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Second Nature Announces College Leadership in Resilience; Alliance for Resilient Campuses, Partnership with Cities

BOSTON, MA-Second Nature, a national nonprofit that works to create a healthy, just, and sustainable society by transforming higher education, today announced the creation of the Alliance for Resilient Campuses(ARC). Building on its flagship Program, the [American College & University Presidents' Climate Commitment](#)(ACUPCC), which has 682 signatory colleges and universities, Second Nature is complementing that effort with a network that will focus on climate adaptation and resilience.



"The ACUPCC has played an enormously influential role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and of embedding sustainability as an operating principle across higher education," said David Hales, President of Second Nature. "At the same time, we recognize that there is an increasing likelihood of damaging climate impacts to many of our colleges. ARC will provide a platform for developing flexible and state-of-the-art guidance and support for assessment, learning, implementation, and evaluation with respect to adaptation and resilience, and will do so in full partnership with communities. As a nation, we have a lot of work to do to adapt to ongoing climate changes, and as higher education invests in its own resilience, it can also play a critical role in helping all of society prepare for and even thrive in the coming decades. This is the driving idea behind ARC."

Presidents of Colleges and universities from California to Maine, representing a diverse range of higher education – community colleges, four-year colleges, and multi-campus research institutions - have already endorsed ARC as Founding Signatories. In the coming months and years, the Alliance will grow, in partnership with cities, corporations, and others, to share knowledge, highlight and learn from success, and to contribute to an expanded and innovative focus on designing a resilient society. In addition, ARC is partnering with the [Resilient Communities for America](#)(RC4A), a national initiative that is mobilizing local elected officials from cities, counties, and towns in pledging to create more resilient communities. ARC and RC4A will work together to encourage strong partnership between communities and campuses, and to share tools, information resources, and successes to support and highlight improved resilience. RC4A is a joint campaign of ICLEI-USA, the U.S. Green Building Council, the World Wildlife Fund, and the National League of Cities.

Through the ARC statement of purpose, Presidents and Chancellors acknowledge the risks and opportunities, as well as the role of higher education in creating a more resilient society:

"We recognize that in order to protect our vital institutional interests and serve the needs of society in preparing for climate impacts, we must minimize our vulnerability to the impacts of change and strengthen our ability to anticipate, avoid, and manage disruptions. Increasingly severe extreme weather events, and long-term impacts from extremes such as flooding, drought, and heat waves pose complex challenges for our institutions and communities in every region of the country. Yet we acknowledge that addressing these risks can provide an innovative opportunity to strengthen institutions of higher education for the 21st century, equipping them to be safer and more secure in the face of change, more actively engaged in solving real-world problems, and organized to provide the education and research needed to create and maintain a sustainable society."

A Foundation of Climate Science

Recent reports from the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), the National Academy of Sciences, the U.K. Royal Society, and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) have all highlighted the severity of expected climate impacts, as well as the need for increased attention on both reducing the magnitude of future change (mitigation) as well as preparing for the impacts of unavoidable change (adaptation). Tomorrow, the most comprehensive climate assessment to date for the U.S. will be released (the Third U.S. National Climate Assessment) and will provide considerable detail about current and expected impacts across the regions and economic sectors of the U.S. The report will also assess the state of national adaptation and mitigation activities. ARC (and the ACUPCC) will not only incorporate this latest science and ensure it can be used in climate preparedness planning on our campuses and in our communities, but will work with the ongoing National Climate Assessment network to contribute to the capacity to collectively fill gaps in knowledge including how to effectively gauge our continued progress towards resilience.

ARC Founding Signatories:

Institution

Agnes Scott College
 Ball State University
 Bennington College
 Bentley University
 Bethany College
 Bristol Community College
 California State University System
 California State University, Chico
 California State University, Northridge
 Central Community College
 Chandler-Gilbert Community College
 Delta College
 Eastern Connecticut State University
 Emory and Henry College
 Frostburg State University
 Gateway Technical College
 Hampshire College
 Hollins University
 Millersville University
 Mt Hood Community College
 Northland College
 Paul Smith's College of Arts and Sciences
 Portland State University
 Presidio School of Management
 Rochester Institute of Technology
 Unity College
 University of Arizona
 University of Maine
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 Wim Wiewel
 William Shutkin
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 Stephen Mulkey
 Ann Hart
 Paul Ferguson
 Mark Huddleston
 John Dunn

About Second Nature

Second Nature works to create a healthy, just, and sustainable society beginning with the transformation of higher education. Second Nature is the supporting organization of the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC), an intensive partnership among more than 680 higher education institutions committed to carbon neutrality. ACUPCC institutions work to accelerate education, research, and community engagement while setting an example by eliminating greenhouse gas emissions from their own operations. Learn more at: www.secondnature.org and www.presidentsclimatecommitment.org