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Second Nature Takes Lead Role in Supporting American Colleges and Universities Presidents' Climate Commitment

As the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC) has grown to include more than 640 schools working towards the bold and important goals of climate neutrality, **Second Nature** has taken the lead role in supporting this major effort. Second Nature, a national nonprofit organization based in Boston, is enhancing its work with presidents in higher education to dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions on their campuses and to prepare their faculty and students, as well as the rest of society, to address the climate crisis.

Said Dr. Anthony D. Cortese, Second Nature's founder and president, "The signatory college and university presidents and their teams do the difficult thinking and transformative work that is leading our society towards a sustainability future. Second Nature is thrilled to expand our role in supporting their efforts."

Since the launch of the ACUPCC in December of 2006, it has been staffed and supported by three organizations - ecoAmerica, Second Nature, and the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). A few months ago, the presidents on the ACUPCC Steering Committee, recognizing the growth and evolution of the initiative and the benefits of a single supporting organization providing program management support, asked the three organizations to create a strategy for moving forward with the initiative.

Second Nature support activities of the ACUPCC include: outreach to the more than 640 signatory presidents and their implementation staff; recruitment of new signatories; trainings and webinars for signatory schools; advocacy with the presidents for improved government policies pertaining to higher education and climate; provision of the monthly "Implementer" e-newsletter; organizing of the annual summit; and provision of ongoing resources to the signatories, including guidance on climate and sustainability-related academics, energy financing for campus operations, and other ways to help higher education bring the rest of society towards climate neutrality and a sustainable future. Second Nature also facilitates the ACUPCC Steering Committee; leads fundraising and financial management; and conducts media outreach and publicity, including the management of the ACUPCC website at <http://www.presidentsclimatecommitment.org>.

As part of the transition plan, Toni Nelson (formerly the Climate Program Manager at AASHE) has joined the Second Nature team as the ACUPCC Program Director. Said Nelson, "Our growing and talented team is ready to do whatever it takes to help colleges and universities make climate neutrality a reality."

AASHE will remain a key supporting organization, hosting the online reporting system with plans to expand its accessibility to all of higher education as the Higher Education Climate Action Registry. AASHE's support activities will also include faculty development workshops, a climate discussion forum, online publication of its weekly Bulletin, enhancement of its electronic resource center, curricular planning and design innovations, conferences, reports, maintenance of the reporting tool, and other ongoing support mechanisms.

ecoAmerica will focus on select ACUPCC projects as needed, in keeping with its initial plans to phase out of the day-to-day ACUPCC activities three years after the initiative's successful launch. ecoAmerica has played a key role in strategy, funding, and marketing support, and its ACUPCC operational activities are now being assumed by Second Nature.

Second Nature works to accelerate movement toward a sustainable future by serving and supporting senior college and university leaders in making healthy, just, and sustainable living the foundation of all learning and practice in higher education. In addition to providing leading support for the ACUPCC, Second Nature manages the Advancing Green Building in Higher Education program and the Higher Education Associations Sustainability Consortium. For more information about the ACUPCC, please contact Toni Nelson or Gina Coplon-Newfield.