

KM: Yeah definitely. STARS is huge. STARS is huge to us. We try to go to the AASHE conference every year and that's always really fun. You guys should try and get someone to pay for you to go. It's a great time. But STARS the process of... is... super time consuming for us. Um, we almost have to completely abandon our community programs every 3 years to be able to do STARS.

So we go pretty in depth on it. I primarily was over **reporting on kind of student, like the sustainability designated courses and faculty that were involved in sustainable courses.** But that was such a small part compared to like what the other intern and my boss were doing. I just got off on it kind of easy because I had monthly newsletters to make so I got kind of lucky. **But STARS is really important for keeping track of where we started and where we're going in making our goals.** We want to be realistic with our goals. Right now I think we're STARS silver, yeah I think we're STARS silver. So the big debate this year was are we going for I think the next one is gold and then there's green I think is how it works, or platinum. One of those.

And we were trying to decide if we should go for the next one, or the top one. They haven't finished exactly on what they decided to do because we do want to set those realistic goals. But basically STARS if we say we want to be gold certified in STARS then we know what we have to do and we can tell the university this is what we would have to do in order to get there. Can you support us in this? So that really helps kind of like... have a clear direction.

You can also see the major areas that you're lacking. Like we were doing really well in facilities. But we weren't doing well in like we don't have enough sustainability courses. And we don't

have enough... we didn't have enough individual departments or offices doing tiny trashes. Or recycling their ink cartridges and things like that. So that's where the green department program came in, was like to help us get to the next certification of STARS.

But STARS as I understand it can be... even if you don't think that you can reach the next certification the next year that doesn't mean that you can't still improve of course because gold is arbitrary. **It's about the progress and the efforts that you're making.** But it really does help you see where you need to improve on points if you wanted to continue through the certification process. So I think it'd be really great for us, even if it is really stressful. And I think more universities should and are going to utilize as making sustainability plans is going to become more popular. I think this is a really good one to go off of.