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Contact: LEE BODNER
(202) 457-1115
lee@ecoamerica.net

All 50 States Now Represented in the American College & University Presidents' Climate Commitment

Nebraska's Concordia University Joins Growing List of Higher Education Leaders to Fight Global Climate Disruption and "Completes the Map"

WASHINGTON, DC – Concordia University President Brian Friedrich chose Earth Day to sign the American College & University Presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC). This not only makes Concordia the first signatory institution in Nebraska, but it also "completes the map" for the ACUPCC, meaning all 50 states and the District of Columbia are now represented – a fitting Earth Day achievement for the initiative.

Just last week, Chancellor Robert Khayat of the University of Mississippi (Ole Miss) committed his institution, becoming the first signatory in Mississippi and making that state the 49th to be represented in the ACUPCC. The very next day, Steven Knapp, President of George Washington University signed, making GWU the first ACUPCC institution in the District of Columbia.

"On behalf of all the signatories, I welcome Presidents Friedrich and Knapp, and Chancellor Khayat to the Commitment. We are honored and pleased to have them join us," said Michael Crow, President of Arizona State University, founding member of the ACUPCC Leadership Circle, and Chair of the ACUPCC Steering Committee. "Colleges and universities must lead the effort to reverse global warming for the health and well being of current and future generations."

The ACUPCC is a high-visibility effort to address global warming and to accelerate the research and educational efforts of higher education to equip society to re-stabilize the earth's climate. To date, the leaders of 526 institutions across the country – representing 25% of the total student population – have made the Commitment.

By joining the ACUPCC, colleges and universities agree to create a plan to achieve climate neutrality as soon as practically possible and to promote the research and education needed to dramatically reduce GHG emissions and re-stabilize the earth's climate. ACUPCC institutions are making regular progress reports available to the public, a move that will promote greater learning about the process and ensure accountability.

Committed institutions have come together to form a learning community on implementing the ACUPCC, and are walking the talk. The endeavor not only benefits students and staff, who will learn through the experience, but it helps each campus model solutions for the rest of society. In addition to creating an institution-wide action plan to move towards climate neutrality, schools are initiating two or more of the following concrete actions while the broader plan is being developed:

- Adopting green standards for buildings;
- Requiring ENERGY STAR certification for products purchased by the university;
- Offsetting emissions due to air travel;
- Encouraging public transportation;

- Purchasing energy from renewable sources;
- Supporting climate and sustainability shareholder proposals through their endowment; and
- Minimizing waste generated on campus.

The Presidents' Climate Commitment is the first such effort by any major sector of society to set climate neutrality – not just a reduction in GHG emissions – as its target. This undertaking by America's colleges and universities is inspired by the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, the U.S. Climate Action Partnership, and other collective efforts by states and businesses.

Under the guidance and direction of presidents and chancellors in its Leadership Circle and Steering Committee, the ACUPCC is coordinated and supported by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE), Second Nature, and ecoAmerica.

Learn more at: www.presidentsclimatecommitment.org.

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