

February 20, 2018

Ms. Meghan Fay Zahniser, Executive Director
Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education
1536 Wynkoop St. Suite 100
Denver, CO 80202

Dear Ms. Zahniser and staff of AASHE

For over twenty years, Green Mountain College has consistently provided leadership in advancing sustainability. Our mission to “prepare students...to create a just and sustainable society” informs everything we do. Our strategic plan, *Sustainability 2020*, guides our actions toward having a net positive impact socially, economically, and environmentally.

Our general education curriculum, the environmental liberal arts, requires all undergraduate students to demonstrate a complex understanding of sustainability and their role in affecting positive change in the world. Our residential undergraduate majors and online graduate programs utilize interdisciplinary, place-based, and project oriented curricula and pedagogy to engage students with the central sustainability challenges of our times. Our school’s operations reflect our mission through achieving and maintaining carbon neutrality since 2011, divesting from fossil fuels in 2015, and developing a comprehensive strategic plan that incorporates sustainability goals in all aspects of our institution.

Highlighted areas of continued improvement in our third STARS submission include a 50% reduction of the College’s gross greenhouse gas emissions over the past 10 years and diverting 50% of our waste for the previous three years. Our campus grounds have been designated a Tree Campus USA and the College began the process of establishing our lands as a native arboretum. We have added additional academic programs including Animal Care and Conservation, Resilient and Sustainable Communities, and Applied Environmental Science to prepare our students to better meet workforce and community needs.

However, even with our continued accomplishments, we recognize the challenges at our school and in the larger world are significant. Our increased focus on social sustainability has raised more questions than solutions. The College is actively working to increase our resilience to potential risks including climate events, cultural polarization, and economic uncertainty. We are grateful for AASHE and the STARS framework’s role in supporting higher education’s work to address these challenges and advance a holistic understanding of sustainability.

Our STARS report highlights GMC’s current sustainability efforts and the information presented in the report is current and accurate to the best of our knowledge. Data collection was led by the sustainability office with oversight from the provost’s office and collaboration with our Campus Sustainability Council representing faculty, staff and students.

Sincerely,



Robert W. Allen
President