

# TAKING ACTION

## Saint Joseph's College Civic Action Plan

March 2017

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#### *Introduction*

The culture of Saint Joseph's College is inherently community-oriented and civic-minded. As a Sisters of Mercy Institution, we share the Sisters' commitment to social justice and advocacy. Additionally, the Mission of the College states that we will "advocate for justice and peace in recognition of each person's responsibility for the welfare of both humankind and the environment."

A closer examination of the culture of engagement at Saint Joseph's College reveals that sustainability in its broadest sense now permeates every aspect of our work. As the College's own strategic plan *Sustaining the Promise* says, "We are an intentional community—one where everyone is committed to the practice and pursuit of the Core Values that are central to our identity as Catholic and Mercy—faith, excellence, integrity, community, respect, compassion, and justice—in everything we do from our educational programs to the ways we work and live together... Our continuing focus on these common concerns has led us to embrace the theme of "wellness and sustainability" as a major organizing principle."

***Taking Action***, Saint Joseph's College's Civic Action Plan, deliberately infuses sustainability initiatives into our culture of civic and community engagement, and identifies three priority goals that will strengthen and focus these efforts across campus while enhancing the public purpose of Saint Joseph's College:

- ***Goal 1***  
We will academically **integrate** the theme of "wellness and sustainability" with our commitment to civic engagement through the **Implementation of Sustainability Education**. Additionally, we will create a **Sustainability Certificate Program**, which will explore the connections between social, environmental, and economic systems, and equip students with the knowledge to apply sustainable, integrated problem-solving approaches in their communities.
- ***Goal 2***  
We will **coordinate** the efforts of faculty, staff, and students under the common goal of a sustainable future that includes a healthy environment, economic prosperity, and social justice, through both the **Development of a Civic Sustainability Lab** and the **Creation of a Chief Sustainability Officer Position**.

The **Civic Sustainability Lab** will promote, enhance, and reward high-impact practices such as community-based learning and research, critical thinking and reflection, and experiential learning.

The **Chief Sustainability Officer** will work across the organizational structure of the College to support a robust sustainability management system that strives to continuously improve alignment with the College's Strategic Plan, Climate Action Plan, and Civic Action Plan.

- *Goal 3*

We will **communicate** that we are an intentional community dedicated to improving health and vitality in the region through the **Development of a Community Culture Collective** and the **Creation of the Institute for Local Food Systems Innovation**.

The **Community Culture Collective** will be a place-based interdisciplinary collaboration of campus and community members supporting civic engagement and environmental sustainability through creative programs and media.

The **Institute for Local Food Systems Innovation** will serve as a supporting organization for the development of Maine's food and beverage industry by providing critically needed workforce training, facilities for scale-up of home operations, business development, and collaboration of other supporting organizations.

### *Institutionalizing Our Commitment to Excellence*

One of *Sustaining the Promise's* seven strategic initiatives is "Institutionalizing Our Commitment to Excellence," which calls us to develop sustainable systems for measuring and assessing our efforts in order to improve our practice in a variety of areas. **Taking Action** will serve as a vehicle for this effort while further emphasizing our "Commitment to Excellence."

The formal 3-year review of **Taking Action** will include a set of recommendations to continue the process of institutionalizing—and thereby making sustainable—the College's commitment to civic and community engagement and enhancing the public purpose of Saint Joseph's College.

Respectfully submitted March 31, 2017

Dr. James Dlugos, President

Kimberly Post, Community-Based Learning Director

Saint Joseph's College, 278 Whites Bridge Road, Standish, Maine 04084

## **CHARGE**

Saint Joseph's College President Dr. Jim Dlugos signed the **Campus Compact Thirtieth Anniversary Action Statement of Presidents and Chancellors** in March 2016. By signing, Dr. Dlugos agreed to create a campus **Civic Action Plan** within one year, in which the College commits to deepening civic and community engagement and enhancing the public purpose of Saint Joseph's College.

**Campus Compact** is a national coalition of nearly 1100 colleges and universities aimed at advancing the civic and democratic purposes of higher education. The network has developed over the last thirty years, and currently has a national office and state offices throughout the country. Campus Compact provides guidelines and resources for developing substantive campus civic and community engagement programs with a stated mission to "build a world in which all students are prepared for lives of engaged citizenship, all campuses are engaged in strong partnerships advancing community goals, and all of higher education is recognized as an essential building block of a just, equitable, and sustainable future."

Campus Compact has identified **Five Core Principles** for fulfilling this mission and for creating an impactful Civic Action Plan. These five core principles state that:

1. We empower our students, faculty, staff, and community partners to co-create mutually respectful partnerships in pursuit of a just, equitable, and sustainable future for communities beyond the campus—nearby and around the world.
2. We prepare our students for lives of engaged citizenship, with the motivation and capacity to deliberate, act, and lead in pursuit of the public good.
3. We embrace our responsibilities as place based institutions, contributing to the health and strength of our communities—economically, socially, environmentally, educationally, and politically.
4. We harness the capacity of our institutions—through research, teaching, partnerships, and institutional practice—to challenge the prevailing social and economic inequalities that threaten our democratic future.
5. We foster an environment that consistently affirms the centrality of the public purposes of higher education by setting high expectations for members of the campus community to contribute to their achievement.

The process of creating this Action Plan is based on the following understanding of terms:

### **Civic Engagement**

Civic Engagement is a form of citizenship practice consisting in mainly collective initiatives aimed at implementing rights, taking care of common goods, or empowering citizens. It can be addressed both to governmental or private interlocutors as well as to the general public. From the AAC&U's Civic Engagement VALUE Rubric: Civic engagement is "working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the

quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes." (Excerpted from *Civic Responsibility and Higher Education*, edited by Thomas Ehrlich, published by Oryx Press, 2000, Preface, page vi.) In addition, civic engagement encompasses actions wherein individuals participate in activities of personal and public concern that are both individually life enriching and socially beneficial to the community.

### **Community Engagement**

From the 2015 Carnegie Foundation Community Engagement Classification materials: Community engagement describes collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity. The purpose of community engagement is the partnership of college and university knowledge and resources with those of the public and private sectors to enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good. [New England Resource Center for Higher Education (NERCHE).]

### **Community-Based Learning (CBL)**

At Saint Joseph's College, community-based learning is defined as an experiential instructional strategy linked to course outcomes that engages students in solving problems within their schools and communities as part of their academic studies, transforming them from passive recipients to active participants in their education and community while providing a deeper understanding of theories and course content. It is:

**Experiential:** It provides students with hands-on projects/problem-solving with community partners.

**Collaborative:** Students and community partners equitably share the processes and desired outcomes in an active and reciprocal manner.

**Action-oriented:** The process and results are useful to community members in solving real-world problems, often promoting social equity and positive social change.

### **Place-Based Education (PBE)**

Place-based education is "an educational approach that uses all aspects of the local environment, including local cultural and historical information, as well as the natural and built environment, as the integrating context for learning." Research has shown that PBE helps students develop stronger ties to their community, enhances students' appreciation for the natural world, and creates a heightened commitment to serving as active, contributing citizens. (Sobel, David. *Place-Based Education: Connecting Classrooms and Communities*, Nature Literary Series No. 4. Great Barrington, MA: The Orion Society, 2004.)

### **Sustainability**

At Saint Joseph's College, sustainability is expressed as a deep respect for the earth through daily practices, decision-making, and stewardship in a healthy and equitable way so that communities now and in the future can thrive. (Sustainability Task Force, Saint Joseph's College, 2015)

# OUR MISSION AND CORE VALUES

Saint Joseph's College, sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy, is a liberal arts college that nurtures intellectual, spiritual, and social growth in students of all ages and all faiths within a value-centered environment.

In fulfillment of this mission, Saint Joseph's College will:

- foster a strong academic community dedicated to the pursuit of truth through serious study, integration of knowledge, and an ongoing dialogue between faith and reason;
- encourage all students to explore widely the arts and sciences while they also prepare to live ethical and meaningful lives;
- provide a strong foundation for graduate study, professional service, and career advancement;
- offer as an extension of its Mission to multiple areas of the world, both degree and non-degree programs through distance education;
- enhance students' awareness of human dignity and the meaning of life;
- advocate for justice and peace in recognition of each person's responsibility for the welfare of both humankind and the environment.

The values of the College, rooted in the teachings of Jesus Christ and in the heritage of the Sisters of Mercy, are the foundation for the College's educational mission. Taken to heart, these values exist at our very core; they are made visible in our daily interactions. Through a process of discernment based on dialogue and reflection, we designate the following as the Core Values for our College.

## **Faith**

Rooted in the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church, nevertheless, we respect diverse religious traditions and honor each individual's religious beliefs. Through the curriculum, sacramental opportunities, and co-curricular activities, we invite all members of the College community to develop their faith as an essential dimension of their lives.

## **Excellence**

As a Catholic liberal arts college, we seek to combine faith with reason in the pursuit of academic excellence. We call all members of the College community to excel as individuals and as professionals within their specific roles.

## **Integrity**

Concerned for the common good as individuals and as a community, we commit ourselves to honesty in all relations with students, faculty, staff and administration. Through our integrity, we maintain the trust of the surrounding community and of public and governmental agencies.

## **Community**

Informed by the spirit of the Sisters of Mercy, we demonstrate our spirit of connectedness with one another through our expressions of hospitality, courtesy, inclusive relationships,

shared values, and collaboration. We extend this value of community by reaching out to neighbors and to members of the broader civic and ecclesial communities.

### **Respect**

Mindful of the achievements of the past, we value and respect the contribution of each member of the Saint Joseph's College community to the advancement of our mission. We encourage and support each other as colleagues working together for the good of the whole institution.

### **Compassion**

Inspired by the example of Catherine McAuley, foundress of the Sisters of Mercy, we open our hearts to those among us in physical, psychological, or spiritual need. We consciously reach out beyond our college boundaries to serve the needs of others with compassion and mercy.

### **Justice**

Recognizing the dignity of all persons, we seek to address instances of injustice both within and outside our College community from a stance of informed advocacy. We hold ourselves accountable to each other and endeavor to practice responsible stewardship of the resources available to us.

## **INSTITUTIONAL BASELINE**

Saint Joseph's College is sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy, an order based in service to others, with a particular concern for the poor, the marginalized, women, immigrants, and the sustainability of life. Since it is rooted in the Catholic social teaching that all persons, without exception, possess inherent human dignity, the College constantly seeks to educate its students through classes and experiences that bring them face-to-face with people in need, and we dedicate significant resources to this mission. Each year, students, faculty, and staff consciously reach out beyond college boundaries to serve the needs of others with compassion and mercy, contributing over 30,000 hours of service to more than 50 schools, hospitals, nonprofits, municipalities, and agencies in Maine, other states, and abroad.

Since 1991 and the first Spring Break Service Immersion Trip to Kentucky, Saint Joseph's College has been committed to reaching out beyond our campus to serve those in need. Some of our significant programs include:

### **Spring Break Workfest**

Spring Break Workfest is a service and educational experience that offers small student teams hands-on opportunities to take a closer look at issues facing people and communities in various regions of the United States, serving their needs while developing personal relationships. Students, faculty and staff participate in this annual tradition.

### **International Service Trips**

2017 marked the 11<sup>th</sup> year of Saint Joseph College's International Service Trips over Winter Break to Haiti and Guatemala. Participants attend a series of 5 pre-trip meetings that introduce them to the historical, economic, political, and religious aspects of both countries. They also learn some basic Spanish or French, receive tips on cultural do's and don'ts, and engage in a series of team-building exercises. Their trip preparation and participation is institutionally recognized with academic credit. Participating faculty make these annual service trips an integral part of their teaching and research.

### **Midnight Run**

Midnight Run is a volunteer organization dedicated to finding common ground between the housed and the homeless. Each year, students, staff, and faculty participate in a "run" over the President's Day Weekend in February. Leading up to the weekend, the Mercy Center organizes a winter-clothing drive and the campus collaborates to ensure that enough coats, jackets and other winter wear are collected to distribute for the Midnight Run. The weekend of the run includes an afternoon of sandwich making and clothing sorting (organizing donations into item, gender, and size) on Saturday, and on Sunday, the group departs for Manhattan. Sunday night, they visit a number of planned stops throughout Manhattan to distribute clothing, hot coffee, and meals to people living on the bitterly cold streets of New York. Students have a unique opportunity to distribute food and warmth as well as share their time and conversation with the people they encounter.

### **Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week**

National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week is a yearly awareness campaign co-sponsored by the National Coalition for the Homeless and the National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness. At Saint Joseph's College, students, faculty and staff orchestrate a series of events to raise awareness across campus, and students historically start the week with Shack-A-Thon, a night spent sleeping outside with minimal shelter. The event is organized by the College's Habitat for Humanity Club.

### **Catherine's Cupboard**

Catherine's Cupboard is a community pantry and outreach program that is part of a collaborative outreach in the town of Standish. Working in cooperation with the town government and other partner organizations, each week it serves at least 50 families, with greater outreach during the holidays when food drives take place across campus. Students, faculty, and staff are regular volunteers as well as participants in specific activities that address local community needs. At Thanksgiving, the college and community come together to bake over three hundred pies for families in need.

In academics, students take a variety of courses that emphasize **social justice, service, and sustainability**. Each semester an average of 400 students take courses with community-based learning components, and much support is given to course development emphasizing both sustainability and community engagement. Our significant curricular programs include:

### **Ecology and the Environmental Challenge**

ES 300 was established in 2002 as a Core Course, with 250 students both on campus and online taking it every year. Students explore how natural systems work, food systems and agricultural practices, energy processes, everyday activities, the social dimensions of population, global cooperation and solutions, behavior change, and systems-level problem solving. During any given semester there are at least four sections running with a variety of community-based learning components.

### **Community and Sustainability Engaged (CASE) Scholarship**

The CASE Scholars program was created to support students who show extraordinary commitment to environmental sustainability and community by offering Community and Sustainability Engaged (CASE) Scholarships. These CASE Scholars not only receive a monetary award, but also join an exciting community-based learning program while pursuing a minor in Sustainability or Leadership and Community Engagement. Scholars increase their service and leadership skills while studying in one of the most rapidly growing fields of the 21<sup>st</sup> century in preparation for productive futures in the emerging green economy. The CASE Scholarship Program is part of Saint Joseph's College's Community-Based Learning Program. It seeks to embody the mission and values of the College through a four year progressively challenging program that builds students' capacity while benefiting communities. Each year, CASE Scholars are asked to engage in activities that will increase their abilities and understanding of how best to sustain our shared world.

All CASE Scholars are part of the **EcoReps**, a student group formed in 2006 to promote sustainability through civic action. EcoReps serve as peer educators to raise awareness on sustainability issues ranging from waste reduction and diversion, energy efficiency and conservation, to health and wellbeing, water conservation, and more.

### **Sustainability Studies Minor**

This first interdisciplinary minor was established in 2013. Required courses include Ecology and the Environment, Social Problems, and a Natural Science Internship, along with elective courses ranging from Climate Change and Glacial Geology to Business Ethics, Environmental Psychology, and Theology. Most courses have a community-based learning requirement.

### **Leadership and Community Engagement Minor**

The LCE interdisciplinary minor was established in 2014. It provides students with in-depth knowledge of leadership theory, ethics, skills, and context-based issues, as well as practical, experiential training applicable to nearly any area of study or social setting. Students learn about the fundamentals of community engagement while choosing courses that have community-based learning components, bringing "theory to practice" and enabling students to grow intellectually while also affecting positive change in their communities.



### **Sustainable Communities Initiative**

Founded on the idea that colleges and communities can work together to improve health and vitality in their region, this program leverages the skills, knowledge, and capacity of students and faculty through classes, courses, and research to address sustainability issues for organizations that reside in the surrounding community. From environmental action to economic viability and social integrity, this partnership allows students to engage in real-world problem solving to gain practical skills themselves while also providing needed support to nearby communities.

The **Exceptional Achievement in Academic Community-Based Learning Award** celebrates a graduating senior who demonstrates outstanding participation, commitment, and academic performance in community-based learning projects, particularly as they relate to personal and professional goals, perspectives, and values.

The **Instructional Innovation in Community-Based Learning Award** recognizes innovative faculty contribution to service and community-based learning curriculum development and community outreach.

The **Community Heart Award** recognizes a faculty member's enduring dedication to service learning and community outreach.

The **Sustaining Communities Award** recognizes the lasting legacy of a faculty member's work partnering students with a community in need.

In 2015, Saint Joseph's College was awarded the **Carnegie Foundation Community Engagement Classification**.

The College has been included on the **President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll** since 2012.

## **RATIONALE**

### **From Saint Joseph's College's 2014 Strategic Plan:**

"The Sisters of Mercy provide us with our Core Values of faith, excellence, integrity, compassion, respect, social justice, and community. Because of these Values, students learn it is important to be catalysts for social justice to ensure that all human beings are treated respectfully and equally, learn to act when a need is perceived, learn to accept that in life we are all servers and served as well, and understand the value of our planet and making a difference."

### **From the Mission Statement:**

Saint Joseph's College will: "...enhance students' awareness of human dignity and the meaning of life" and "...advocate for justice and peace in recognition of each person's responsibility for the welfare of both humankind and the environment."

## The Components of Engagement

Currently there are **four core components** to the College's culture of civic engagement. The first is **academics**, and the Community-Based Learning office works directly with faculty, students, and community partners to design and implement community projects and experiences in as many courses as possible. The college is 18 miles northwest of Portland, nestled among rural, moderately economically depressed communities. The campus location offers a diverse pool of potential civic learning opportunities; because there is a large immigrant population in the Portland area and problems ranging from high unemployment to food insecurity in the rural communities, both urban and rural issues can be addressed.

The second is direct **service**, both locally and abroad. In addition to faculty, staff, and students who work actively in schools, food pantries, health care facilities, and other organizations, the college also supports 3 annual week-long service immersion trips to areas of widespread poverty, including the major urban areas of New York and Philadelphia, isolated rural regions of Appalachia and Native American reservations, as well as Haiti and Guatemala. During these experiences, students get to know the people they are working with in a cooperative spirit and learn about the social and political structures that have failed, while working with them to create local solutions.

The third is **outreach**, and since 2005 the College has been running a food pantry to serve needs in the more rural areas. Catherine's Cupboard is a community pantry and outreach program that is part of a collaborative outreach in the town of Standish. Working in cooperation with the town government and other partner organizations, each week it serves at least 50 families, with greater outreach during the holidays when food drives take place across campus. Students, faculty, and staff are regular volunteers as well as participants in specific activities that address local community needs.

The fourth core component of civic engagement at the College is **sustainability**, thanks in part to the campus-wide grassroots action of the **E-Team** and its *Attainable Sustainable* initiative, and Dr. Dlugos' signing of the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment and the Catholic Climate Covenant. In 2015, the Climate Action and Sustainability Plan *Attainable Sustainable* was created, and serves as our road map, guiding action and establishing goals that reinforce and build upon key areas of the College's strategic plan, such as building a diverse, multigenerational learning community, ensuring financial stability, and stewarding the campus environment. Additionally, the college-owned and operated **Pearson's Town Farm** supports the campus and those in need not just through organically-grown food, but as a teaching opportunity to better educate young people about agriculture and their food. The crops are used in the College's food service (Pearson's Café) and Catherine's Cupboard Food Pantry, educating the community and empowering the underserved through the simple means of planting seeds and nurturing life.

## VISIONING

In *Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future*, UNESCO states: "A sustainable future is one in which a healthy environment, economic prosperity and social justice are pursued simultaneously to ensure the well-being and quality of life of present and future generations." (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization. ©UNESCO, 2010. All Rights Reserved.) What becomes quite clear upon examination of the already-existing culture of engagement at Saint Joseph's College is that sustainability in its broadest sense now permeates every aspect of our work.

From our own strategic plan *Sustaining the Promise*, "We are an intentional community—one where everyone is committed to the practice and pursuit of the Core Values that are central to our identity as Catholic and Mercy—faith, excellence, integrity, community, respect, compassion, and justice—in everything we do from our educational programs to the ways we work and live together... Our continuing focus on these common concerns has led us to embrace the theme of "wellness and sustainability" as a major organizing principle."

As a Sisters of Mercy Institution, we share the Sisters' commitment to social justice and advocacy. From their Critical Concerns (2011), "We believe in the need to work toward the sustainability of life and support movements and legislation that secure the fundamental right to water for everyone, and that address climate change. That leads us to examine our own behaviors and policies and to adopt more environmentally sustainable practices."

The Sisters of Mercy's current initiative *Mercy Taking Action* informs the creation of Saint Joseph's College's Civic Action Plan, reinforcing our commitment to sustainability while building upon our innate ethos of service to inspire behavioral, policy, and guideline changes at the personal and institutional levels. This Civic Action Plan, ***Taking Action***, recognizes our heritage, Mission, and Core Values, and celebrates our existing tradition of civic engagement. ***Taking Action*** commits Saint Joseph's College to work toward an environmentally sustainable and "socially just presence on Earth" (Critical Concerns 2011) and makes recommendations to **better integrate, coordinate, and communicate** our efforts. ***Taking Action*** is our civic action plan for *Sustaining the Promise*.

# PRIORITY GOALS AND OUTCOMES

<p><b>Goal 1:</b></p> <p>Academically <b>integrate</b> the theme of “wellness and sustainability” with our commitment to civic engagement.</p>
<p><b>Core Principle(s):</b></p> <p>#2</p> <p>We prepare our students for lives of engaged citizenship, with the motivation and capacity to deliberate, act, and lead in pursuit of the public good.</p>
<p><b>Strategies:</b></p> <p><b>Implementation of Sustainability Education</b></p> <p>With the support of the Faculty Senate and Vice President and Chief Learning Officer, Saint Joseph’s College commits to Sustainability Education, a teaching approach that uses high-impact practices (HIP) such as community-based learning to create meaningful experiences at the intersection of sustainability and individual disciplines. (Kuh, George D. <i>High-Impact Educational Practices: What They Are, Who Has Access to Them, and Why They Matter</i>. AAC&amp;U, 2008)</p> <p><b>Creation of a Sustainability Certificate Program</b></p> <p>As outlined in the College’s Climate Action and Sustainability Plan, Saint Joseph’s College commits to developing a Sustainability Certificate Program by 2020. The program will explore the connections between social, environmental, and economic systems, and equip students with the knowledge to apply sustainable, integrated problem solving approaches in their communities.</p>

<p><b>Goal 2:</b></p> <p><b>Coordinate</b> faculty, staff, and students under the common goal of a sustainable future that includes a healthy environment, economic prosperity, and social justice.</p>
<p><b>Core Principle(s):</b></p> <p>#4</p> <p>We harness the capacity of our institutions—through research, teaching, partnerships, and institutional practice—to challenge the prevailing social and economic inequalities that threaten our democratic future.</p> <p>#5</p> <p>We foster an environment that consistently affirms the centrality of the public purposes of higher education by setting high expectations for members of the campus community to contribute to their achievement.</p>

## **Strategies:**

### **Creation of a Chief Sustainability Officer Position**

The position of Chief Sustainability Officer will be created with the objective of further institutionalizing our philosophical and practical commitments to sustainability in all of its forms. The Chief Sustainability Officer will work across the College's organizational structure to support a robust sustainability management system that strives to continuously improve alignment with the College's Strategic Plan, Climate Action Plan, and Civic Action Plan.

### **Development of a Civic Sustainability Lab**

Through the deliberate infusion of Sustainability Education and in recognition of the College's Strategic Planning goal to develop a **Center for Natural and Human Environments**, the campus will develop a Civic Sustainability Lab to promote, enhance, and reward:

- a. community-based learning and research
- b. participatory group learning/transformational learning
- c. critical thinking/reflective learning
- d. student-centered learning/problem-based learning
- e. experiential learning

The Civic Sustainability Lab will remove barriers and create space for transformative pedagogy, while improving student-faculty, student-staff, and faculty-staff interactions and learning by working to answer questions about how community-based environmental stewardship activities can enhance social and economic structure and function. Possible examinations include the individual, community, and outcomes of sustainability practices and education, including a sense of place, adaptive capacity, and social capital.

Lab activities will be formally recognized in the annual faculty merit process and rank and tenure consideration, in student curricular and co-curricular requirements, and included in the annual staff assessment process.

**Goal 3:**

**Communicate** that we are an intentional community dedicated to improving health and vitality in the region.

**Core Principle(s):****#1**

We empower our students, faculty, staff, and community partners to co-create mutually respectful partnerships in pursuit of a just, equitable, and sustainable future for communities beyond the campus—nearby and around the world.

**#3**

We embrace our responsibilities as place based institutions, contributing to the health and strength of our communities—economically, socially, environmentally, educationally, and politically.

**Strategies:****Development of a Community Culture Collective**

Built on the philosophy that collaboration between communities can create powerful visions and robust strategies for growth, the Community Culture Collective (3C) will be a place-based interdisciplinary collaboration of campus and community members supporting civic engagement through creative programs and media, and promoting an environmentally sustainable and “socially just presence on Earth” (Critical Concerns 2011). Projects housed within the Collective can include exhibits, performances, participatory events, and creative collaborations.

**Creation of the Institute for Local Food Systems Innovation**

The Institute will serve as an innovation hub, promoting sustainable agriculture and local economic development. Its mission will focus on New England’s food security goal to build the capacity to produce at least 50% of the food for all New Englanders by 2060. The Institute will serve as a supporting organization for the development of Maine’s food and beverage industry by providing critically needed workforce training, facilities for scale-up of home operations, business development, and collaboration of other supporting organizations. The Institute will support the industry with a physical and digital space designed to teach skills to a diverse community of learners, generate new business for local farms, and foster business development in the regional food system. To this end, we will develop a network of farmers from across the Lakes Region and marketing and technology professionals throughout Greater Portland. By bringing these key entrepreneurial forces together with critical infrastructure and resources in a hub focused on achieving regional agricultural goals, the Institute will provide critical support to economic growth in Maine. The result is an integrated, collaborative community nurturing local food system education and innovation.

## TIMELINE

Action	Date	Responsible Party	Status
Submit to Campus Compact	03/31/2017	Kimberly Post	completed
Send to Faculty Senate	10/2017	Michael Pardales	scheduled
Send to Management Council	09/2017	Jim Dlugos	completed
Submit to Leadership Team	10/2017	Jim Dlugos	scheduled
Present to the Board of Trustees	10/2017	Jim Dlugos	scheduled
Adoption	10/2017	Jim Dlugos	scheduled
3-year Review	FALL 2020	Kimberly Post	scheduled

## COMMUNICATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

1. Progress made in the implementation of ***Taking Action*** will be regularly communicated through the College's website, social media outlets, the alumni magazine, and other appropriate avenues.
2. The implementation process will be monitored by the Sustainability Task Force and the Community-Based Learning Office.
3. When created, the new position of Chief Sustainability Officer (Goal 2 Strategy) will provide additional oversight and support for alignment of ***Taking Action*** with the College's Strategic Plan and Climate Action Plan.
4. The formal 3-year review of ***Taking Action*** will include a set of recommendations to continue the process of institutionalizing—and thereby making sustainable—the College's commitment to civic and community engagement and enhancing the public purpose of Saint Joseph's College.