHE is an association of colleges and universities that are working to create a sustainable future. For more information about AASHE, visit www.aashe.org.

For more information about the STARS program, visit stars.aashe.org.

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The University of Maryland, Office of Sustainability supports and advances environmental performance, economic prosperity and social equality through sustainable policies, practices and curricula for the campus community.

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