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91 U.S. Universities Join New Climate Commitment

BOSTON- (April 27, 2016) 91 colleges and universities across the United States have committed to carbon neutrality and resilience by becoming Charter Signatories to the Climate Commitment. The Climate Commitment, a signature program of Boston-based nonprofit Second Nature, requires higher education institutions to set targets, report on progress publicly and collaborate with their surrounding community, all while integrating sustainability across the curriculum. To become a Charter Signatory of the Climate Commitment, schools had to sign between October 5, 2015 and Earth Day, 2016.

"We are proud to be one of the early signatories of the Climate Commitment"-- said Lacey Raak, Sustainability Director at California State University Monterey Bay-- "and [we] look forward to supporting and working with other campuses and community partners to advance the goals of the Commitment."

The Climate Commitment is one of three commitments from Second Nature. Known jointly as the Climate Leadership Commitments, they include a Carbon Commitment (focused on reducing greenhouse gas emissions), a Resilience Commitment (focused on climate adaptation and building community capacity), and a Climate Commitment that integrates both. The Carbon Commitment, formerly known as the American College & University Presidents' Climate Commitment (or ACUPCC) has a track record of 10 years of success, boasts nearly 600 signatories, and has been used as a model for higher education climate action internationally. The Climate Commitment seeks to expand on that success and integrate resilience into the framework. In the U.S., these signatory institutions become part of the Climate Leadership Network, which comprises more than 650 colleges and universities in every state and the District of Columbia.

The Climate Leadership Commitments have created tremendous impact: A recent study from the University of New Hampshire and facilities solutions company, Sightlines, found

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that campuses that have signed the Carbon Commitment have 47% lower carbon emissions from purchased energy than non-signatories that are doing sustainability work on campus. Additionally, Climate Leadership Network signatories are over-represented in sustainability leadership rankings. For example, 100% of the Top 10 Sierra Club Cool Schools are signatories. Second Nature also recently worked with the White House to create and support the American Campuses Act on Climate pledge leading up to the COP21 international climate talks. Nearly 80% of the pledges were from Climate Leadership Network institutions.

Second Nature launched the Climate Commitment on October 5 2015, along with the Resilience Commitment and the Carbon Commitment, the latter being a updated and rebranded version of their original commitment: the ACUPCC.

For a full list of the Climate Commitment Charter Signatories, see:
secondnature.org/charter-signatories/

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About Second Nature

Second Nature works to proactively build a sustainable and positive global future through initiating bold commitments, scaling successful actions, and accelerating innovative solutions among leadership networks in higher education. The Climate Leadership Commitments are a signature program of Second Nature and include a Carbon Commitment (focused on reducing greenhouse gas emissions), a Resilience Commitment (focused on climate adaptation and building community capacity), and a Climate Commitment that integrates both. The Climate Leadership Network comprises more than 650 colleges and universities in every state and the District of Columbia who have committed to take action on climate and prepare students through research and education to solve the challenges of the 21st century. Learn more at: secondnature.org.

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