



Officers

**President**

**Lorrie Loder**  
nuTerra

**Vice President**

**Wayne King, Sr.**  
Erth Products

**Treasurer**

**Clayton Leonard**  
New Earth, Inc.

**Secretary**

**Jeff Ziegenbein**  
Inland Empire Utilities Agency

Board of Directors

**Matt Cotton**

Integrated Waste Management  
Consulting

**Joe DiNorscia**

Integrated Waste Management

**Brian Fleury**

WeCare Organics

**Greg Gelewski**

Onondaga Resource Recovery  
Agency

**Patrick Geraty**

St. Louis Composting

**Tim Goodman**

NatureWorks

**John Janes**

Caterpillar, Inc.

**Sarah Martinez**

Eco-Products

**Robert Michitsch, Ph.D.**

University of Wisconsin –  
Stevens Point

**Susan Thoman**

Cedar Grove Composting

**Bob Yost**

A-1 Organics

Executive Director

**Frank Franciosi**

September 14, 2016

**AASHE STARS**

2401 Walnut Street, Suite 102  
Philadelphia, PA 19103

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to support the ASUA Compost Cats program at the University of Arizona as a unique and innovative program. The Compost Cats divert large quantities of organic materials from southern Arizona landfills and transforming that material into high quality soil amendments for use in local gardens, farms, and landscapes.

The Compost Cats program is innovative in several ways. First, they've turned a student idea into a student-operated, industrial scale program that has kept more than 11 million pounds of material out of landfills. For this work, Compost Cats received a 2015 Unsung Hero Award from the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) and a 2015 Certificate of Achievement from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). They have participated in the last several Annual Conferences of the US Composting Council, enthusiastically participating in our volunteer program. This Fall they are hosting our five-day Compost Operations Training Course, which will allow many to gain even more in-depth training on modern compost manufacturing.

The program is truly transformative in southern Arizona because of the unique partnerships the Compost Cats have formed as they've scaled up operations. Compost Cats students and staff have led the way in partnering with City of Tucson Environmental Services to serve businesses throughout the city, now collecting materials from 57 local grocery stores, restaurants, hotels, and other businesses. They've partnered with the Tohono O'odham tribe at San Xavier Co-op Farm to secure more space for composting while also offering the tribal farm an abundant source of soil amendments for their crops. They've partnered with the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona to offer compost to the food bank's innovative backyard gardening program for low income families. And recently they've begun offering waste reduction and composting educational programming in Tucson public schools.

All of this work is done by a group of now 18 undergraduate students with one staff program coordinator, and the way the Compost Cats operate and make decisions collaboratively means each student gets green job training in a wide range of skills: product marketing, classroom and conference presentations, farm equipment operation, soil testing, meeting facilitation, and negotiation. This aspect of the program too makes the program unique and valuable within both higher education and the composting industry. Please feel free to contact me if I can

answer any questions regarding our support for the Compost Cats as a unique and innovative program.



Cary Oshins, Associate Director