



Eastern Connecticut State University

NEWS

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For Immediate Release
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Eastern Participates in White House Climate Action Pledge

Willimantic, Conn. – The White House launched the “American Campuses Act on Climate Pledge” on Nov. 19 to highlight the commitments of higher education institutions across the nation and the actions they are taking to set the country on the path toward a low-carbon, sustainable future. President Elsa Núñez of Eastern Connecticut State University joined more than 200 colleges and universities representing more than three million students in signing the White House climate action pledge.

In addition to supporting “a comprehensive, ambitious agreement at the upcoming United Nations Climate Negotiations in Paris,” the university presidents pledge to “accelerate the transition to low-carbon energy while enhancing sustainable and resilient practices across our campus.” Eastern Connecticut State University committed specifically to achieve carbon neutrality on campus by 2050; integrate carbon neutrality and climate resilience into the curriculum and educational experiences for students; continue Eastern’s role as co-chair of the Connecticut Alliance for Campus Sustainability; and showcase green buildings on the campus and ensure high sustainability design requirements for all new buildings.

“I am proud of Eastern’s commitment to model sustainability in our buildings, our classrooms, and our community,” said President Elsa Núñez. “We will continue to reduce our

carbon footprint to meet Eastern's climate pledge, which will help to achieve strong state, national, and international climate goals.”

In addition to taking action on campus, Eastern co-chairs the Connecticut Alliance for Campus Sustainability with Yale University, supporting initiatives at all of Connecticut's public and private colleges and universities. The alliance provides a vibrant statewide peer network, fostering coordination and collaboration on best practices to meet climate commitments and integrate sustainability into curriculum, research and campus operations. Since 2007, one-third of Connecticut's higher education institutions have made commitments to achieve carbon neutrality. The visible results at Eastern and on many Connecticut campuses include green buildings that reduce energy costs and minimize environmental impact, solar panels, geothermal systems, local foods served in dining halls, electric vehicles, and student internships and degree programs in sustainability.

Connecticut's higher education institutions will help Connecticut achieve the state's commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by the year 2050 and improve resilience in adapting to a changing climate. Last spring, Connecticut Governor Dannel Malloy created the Governor's Council on Climate Change, charged with identifying new strategies to ensure that Connecticut will achieve the state's ambitious greenhouse gas targets. The council has focused, in part, on successful leadership models for climate action, such as the higher education community. The council will submit findings and recommendations to the governor in January.

For more information on Eastern's climate change initiatives, go to www1.easternct.edu/sustainability. For more information on American Campuses Act on

Climate Pledge, go to <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/11/19/fact-sheet-ahead-conference-climate-change-more-200-colleges-and>