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ANNUAL

REPORT

THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT
OF SUSTAINABILITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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On the cover: The AASHE Board of Directors met in Anaheim, California, during the AASHE Conference & Expo to connect with AASHE members, attend sessions, and help finalize AASHE's newest strategic plan.

MESSAGE FROM AASHE'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Sustainability Champion,

Looking back on 2024, I am incredibly proud of all that AASHE accomplished to advance sustainability in higher education. From launching new initiatives to deepening global engagement, this year was marked by significant progress and impact.

AASHE organized dozens of educational opportunities, offering workshops, webinars, and courses that engaged thousands of faculty and staff. In October, we gathered in Anaheim, Calif., for the annual AASHE Conference & Expo, where we found rejuvenation from both the content as well as the connections with sustainability change agents from around the world.

We also expanded our efforts to embed sustainability into higher education curricula. With support from Microsoft, we welcomed nine new Centers for Sustainability Across the Curriculum, including in Nigeria and Ireland, and increased the number of faculty trained to infuse sustainability into their courses. This means more students worldwide are gaining the knowledge and skills needed to lead sustainable solutions in their communities and beyond.

After nearly five years in the making, another milestone achievement in 2024 was the launch of STARS 3.0, the latest version of the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System. STARS 3.0 enables any higher education institution across the globe to assess its comprehensive sustainability performance at no cost. With more robust indicators of racial equity and social justice addressing student and employee diversity, pay equity, and workers' rights, Version 3 is the most robust and globally accessible to date. It remains the most in-depth tool for assessing sustainability in higher education. You can't manage what you don't measure, and we are doing all we can to make it easier for campuses to track and report their sustainability data.

Additionally, we launched the AASHE Communities of Practice program, including new communities focused on securing funds made available under the Inflation Reduction Act and supporting community and technical colleges. Similarly, we also introduced AASHE Affinity Groups, creating more opportunities for AASHE members to connect, support one another, and build community around shared identities.

Another major milestone was the completion of AASHE's new strategic plan. After spending the past few years listening and learning with our members, engaging our Advisory Council, working with the Board and staff, and a consultant, we've refined our focus on the areas where AASHE brings the greatest value. With this new strategic plan in place, we've renewed our commitment to what our community values most and will work to engage more campuses in our programs.

Last year we also updated our awards program and prepared new educational offerings for this year that I encourage you to explore and share with your colleagues.

The challenges around us remain significant, but so does our collective determination to drive meaningful change. Together, we will continue to advance AASHE's mission: *To inspire and catalyze higher education to accelerate the transition towards a just & sustainable world.* Let's put one foot in front of the other, prioritize our health and well-being, and do all we can to create the change we want to see in the world.

Yours in hope and solidarity,



Meghan Fay Zahniser
Executive Director, AASHE



STARS HIGHLIGHTS

Now in its 15th year, the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System™ is a transparent, self-reporting framework for colleges and universities to measure their sustainability performance.

AASHE released STARS Version 3.0 in summer 2024. This is the first major revision of STARS since Version 2.0 was released in 2013. By the close of 2024, 20 3.0 reports had been submitted, with many more expected in 2025.

AASHE launched the [STARS Data Quality Certificate Program](#) in fall 2024. Over 100 individuals from eight countries earned certifications. The program will be offered again in spring 2025.



Key Features of Version 3.0:

- Streamlined, performance-based credits
- Greater international compatibility with a shift to metric units
- More robust social equity indicators
- 40% fewer documentation fields than in the previous version



Presentation of STARS for Tecnológico de Monterrey campuses at the 3rd Ruta Azul Annual Report event in November 2024. The Tecnológico de Monterrey system achieved the distinction of earning [STARS ratings](#) for 16 of its system campuses in 2024.

STARS by the Numbers

1,240

Registered Institutions

A diverse mix including community colleges, research institutions, and everything in between

371

STARS-Rated Institutions

With 151 reports published in 2024, total ratings increased by 7% over last year

56

Countries Represented among Registrants

16 countries had at least one STARS-rated institution, and institutions in four new countries earned a rating in 2024

34

STARS Support Cohort Participants

Regular calls and communications guided participants through data collection and report submission

9

ACTS-STARS Cohort Institutions

Participants from Australia and New Zealand connected to network and share strategies

3

Systems with 10+ Rated Institutions

Including California State University System (19), Tecnológico de Monterrey (16), and State University of New York (10)

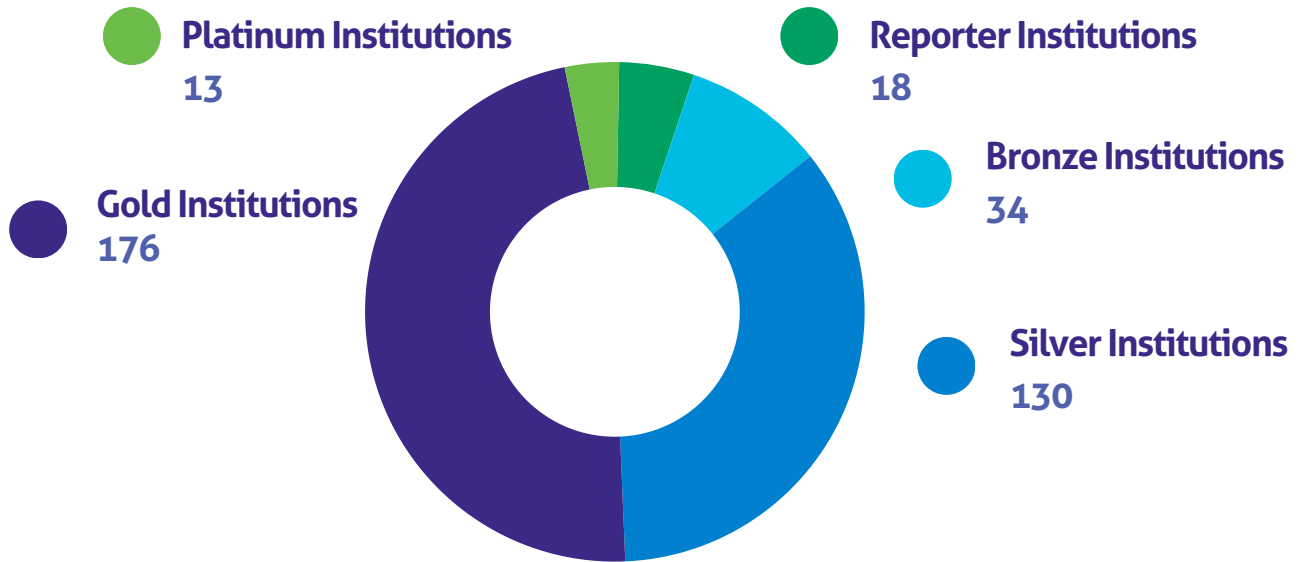
“

The STARS rating system is a great tool for universities to start tracking their progress towards a more sustainable day to day operation and culture. We find STARS to be very helpful to set a baseline for future efforts and to help us identify priorities for the Sustainability Office in the following years.

”

- Martin Sanchez, Tecnológico de Monterrey

STARS-Rated Institutions



UC San Diego students spend time gardening in the Warren Garden, one of many campus community gardens used for education and outreach. UC San Diego became a STARS Platinum institution in December 2024.

MEMBERSHIP VALUE

AASHE membership provides premium access to resources and networking opportunities to help sustainability professionals and leaders advance higher education sustainability.

AASHE membership is intended for the full spectrum of higher education institutions and organizations. The year ended with 804 member organizations across 28 countries.

Member Types



Membership by the Numbers

804

AASHE Member Organizations

80 were first-time AASHE members

28

Countries Represented by AASHE Members

Our newest members include institutions from Bulgaria, Israel, Kuwait, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Uruguay

4

University System Members

Including the State University of New York (SUNY), Maricopa County Community College District, Los Angeles Community College District, and University of California

“

AASHE convenes, informs, connects, challenges, educates, analyzes, shares, and inspires. Its member colleges and universities bring questions, knowledge, experiences, and passions to the AASHE table and develop connections and communities that sustain them in their efforts. We do better work at West Chester University with AASHE's support and feel part of a larger movement that nourishes our efforts.

”

- Bradley Flamm, West Chester University Office of Sustainability

Thank You, Business Leader Members

We are grateful to all of our members and sponsors for their ongoing support and participation! A special thank you is extended to 2024 AASHE Business Leaders:



Didómi



AASHE CONFERENCE & EXPO

The 2024 conference signified AASHE's return to the North American Pacific Coast - our first conference on the Pacific Coast since 2019!

Nearly 900 higher education sustainability professionals and enthusiasts joined colleagues and friends in Anaheim, California, October 27-29 to reconnect, meet new leaders, and further develop their knowledge and passion about higher education sustainability.

Masterclass Sessions



Peggy Shepard

Co-founder and Executive Director of WE ACT for Environmental Justice, Peggy Shepard is the White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council co-chair and the first female chair of the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Her keynote address focused on the right of a clean environment for every community, and included a call to center the voices and perspectives of those most affected by environmental hazards and climate change.



Shaun Harper

Provost Professor in the Rossier School of Education, Price School of Public Policy, and Marshall School of Business at the University of Southern California, Shaun Harper is one of America's most highly respected diversity, equity, and inclusion experts. His keynote address highlighted the similarities between racism denial and climate change denial.



David W. Orr

Paul Sears Distinguished Professor of Environmental Studies and Politics emeritus at Oberlin College, David W. Orr is a leading voice for sustainability in higher education, with eight books and over 250 articles. Now a Professor of Practice at Arizona State University, his keynote address reflected on the trajectory of the movement for sustainability in higher education and argued for the importance of political engagement.

Conference by the Numbers

861

Registrants

A diverse community of participants, 92% of attendees were higher education staff, faculty, or students

65%

Identify as Female

Among those that shared their gender identity

24%

Identify as BIPOC or Multiple Races/Ethnicities

Among those that shared their racial and ethnic identity

Countries Represented

7

Registrants joined us from Australia, Canada, France, Mexico, Philippines, South Africa and the U.S.

157

Sessions

You can access session recordings from this and previous years via [AASHE On-Demand](#)

41

Sponsors & Exhibitors

The expo hall showcased ideas, initiatives, and solutions from our many exhibitors and sponsors

37

Scholarships Awarded

A special thank you to our scholarship sponsors, RecRe and Sunrock DG Solar

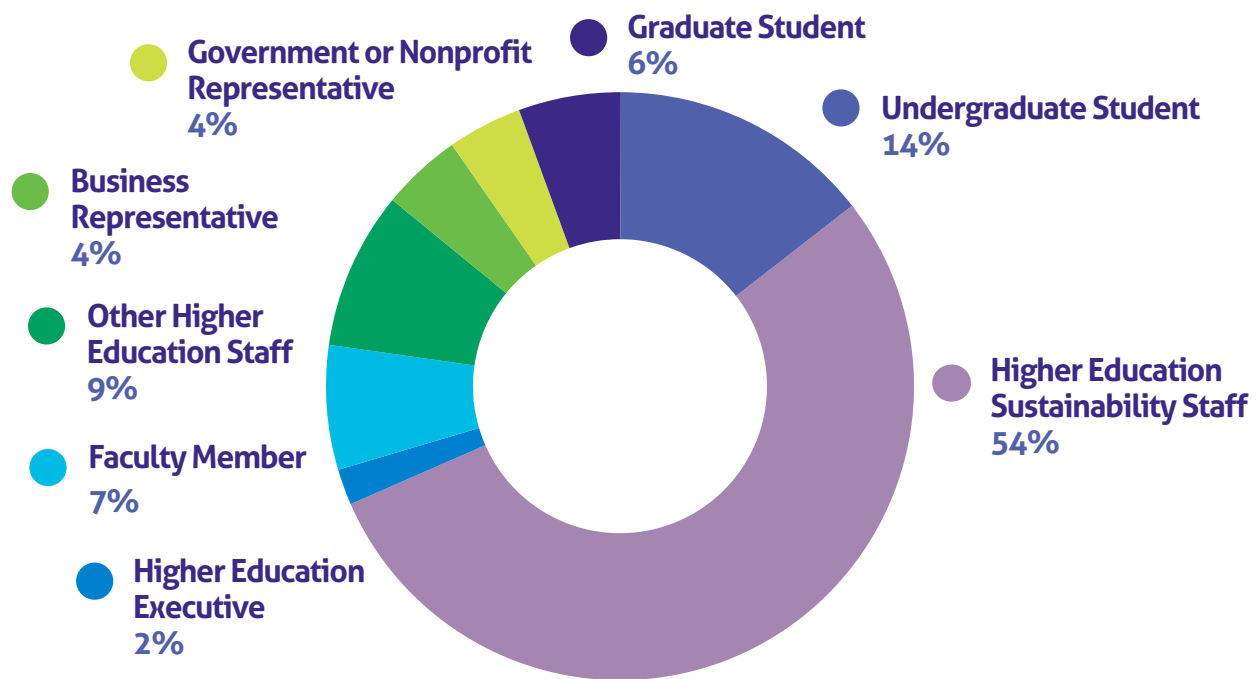
“

This is THE conference I look forward to as a higher ed sustainability professional. It inspires, informs, and connects me to leaders in my field who are addressing sustainability in a variety of ways and from beginner to experienced perspectives.

- Krista Bailey, Penn State Sustainability

”

Attendees by Role



Favorite Sessions

- *Shaun Harper Keynote Address*
- *Please Like Me: Engage an Audience with Student-Led Social Media* - Kendall Sternberg, Tawni Eakman
- *David Orr Keynote Address*
- *It's All Connected! Climate Change, Social Justice, Basic Needs Support and Student Leadership* - Briar Schoon, Chelsea Kimmitt, Kendi Esary, Sandra Garcia
- *Trust, Feedback, Growth - Cultivating a Resilient and Adaptive Team* - Dallase Scott
- *Zero Waste by X?* Alex Freid, Grace Bowden
- *Charting new futures for faculty development for sustainability* - Scott Morrison

This is based on responses from AASHE's 2024 post-conference attendee survey. [AASHE On-Demand](#) subscribers can access recordings for some of these sessions, and the abstracts are available to AASHE members via the [Campus Sustainability Hub](#).

Conference Acknowledgements

As we reflect on the success of #AASHE2024, we want to thank our sponsors and exhibitors for their continued support and commitment to sustainability in higher education. Thank you for helping to make this conference an exceptional gathering of minds and ideas.

Sponsors



Lifecycle Renewables

truburn



Exhibitors



VIRTUAL EDUCATION

From webinars, workshops, and courses to the Sustainability Education Forum (SEF), AASHE offered a wide range of virtual education and professional development opportunities in 2024.

With support from Microsoft, our work to expand the integration of sustainability across the curriculum continued. In 2024, 10 new [Centers for Sustainability Across the Curriculum](#) were established, and \$50,000 was allocated to support the development of sustainability across the curriculum programs at 10 other institutions.

Webinar Highlights

Highest 2024 registration counts

[What's new in STARS 3.0](#)

[Missing Pieces in Higher Education Climate Action Planning: Food, Reuse and Empowerment](#)

[Alternative Economies: Libraries of Things, Free Swaps, and Other Sustainable Solutions](#)

Highest 2024 satisfaction ratings

[Cli Fi, Sci Fi, and the Culture of Sustainability](#)

[Certifying High-Performing and Sustainable Parking Structures on Campus: A Parksmart Workshop](#)

[Implementing Sustainability Literacy and Culture Assessments for AASHE STARS](#)

[Webinar recordings](#) can be accessed by AASHE members in the Campus Sustainability Hub.

Workshop Highlights

Highest 2024 registration counts

[STARS 3.0 Data Quality - Training & Certification for Submitters & Reviewers](#)

[Toolkit Resources to help Understand and Manage Campus Food Waste](#)

[Program Evaluation for Sustainability and Sustainability-Related Programs: A Program Director's Cohort](#)

Highest 2024 satisfaction ratings

[Embed the Sustainable Development Goals in Your Course](#)

[Toolkit Resources to help Understand and Manage Campus Food Waste](#)

[Deciphering the Challenges of Change - an Introduction to Liberating Structures](#)

Anyone can [purchase](#) archived workshop recordings and resources.

Education by the Numbers

161

SEF Attendees

Including participants from 102 organizations in 17 countries, a 15% increase from 2023

26

Webinars

Engaged 2,224 registrants from 839 organizations across 44 countries

14

Workshops and Courses

Connected 807 participants from 28 countries

50

Mentorship Program Matches

Selected from a pool of 153 applicants

74

Scholarships Awarded

Expanded access to virtual education programs

“

The workshop was a transformative journey, and I feel compelled to share my thoughts on the invaluable insights and skills I gained during this event. The facilitators, with their wealth of knowledge and expertise, delivered engaging sessions. The interactive nature of the workshop allowed me to actively participate, ask questions, and collaborate with fellow attendees, fostering a dynamic learning environment.

”

**- Dr. Deepika Kohli, Assistant Professor,
Khalsa College of Education, Punjab, India**

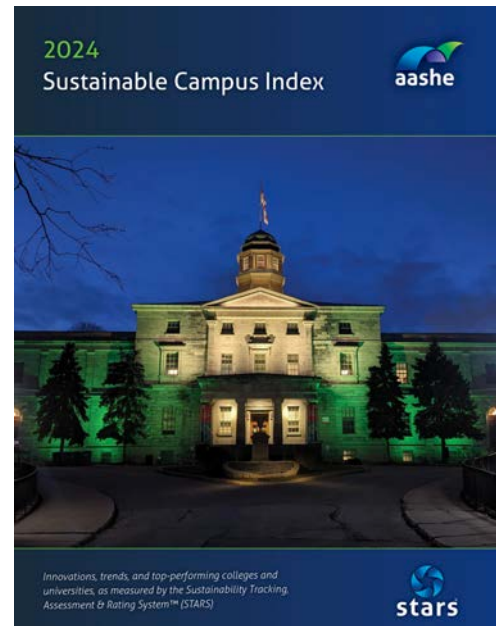
Attended *Building a Curriculum Development Program for your Institution: The Piedmont/Ponderosa Model.*

RESOURCES & PUBLICATIONS

AASHE released two publications in 2024 and added [406 new resources](#) to our online resource library, the [Campus Sustainability Hub](#).

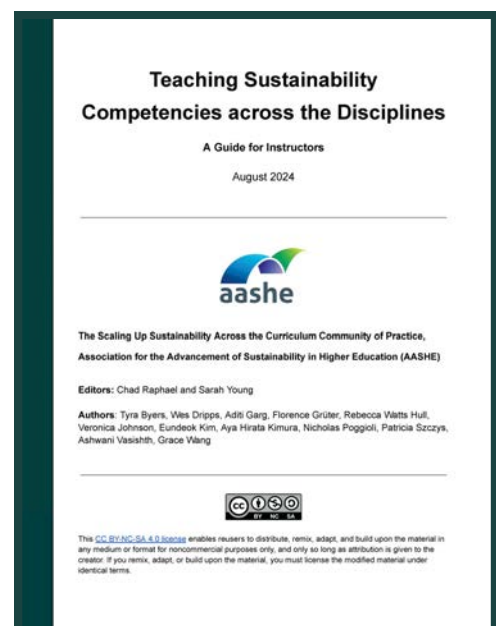
[2024 Sustainable Campus Index](#)

The 2024 Sustainable Campus Index (SCI) recognizes top-performing colleges and universities by country, institution type, and in 17 sustainability impact areas, as measured by the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS). The SCI also recognizes high-impact projects and initiatives, institutions with exceptional STARS report accuracy, and the most frequent STARS reporting institutions.



[Teaching Sustainability Competencies across the Disciplines - A Guide for Instructors](#)

Members of AASHE's [Scaling Up Sustainability Across the Curriculum Community of Practice](#) produced this guide for instructors who seek to integrate sustainability across the curriculum in higher education. The guide aims to help instructors understand the similarities and differences among various sustainability competencies frameworks, and provide access to resources that can support the integration of sustainability competencies into courses from a range of disciplinary contexts.



ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

Participation, enthusiasm, and ideas generated by members of the AASHE community continue to inspire us and drive our work!

AASHE newsletters and online communities provided opportunities to follow sustainability news and make connections.

Most-Clicked AASHE Bulletin News

1. [SUNY Adopts Policy to Phase Out Single Use Plastics](#)
2. [Princeton Review Publishes 2025 Guide to Green Colleges](#)
3. [U Virginia Begins Decarbonization Academy](#)
4. [U Minnesota Twin Cities Releases Climate Resilience Plan](#)
5. [London School of Economics Announces Global School of Sustainability](#)
6. [Geothermal System Comes Online at Oberlin College](#)
7. [Santa Clara U Publishes Sustainability & Justice Action Plan](#)
8. [U Wisconsin Madison Unveils Enviro Sustainability Goals](#)
9. [U Pennsylvania Announces Climate Science, Policy & Action VP Role](#)
10. [San Diego CC District Increases Minimum Wage to \\$30 Per Hour](#)

Bulletin News stories are archived in the [AASHE Bulletin Database](#).

Most-Active AASHE Connect Threads

[Sustainability Literacy Assessment \(AC 5.1\)](#) - Posted by Kathryn Carpenter, Stetson University

[Policy to ban useless "swag" items on tuition dollars](#) - Posted by Claire DeBlanc, Central Michigan University

[Clothing Swap on Campus](#) - Posted by Zay Min Htike, University of Dayton

Based on number of thread responses. Archived posts are accessible to AASHE members in our [AASHE Online Community](#).

New Engagement Opportunities

To facilitate greater connection, support, and collaboration, AASHE created a number of [Communities of Practice](#) focused on specific topics of interest, as well as several [Affinity Groups](#) focused on specific identity groups. A new online community from the [Big 10 & Friends Sustainability Network](#), an [AASHE Affiliate](#), was also created. We welcome you to join the conversations on [AASHE Connect!](#)

Communities of Practice

- [Community & Technical Colleges Sustainability Network](#)
- [Ecological Landscapes](#)
- [Inner Development Goals](#)
- [IRA and Resources Discussion Group](#)
- [Liberating Structures & Facilitation](#)
- [Scaling Up Sustainability Across the Curriculum Community](#)
- [Scope 3 Emissions](#)
- [Senior Leaders Community](#)
- [Sustainability & Sustainability-related Degree Program Directors](#)
- [Sustainability Efforts with Beverage Companies](#)
- [Sustainability in Collegiate Athletics](#)

Affinity Groups

- [TSLGBTQIA+ Identity Affinity Group](#)
- [Asian Identity Affinity Group](#)
- [Black Identity Affinity Group](#)
- [Latino/a/x Identity Affinity Group](#)
- [Indigenous Peoples Affinity Group](#)

Engagement by the Numbers

42,000+

AASHE Connect Members

Connected in 358 new discussion threads in 2024

19,629

AASHE Bulletin Subscribers

Featured 179 job postings, 159 opportunities, and 33 new sustainability resources

1,200+

STARS Community Members

Engaged in 42 new discussion threads in 2024



Hundreds of students, faculty, staff, and community members came out to enjoy University of Virginia's Annual Eco-Fair held during Earth Day.

ADVOCACY & ACTION

AASHE advocates for policies and practices that contribute to higher education sustainability.

- **March 2024** – AASHE joined the Natural Resources Defense Council and more than 130 organizations from 39 countries in calling for the establishment of [strong accountability mechanisms](#) to ensure the achievement of global commitments related to deforestation and forest degradation. The statement reinforced the calls for the establishment of a Glasgow Declaration Accountability Framework (GDAF), a mechanism for driving equitable, common progress toward the 2030 target of halting deforestation and land degradation.
- **April 2024** – AASHE endorsed the [Climate Change Education Act](#). This legislation would create a Climate Change Education Program within the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to support climate literacy initiatives through grants and technical assistance to educational agencies, higher education institutions, and other groups. This act emphasizes the need for integrating climate knowledge into the broader educational framework to prepare students to live, work, and lead in a world increasingly impacted by climate change.
- **June 2024** – AASHE joined the [Change the Chamber](#) campaign in urging Congress to uphold the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s new carbon pollution standards for power plants. These regulations aim to cut 1.38 billion metric tons of carbon pollution by 2047 and address emissions from coal-fired and gas-fired plants, which disproportionately impact low-income and marginalized communities. By signing onto national and state-level letters, AASHE reinforced its commitment to defending strong air quality protections and public health for everyone.



University of Arizona’s Center for Environmental Justice center offers community leadership advocacy training.

AASHE STAFF

Executive Director

Meghan Fay Zahniser



Meetings & Membership cont.

Simone Smith

Membership Operations Coordinator



Finance and Operations

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Accounting & Operations Manager



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Director of Programs



Rogelio Zuniga Rubio

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Development Manager



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Senior STARS Program Manager



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Crystal Simmons

Bulletin Editor & Program Manager



Meetings & Membership

Kimberly Smith

Director of Meetings & Membership



Daita Serghi

Senior Education Manager



Erin Hathaway

Conference & Events Manager



Monika Urbanski

Senior Manager of Resources,
Data Quality & Publications



Aubrey Organ

Education Intern



Nikia Johnson

Membership Development Manager



Robin Frederick

STARS & Resources Intern



Previous staff members who contributed to 2024 efforts include Madison Bruns, Marketing Coordinator.

AASHE GOVERNANCE

2024 Board of Directors

The Board advises on policy and direction, and assists with governance to support AASHE's mission. After six years of service, V.S. (Raghu) Raghavan and Ashwani Vasishth rotated off of the board. We are grateful for their service and dedication to AASHE! [View current board members.](#)

Stephania Fregosi (President)
Portland Community College



Daryl M. Pierson, Ph.D.
(Vice President)
Portland State University



Rania Assariotaki (Secretary)
The American College of Greece



Kristin Parineh (Treasurer)
Stanford University



François Miller (Past President)
McGill University



Sophia Agtarap
Washington State Board for Community
and Technical Colleges



Jillian Buckholz
Brailsford & Dunlavey



Chris Ewing
University of Colorado Boulder



Greg "G.L." Genco
Generation Conscious



Joseli Macedo
University of Calgary



John Madden
University of British Columbia



Chris O'Brien
Coho Climate Advisors LLC



V.S. (Raghu) Raghavan
New Mexico State University



Ashwani Vasishth
Ramapo College of New Jersey



Advisory Council

With 136 volunteers representing institutions from 14 countries, the [Advisory Council](#) (AC) provides guidance on strategy, programs, and services. We are grateful for our AC members who work tirelessly to advance AASHE's mission!

NEW MISSION, VISION & PLAN

AASHE's new strategic plan includes revisions to our Mission, Vision and Definition of Sustainability, and updated goals and objectives.

Mission

To inspire and catalyze higher education to accelerate the transition towards a just & sustainable world.

Vision

We envision a just & sustainable world in which higher education:

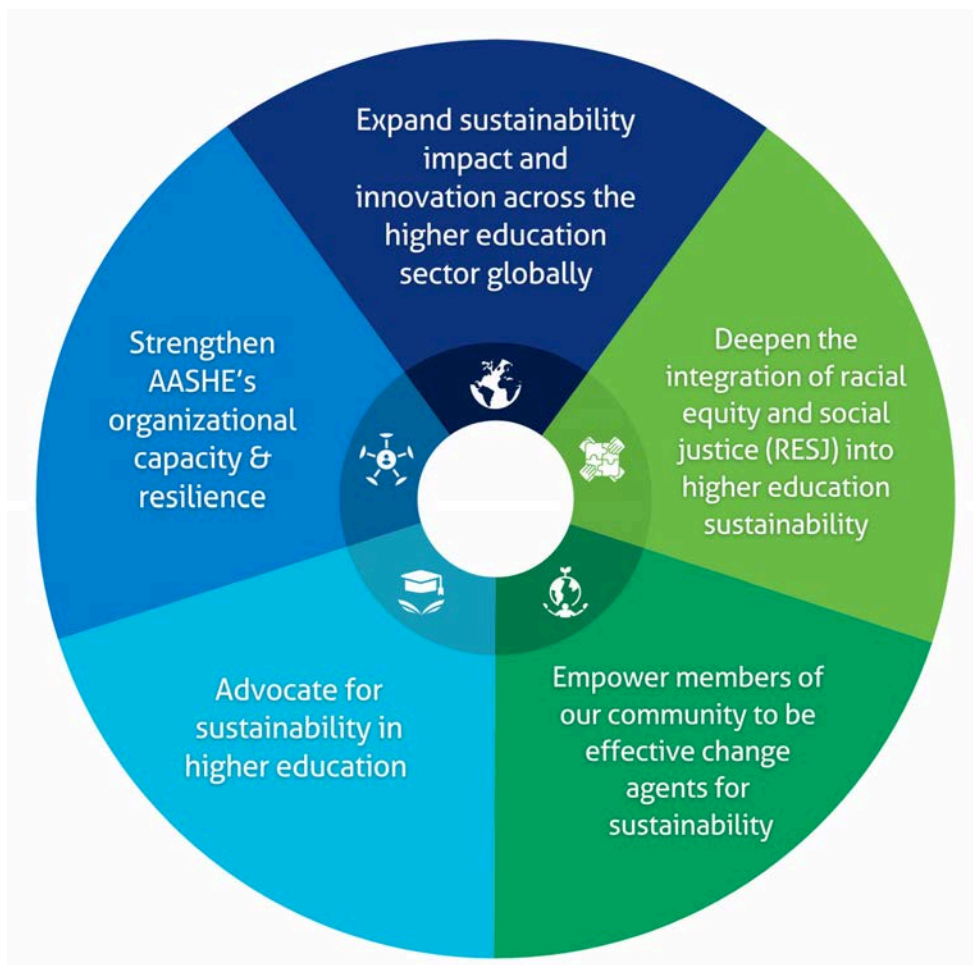
- Prepares students to be responsible citizens who understand sustainability challenges and are ready to address them in their careers and personal lives;
- Is a broadly accessible engine of social mobility that lifts up marginalized and under-resourced people;
- Ensures student and employee wellbeing;
- Operates as a model for sustainability; and
- Collaborates with local communities to generate and implement sustainable solutions.

AASHE understands sustainability as a pluralistic concept encompassing human and ecological health, racial equity and social justice, secure livelihoods, and well-being for all now and in the future. Our understanding is informed by concepts of sustainability embedded in many Indigenous cultures as well as the Earth Charter and the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals.

- AASHE's Definition of Sustainability

NEW MISSION, VISION & PLAN

Strategic Plan & Goals



Financials

AASHE is a 501(C)(3) membership association. Our annual information return (Form 990) can be found on the [Financials page](#).

Thank YOU!

We acknowledge our members and partners for being a part of the AASHE community. Without you, AASHE wouldn't be the association it is today. Your feedback, engagement, and passion for sharing ideas is the cornerstone of our community. Let's keep inspiring one another to drive the higher education sustainability movement. Together, WE are AASHE.

Photo credits:

Images throughout this publication were shared by the following AASHE member institutions through the Campus Sustainability Hub: American University; Dickinson College; IESE Business School - Barcelona; McGill University; Tecnológico de Monterrey; Texas A&M University; University of Arizona; University of California, Davis; University of California, San Diego; and University of Virginia.



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