

Impact Report

Sustainable Creighton

2024-2025 ACADEMIC YEAR
OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAMS



sustainable
CREIGHTON

Creighton colleagues, friends and partners,

I'm pleased to share with you the Sustainability Impact Report for the 2024–2025 academic year, marking a significant milestone in our journey toward a more **Sustainable Creighton**. As we reach the halfway point of the Sustainable Creighton Initiative, this report reflects the **meaningful progress we've made together**.

Thanks to the dedication of students, faculty, staff and community partners, we remain **on track to fulfill the commitments** of the initiative in anticipation of our 150th anniversary in 2028. This year's report outlines achievements across four key areas: academics, operations, engagement and reporting— each demonstrating the **power of collective action**.

Hope for the future is rooted in action. This report is a testament to the creativity, collaboration and commitment of our campus community in taking action. From faculty integrating sustainability into curriculum, students leading waste diversion efforts and staff implementing energy-efficient infrastructure — every effort brings us closer to a **more just and sustainable world**.

As you explore the report, I encourage you to reflect on your role in this shared journey. Sustainability is not a destination — it's **a responsibility we carry together**. Let this report serve not only as a record of our progress, but as a source of inspiration for what is still possible.

Thank you for your continued dedication to caring for our common home.

Sincerely,

Andrew G Baruth, PhD

Director, Office of Sustainability Programs



ANDREW BARUTH, PHD
Director
Office of Sustainability Programs



APRIL THOMPSON, PSM
Projects & Reporting Coordinator
Office of Sustainability Programs

18.6 tons

of food waste collected
and processed into compost

*through a partnership with
Soil Dynamics/Hillside Solutions*

- Creighton receives a monthly allotment of **composted soil** from Soil Dynamics, which is donated to a dozen nonprofits in the Omaha area.
- Introduced compost collection to the Skutt Student Center for 8 weeks in spring, where Sodexo already supplies **compostable plates, cups and utensils**. Prior to the pilot, there were only compost bins *outside* of Skutt, as the building dock and staffing are not set up to manage the compost stream.

33.8%

waste diversion rate

during the Skutt Student Center Compost Pilot

- Compost bins (green) were added on the main first floor and in locations where tables were situated, each paired with a landfill bin (black) and a recycling bin (blue) to encourage proper sorting. Over eight weeks (3 hours per day, 4 days per week), 756 pounds of compost + 443 pounds of recycling + 2,235 pounds of landfill = **33.8% waste diversion rate**. Large landfill amounts and cross contamination remain an issue, showing the need for more “choose the right bin” educational campaigns.
- Over two years of implementation, over 80,000 to-go meals were served in a reusable Green Box container instead of single-use clamshells.

- Diverted **230 pounds of expanded polystyrene (Styrofoam) packaging** from the landfill through a partnership with the Omaha-based Plastilite Corporation. This initiative supports our goal of reducing hard-to-recycle waste and demonstrates how targeted material diversion efforts can be scaled through community partnerships.

186

geothermal wells added to campus

*for electric heating and cooling of the new
sophomore residence hall*

- Creighton University has installed **186 geothermal wells**—each over 400 feet deep—on the north side of our Omaha campus to support the new sophomore residence hall. This ground source system harnesses the Earth’s stable underground temperatures to provide **efficient heating and cooling year-round**. By tapping into renewable thermal energy, Creighton significantly reduces reliance on fossil fuels, lowers greenhouse gas emissions, and advances our commitment to sustainable campus development. The system also supports radiant floor heating in the new facilities maintenance building and domestic hot water pre-heating, maximizing energy reuse and minimizing environmental impact.

16

truckloads of donated move-out items

as part of the annual ReNest program in May

- Donated over 75 carpets and rugs, 20 couches and futons, 100 home appliances and 60 boxes of linens—**filling 16 truckloads**—to The Furniture Project during student move-out, as part of the ReNest program.



Reporting

- Named a **“Green College”** by **Princeton Review**, with a strong score of 86 out of 99. Only colleges that earned a Green Rating Score of 80 or higher made the list, and Creighton is proud to be among them.

16 years

designated TreeCampus
Higher Education

from the Arbor Day Foundation, with over **1,300 trees** on the Omaha Campus

81%

favorable opinion of campus
sustainability resources

1,300 Omaha-based students, faculty and staff participated in a survey during Earth Month over awareness, behaviors and perceptions related to environmental sustainability at Creighton.

81.2% of respondents agreed that Creighton provides good resources to support sustainability.

Academics

- Dozens of faculty members participated in **faculty development programs** over the summer to enhance the presence of sustainability in their courses. These workshops taught faculty how to integrate the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals as well as the recently developed Ignatian Pedagogy for Sustainability principles.

40

 courses added
sustainability-related content

- **40 courses** added the “Sustainability-Related” course attribute and are searchable in The Nest, our online course registration platform, and represent numerous fields across business, arts and sciences, law, nursing, pharmacy and medicine.



Engagement



CREIGHTON ECO•REPS

- The **Eco-Reps program**, with seven student leaders, drove sustainable living in residence halls through events, campaigns and outreach.
 - ▶ **8 campus events** – upcycling nights, mending workshops, “Bring Your Own” cocoa and ice cream socials and a reusable cup contest.
 - ▶ **Campus clean-up** with Keep Omaha Beautiful, removing litter and identifying cigarette waste hot spots.
 - ▶ **600+ lbs clothing diverted** via the IRHG Creighton Closet drives.
 - ▶ **1,000 lbs food waste composted** at Christmas at Creighton.
- Their efforts help Creighton continue striving toward its goal of diverting 35% of campus waste and reducing overall waste generation by 25%, reflecting the Jesuit value of caring for our common home.

31

offices have the Sustainable
Creighton Office Certification

- Grew the number of offices with the **Sustainable Creighton Certification**, 31 offices completed 16 sustainable actions to receive certification. Action areas are engagement, printing, office area, waste reduction, electronics and energy efficiency, purchasing and transportation.



- Funded seven **Creighton Student Sustainability Action Fund (CSSAF) projects** in 2024-2025, for a total of 17 projects since its 2022 launch.
 - Projects this year included an Energy Reduction competition, the 3rd annual Sustainability Week in Phoenix, and a pilot for residence hall composting. More than **\$7,000 invested** in student-led initiatives.

\$22,000+

invested in student-led
sustainability projects since 2022

- Ongoing promotion of **JayPass**, free bus access in Omaha, throughout the academic year led to strong growth in usage and measurable sustainability benefits. From September to April (last full month of ridership), Creighton affiliates took **9,040 rides across 1,468 unique riders**, avoiding 17 tons of CO₂ emissions, reflecting both engagement and momentum toward more sustainable transportation.
- Partnered with **Conservation Nebraska** to support **three AmeriCorps members** for the Omaha campus. The Common Ground Project funds Creighton students and allows Creighton University to be their primary service site for the year. These students supported campus ecology, the Eco•Reps program, waste diversion, sustainable transportation and emissions reporting.

30+

sustainable campus events

- Through a partnership with Sodexo, Student Life and the Office of Sustainability Programs, **all tableware** for Creighton events is now **reusable or compostable**, greatly expanding the ability to host low waste campus events. Whether the President’s Picnic, the Blue BBQ or end-of-year celebrations, over **30 events** produced nearly zero landfill waste through proper materials management this year.