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Second Nature Celebrates Climate Innovation & Leadership in Higher Education Throughout the Month of April

BOSTON, MA- Second Nature is recognizing 20 colleges and universities that exemplify the mission of the American College & University Presidents' Climate Commitment ([ACUPCC](#)) of addressing sustainability through education, research, and community engagement. These institutions are also finalists for this year's Second Nature Climate Leadership Awards.

"The innovative approaches and actions that these institutions are taking in the pursuit of sustainability, both on campus and in the community, are making enormous impacts," said David Hales, President of Second Nature. "They are showing critical leadership and their successes further strengthens progress made by the ACUPCC network."

As part of Earth Month celebrations, these institutions will be highlighted throughout the month of April in a video competition and in Second Nature's Celebrating Sustainability series.

Starting today, 18 of these 20 institutions will be vying for the most votes in a nationwide public video-voting competition. In partnership with [PlanetForward.org](#), an innovative environmental media project based at The George Washington University, the video competition will run from April 1-15. Each institution has produced a video that promotes its own innovative sustainability efforts. Viewers are asked to vote on the most groundbreaking institution in several institutional categories. Voting takes place here: <http://www.planetforward.org/content/climate-leadership-awards-2014>.

Additionally, Second Nature will also host a Celebrating Sustainability series, in which this year's CLA finalists will be featured every business day on the Second Nature and ACUPCC homepages for their cutting-edge work to promote campus sustainability.

"It is an honor to once again host the Climate Leadership Awards video competition on PlanetForward.org. The contest reflects the great marketplace of ideas in sustainability and promotes our core mission -- to harness the power of digital media and storytelling to elevate innovative solutions that can move the planet forward," says Frank Sesno, host and creator of Planet Forward, and Director of the GW School of Media and Public Affairs.

The Second Nature Climate Leadership Awards are held annually to recognize innovative and advanced leadership in climate mitigation, adaptation, and institutionalizing sustainability at signatory campuses of the ACUPCC. Selection of award winners is done independently of the video voting competition.

This year's finalists are:

Associate/Tribal Colleges

Valencia College (FL)
Gateway Technical College (WI)
Glendale Community College (AZ)
State University of New York Sullivan County Community College (NY)
Montgomery County Community College (PA)

Baccalaureate Colleges

Colby College (ME)
University of Minnesota - Morris (MN)
Huston-Tillotson University (TX)
Furman University (SC)

Master's Colleges & Universities

California State University, Chico (CA)
Pacific Lutheran University (WA)
Frostburg State University (MD)
Columbia College Chicago (IL)
Bentley University (MA)

Doctorate Granting Universities

University of Massachusetts, Amherst (MA)
Western Michigan University (MI)
University of North Texas (TX)
The Ohio State University (OH)

Special Focus Institutions / Others

Massachusetts College of Arts & Design (MA)
University of Massachusetts Medical School (MA)

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 support organization of the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment. Learn more at: www.secondnature.org.

About the American College & University Presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC)

The ACUPCC is an active partnership among approximately 680 colleges and universities to accelerate the education, research, and community engagement needed to slow and stop human-induced climate change while setting an example by eliminating net greenhouse gas emissions from their own operations. Learn more at: www.presidentsclimatecommitment.org

About Planet Forward:

Planet Forward is a multimedia project based out of The George Washington University School of Media and Public Affairs in Washington, DC. Planet Forward engages young people and innovators in search of solutions to the biggest challenges facing our planet. Through media, teaching and convening we empower new voices and elevate compelling ideas. Learn more at: www.planetforward.org