



Claire Bennett, Sustainability Coordinator  
Sustainability Office  
519-884-0710 ext. 4280 or cbennett@wlu.ca

Lori Chalmers Morrison, Acting Director  
Communications & Public Affairs  
519-884-0710 ext. 3067 or lchalmersmorrison@wlu.ca

JAN. 21, 2014 | 005-14

## Laurier earns silver STARS rating for sustainability efforts

WATERLOO – Wilfrid Laurier University’s efforts to create green, environmentally friendly campuses have earned the university a silver rating from the internationally recognized Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS), developed by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education. Laurier first completed a STARS assessment three years ago, receiving a bronze rating.

“We are extremely happy to have moved up to a silver rating, especially because the STARS assessment has been updated to be much more rigorous,” said Claire Bennett, Laurier’s sustainability coordinator, noting that the university is the first institution to have completed the 2.0 version of the STARS assessment. “We participate in STARS because it is the most-used assessment framework by postsecondary institutions, primarily in North America but also worldwide. This provides us with a baseline for our standing and a benchmark against our counterparts.”

To earn a silver rating, Laurier made large improvements in the areas of “Air & Climate,” “Buildings” and “Coordination, Planning & Governance.” Laurier improved energy conservation by tracking greenhouse gas emissions through recently installed submeters and an energy management system. Residence buildings on Laurier’s Waterloo campus held energy-conservation competitions using the submeters and an online dashboard. Laurier also has two Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) silver-certified buildings on its Brantford campus, and the university’s building standards state all newly constructed buildings must follow LEED silver guidelines.

“Laurier’s strategic planning documents identify sustainability as a core principle within university education, operations and community partnerships,” said Bennett. “Laurier also excelled in the area of campus engagement. Student groups, such as the first-year Sustainability Council and the Laurier EcoHawks, work to engage the Laurier community and educate students on sustainable practices and behaviors.”

The majority of rated institutions are silver (151), with 67 institutions holding a bronze rating and 53 institutions holding a gold rating. There are no platinum-rated institutions.

### About STARS

The only program of its kind, STARS involves the public reporting of comprehensive information related to a college or university’s sustainability performance. Participants report achievements in three overall areas: education and research; operations; and planning, administration and engagement. The STARS framework is intended to engage and recognize the full spectrum of colleges and universities in the United States and Canada. STARS encompasses long-term sustainability goals for high-achieving institutions as well as entry points of recognition for institutions that are taking first steps toward sustainability. For more information about the STARS program, visit [www.aashe.org/stars](http://www.aashe.org/stars).

– 30 –