

Marquette University: Receives STARS Bronze rating for comprehensive sustainability achievements

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MILWAUKEE — Marquette has received a STARS Bronze rating in recognition of its sustainability achievements from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). STARS, the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System measures and encourages sustainability in all aspects of higher education.

Marquette's STARS report is publicly available [on the STARS website](#).

The STARS program is a self-reporting rating system which looks at 500 data points to assess an organization's progress in five overall areas: academics, engagement, operations, planning and administration, and innovation and leadership. Marquette last submitted a report in 2013.

"The STARS reporting process offers a great opportunity for universities like ours to see what they are doing well, where we are close and what areas we need to make more investment in," said Chelsea Malacara, sustainability & energy management coordinator. "Since Marquette's last report submission, so much of the criteria has changed. We now have a new baseline for moving forward and can set new targets and strategies to advance sustainability that is weaved within the strategic plan as it is today."

Among the stronger areas for Marquette was diversity and affordability, campus and public engagement, and our undergraduate and graduate programs. These

areas recognized the university's diversity and inclusion efforts, as well as campus engagement initiatives such as the Sustainable Marquette Employee Resource Group and sustainability internship program, as well as the Environmental Studies major and Environmental Law degree.

"This report demonstrated a lot of bright spots in our ongoing sustainability efforts. Our goal is to continue to engage the campus community on these issues, get folks reinvigorated, and empower people across campus to lead in their own departments. It would be impossible for just one person to lead the way to change," Malacara added.

Marquette improving sustainability across campus

The STARS rating acknowledges [Marquette's comprehensive efforts to improve sustainability](#) and reduce the university's carbon footprint. Such improvements — led primarily by Facilities Planning and Management — align with one of the [Society of Jesus' Universal Apostolic Preferences](#), "To collaborate in the care of our Common Home," and Pope Francis' encyclical [Laudato Si'](#).

Following are just a few of the recent ways Marquette is working toward a more sustainable future:

- **Updated endowment policy prohibits direct investments in fossil fuels** — The Marquette Board of Trustees recently approved an [updated investment policy](#) for the university endowment with new socially responsible investing and sustainability language that strictly prohibits direct investments in public securities whose primary business is the exploration or extraction of fossil fuels. Importantly, the university's current investment portfolio does not include any direct public investments in fossil fuels.
- **MUPD moving to hybrid squad cars** — The Marquette University Police Department has begun its [transition to hybrid vehicles](#), deploying its first two hybrid squad cars at the start of the spring semester. The move is the first step in transitioning the department's entire fleet to hybrid vehicles. The whole fleet is expected to be hybrid by 2025.
- **Enhanced opportunities for bicycle use** — Marquette has outdoor bike racks located around campus and inside both parking garages, and the university offers secure indoor bike storage through its commuter program. Additionally, Marquette recently [installed four Dero Bicycle Repair Stations](#) strategically throughout campus. Each station is equipped with an air pump, common tools used to performance basic bike maintenance such as

tightening gears and changing a tire, and a rack to hang your bike from. For those who do not own a bicycle but want to explore the city, a BublR Bikes rental station is located just outside of the Weasler Auditorium.

- **Renewable energy initiatives** — Marquette has two solar arrays. One on the 313 Building (30kw) and one on Engineering Hall (10kw). The university is actively pursuing other ways it can reduce its reliance on fossil fuels and implement on-campus renewable energy sources.
- **Sustainable building standards** — Whether it is a renovation or a new building, Marquette University's planning team always has a sustainability mindset when planning a project. Energy conservation and efficiency measures like window glazing, LED light fixtures, low-flow toilets, automatic sinks, light sensors, Energy Star rated appliances and more are a part of a project's plan. Additionally, the university has six buildings certified by The U.S. Green Building Council's green building rating system [LEED \(Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design\)](#).
- **Sustainability Internship Program** — Launched in the summer of 2021, the [Sustainability Internship Program](#) gives five students of any major each year the opportunity to gain experience in the sustainability field by working on a wide range of projects and initiatives that work to advance sustainability at Marquette, from environmental justice to transportation to energy to landscaping. Students who are interested in a sustainability internship should contact sustainability@marquette.edu.

Learn more about [Marquette's sustainability efforts](#) online.

About AASHE's STARS program

With more than 900 participants in 40 countries, AASHE's STARS program is the most widely recognized framework in the world for publicly reporting comprehensive information related to a college or university's sustainability performance. Unlike other rating or ranking systems, this program is open to all institutions of higher education, and the criteria that determine a STARS rating are transparent and accessible to anyone. Because STARS is a program based on credits earned, it allows for both internal comparisons as well as comparisons with similar institutions.

[AASHE](#) is an association of colleges and universities that are working to create a sustainable future. AASHE's mission is to empower higher education to lead the sustainability transformation. It provides resources, professional development and

a network of support to enable institutions of higher education to model and advance sustainability in everything they do, from governance and operations to education and research. For more information about the STARS program, visit stars.aashe.org.