



Eastern Connecticut State University

NEWS

(5/6/16)

For Immediate Release

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Eastern Joins New Climate Commitment

WILLIMANTIC, Conn. — Eastern Connecticut State University, along with 83 other colleges and universities across the United States, has made a commitment to carbon neutrality and resilience by becoming a Charter Signatory to the Climate Commitment, a signature program of Boston-based nonprofit Second Nature. This commitment requires Eastern to set climate targets, report on progress publicly and collaborate with the surrounding community, while integrating sustainability across the curriculum. This commitment augments a previous commitment signed by Eastern President Elsa Núñez in 2007 to become a carbon-neutral campus.

“We are pleased to be one of the first campuses to add resilience to our climate change commitment,” said Núñez. “To become a resilient campus, we will assess our vulnerabilities and plan for continued operations and student learning in the face of natural disasters, emergencies and disruptions. We have already begun that planning across all departments.”

Eastern’s leadership in sustainability is well established. The university has been recognized as a “Green Campus” by the Princeton Review and U.S. Green Building Council for each of the past six years. Over the past year, Eastern updated its Greenhouse Gas Inventory, conducted a fleet inventory, had two electric vehicle charging stations installed, held a statewide Campus Sustainability Conference and integrated sustainability into the new master plan. Eastern is also participating in the Campus Resilience Enhancement System, a collaboration of multiple federal agencies and six competitively selected campuses to develop tools and processes to enhance campus communities’ responses to and recovery from various kinds of crises, natural disasters, attacks of violence and other man-made or technological disruptions.

More than 650 colleges and universities in every state and the District of Columbia have made Climate Leadership Commitments over the past 10 years, creating a successful model for higher education climate action internationally and resulting in tremendous impact. A recent

study from the University of New Hampshire and the facilities solutions company “Sightlines” found that campuses that have signed the Carbon Commitment have 47 percent lower carbon emissions from purchased energy than non-signatories that are doing sustainability work on campus. Additionally, Climate Leadership Network signatories are over-represented in sustainability leadership rankings. For example, 100 percent of the Top 10 Sierra Club Cool Schools are signatories. Second Nature also recently worked with the White House to create and support the American Campuses Act on Climate pledge leading up to the COP21 international climate talks. Nearly 80 percent of the pledges were from Climate Leadership Network institutions.

For more information on Eastern’s sustainability initiatives, see:

www1.easternct.edu/sustainability/. For a full list of the Climate Commitment Charter Signatories, see: secondnature.org/charter-signatories/

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About Second Nature

Second Nature works to proactively build a sustainable and positive global future through initiating bold commitments, scaling successful actions, and accelerating innovative solutions among leadership networks in higher education. The Climate Leadership Commitments are a signature program of Second Nature and include a Carbon Commitment (focused on reducing greenhouse gas emissions), a Resilience Commitment (focused on climate adaptation and building community capacity) and a Climate Commitment that integrates both. The Climate Leadership Network comprises more than 650 colleges and universities in every state and the District of Columbia who have committed to take action on climate and prepare students through research and education to solve the challenges of the 21st century. Learn more at: secondnature.org.

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About Eastern Connecticut State University

Eastern Connecticut State University is the state of Connecticut’s public liberal arts university, serving more than 5,300 students annually at its Willimantic campus and satellite locations. In addition to attracting students from 158 of Connecticut’s 169 towns, Eastern also draws students

from 20 other states and 63 other countries. A residential campus offering 38 majors and 55 minors, Eastern offers students a strong liberal art foundation grounded in an array of applied learning opportunities. Ranked the 27th top public university in the North Region, by U.S. News and World Report in its 2016 Best College ratings, Eastern has also been awarded “Green Campus” status by the U.S. Green Building Council six years in a row. For more information, visit www.easternct.edu.

It is the policy of Eastern Connecticut State University to ensure equal access to its events. If you are an individual with a disability and will need accommodations for this event, please contact the Office of University Relations at (860) 465-5735.