

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Westminster President Makes Historic Commitment to Climate Change
The College Will Work to Become Carbon Neutral

SALT LAKE CITY (April 18, 2007) –Westminster College has joined more than 170 colleges and universities across the nation to become a charter signatory of the American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment, and will work toward carbon neutrality in the college's operations. President Michael Bassis signed the pledge on behalf of the college ensuring that Westminster will take an active leadership role with what he describes as "One of the defining challenges of the 21st century: global warming."

"Climate change has become a crisis that threatens our entire planet. In recognizing the scientific consensus that global warming is occurring at an alarming rate, I agree with the college and university presidents who have also signed the pledge that as higher education leaders, we have a unique responsibility. Higher education must model the kind of environmental responsibility we are encouraging our students to develop," explained Bassis of his decision.

By signing the pledge, Westminster will be committed to reduce and ultimately neutralize greenhouse gas emissions on the campus. Some of the specific action steps included in the Presidents Climate Commitment includes:

- Initiating a planning process to achieve climate neutrality as soon as possible.
- Completing an emissions inventory within one year.
- Within two years, setting a target date, and interim milestones for becoming climate neutral.
- Taking immediate steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by choosing from a list of short-actions.
- Making the action plan, inventory and periodic progress reports publicly available.

For more information on The President's Climate Commitment, please click on the following link. <http://www.presidentsclimatecommitment.org/index.php>

"I believe we have already taken important steps to put Westminster on the path toward climate neutrality. These include our purchase of 11 percent of the college's energy from renewable sources; our efforts to encourage faculty, staff and students to use alternative transportation; our plans to install solar panels on the new Dolores Dore Eccles Health, Wellness, and Athletic Center; and our plans to build the new science building to standards of LEED certification," remarked Bassis in a statement to the campus.

Bassis expressed hope that this commitment will ensure that Westminster becomes model of environmental responsibility and a steward of our planet and its precious resources.

Details on additional environmental initiatives that Westminster has undertaken are included below.

Wind Power Purchases Meet 11% of Westminster's Electrical Needs ~

Following a recommendation made by students, Westminster became a Visionary partner in the Blue Sky Program. The college purchase 750 blocks of Blue Sky Wind Energy per month amounting to 11% of the College's total electrical needs, Westminster's wind power purchase will have the same environmental benefits as planting over 176,000 trees or not driving over 1.9 million miles annually.

Landscape Master Plan and Demonstration Gardens ~

Completed in 2005, the campus-wide plan targets areas for improved water conservation. A grant from the Energy Solutions Foundation will enable the college to demonstrate water-wise and native landscaping on campus.

Dumke Field Water Harvesting ~

Westminster's new Dumke athletic field is made of artificial turf that does not require water or insecticides. A unique water reuse system was created underneath the field, which gathers all of the excess storm water from the campus and allows the college to pump the reused water back on to campus lawns for watering. This process also helps the college continue its effort to clean up Emigration Creek by keeping that storm water from flowing directly into the creek.

Environmental Center ~

In the fall 2006, Westminster established an Environmental Center. Led by Kerry Case, the Environmental Center is designed to foster understanding of and engagement in local and global environmental issues.

Environmental Studies Major ~

The Environmental Studies major involves highly active learning experiences, which are a signature of a Westminster education. The new Center and new major, as well as the other campus "greening" efforts were all developed with the goal of connecting classroom learning to the physical place that is Westminster, including the magnificent natural environment that sits just beyond the campus.

The American College & University Presidents' Climate Commitment is an initiative of college and university presidents, and is staffed and supported by Second Nature, ecoAmerica, and the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE).

Westminster College, founded in 1875, is a private, comprehensive liberal arts college dedicated to students and their learning. The college prepares its students for success through a strong foundation of liberal education combined with cutting-edge professional programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Located where the Rocky Mountains meet the city of Salt Lake, Westminster blends classroom learning with experiences presented by its unique location to help students develop skills and attributes critical for success in a rapidly changing world. *U.S. News & World Report* consistently ranks Westminster in the top tier of colleges and universities in the West, and *Kaplan/Newsweek's America's Hottest Colleges* named Westminster as one of

the “367 Most Interesting Schools” in the country. For more information, visit www.westminstercollege.edu.

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