# HANLEY SUSTAINABILITY INSTITUTE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY:

## KEY OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Hanley
Sustainability
Institute

DESIGN
IMPACT

## PROCESS SUMMARY STATEMENT:

In the fall of 2019, the Hanley Sustainability Institute launched a partnership with Design Impact (DI), a social innovation nonprofit based in Cincinnati, OH. DI and HSI are working together to create a strategic vision for HSI that will outline the role the institute will play on and off campus. **This strategic vision is being shaped through broad and deep community engagement with many of HSI's stakeholders— students, faculty, staff and community partners.** A core team of UD staff and faculty from various departments have been guiding this process.



Since October, DI has facilitated a number of campus wide listening sessions and focus groups with these stakeholders to better understand what sustainability means to people and how they view HSI's position and role in elevating sustainability on campus and in the community. In addition, HSI staff has interviewed current and potential community partners and studied other institutes and campus sustainability initiatives around the country. **DI looked at all of the inputs from these engagements and identified eight themes that emerged from these exploratory conversations and investigations.**

These themes were shared with the core team and HSI staff. Their feedback and perspectives are reflected in the themes. Each of these themes present a potential opportunity for HSI. **Overall, the discovery process highlighted a need for HSI to collaborate with and complement existing sustainability efforts on campus and in the community.** Creative sessions held on campus in the Fall of 2020 with stakeholders will determine which of these opportunities should be part of HSI's strategic vision.

# DEMOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN:

To ensure that HSI's strategic vision is truly collaborative, it is important to engage multiple perspectives. Design Impact hosted 6 focus groups on campus — two with students, two with operation staff and two with faculty. In October, DI hosted a listening session at Kennedy Union that was open to students, staff and faculty. HSI staff interviewed over 15 community partners and researched other model universities and institutes around the country that are leading sustainability initiatives on campus and in cities.

The images below represent the stakeholders engaged:

## STUDENT POP UP

37 first year students • 15 second year students
10 third year students • 4 fourth year students
5 graduate students • 1 staff member
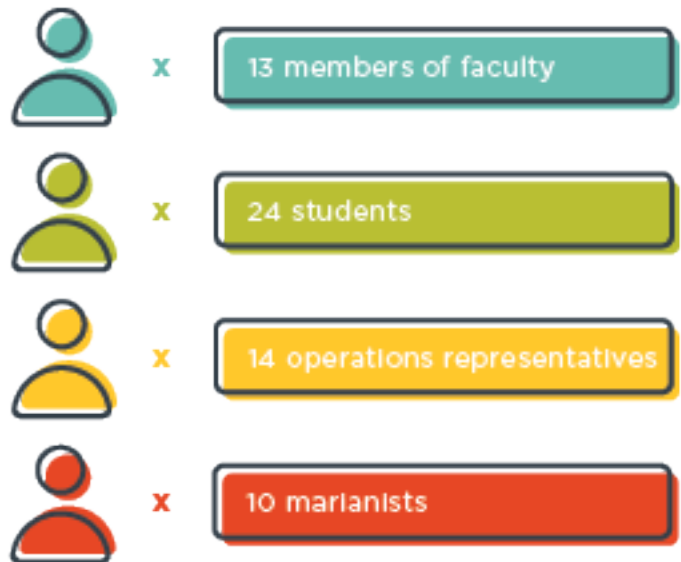
### TOTAL PEOPLE: 72

## FOCUS GROUPS

X  13 members of faculty

X  24 students

X  14 operations representatives

X  10 marianists

### TOTAL PEOPLE: 61

## LISTENING SESSION

3 students
13 faculty
6 academic staff
3 operations
5 other

### TOTAL PEOPLE: 30

22  Total community partners (1:1 Conversations)

### TOTAL ENGAGED:
## 185

# KEY THEMES

# LEANING INTO RESEARCH

# RESEARCH FOR ACTION

## SUMMARY:

Research plays an important role to inspire change or measure progress and outcomes once action has been taken. Within a university setting, research can be thorough and in-depth, but also highly academic and out of reach for other organizations or individuals to access or put into action. It's important to connect lab-based research with on-the-ground, community-based research to encourage collaboration and maximize impact. HSI can invest in a variety of research practices and methodologies that are responsive to community needs and build bridges between these often siloed research strategies.

Additionally, HSI can invest in research to support operations by providing vetted information and insights to help shape decisions on campus and educate others about these decisions.

## PERSPECTIVES:
*(quotes and summary statements from focus groups, listening sessions, and interviews)*

- Work with communities to empower them to implement research and best practices in ways that align with their culture and perspective.

- **HSI is poised to do hands-on research with community.** It already takes place on campus and it could continue to strengthen off campus. How do we connect UD's resources with the needs (and assets) of surrounding urban communities to address environmental and sustainable challenges through hands-on learning experiences for students?

- Keep a focus on data and information about the campus, community, etc. We can make the right decisions when we have the info to do so.

- "It's really hard to figure out the best way to do it, even if you have a sustainable mindset. There is a lot of confusing information out there. It's hard to make a commitment to something if you can't discern what is out there. HSI could play a role to distribute materials and research that can help us determine the most sustainable way to do something."

- **HSI has access to data-driven solutions through their connection to academia. It's important to leverage this as part of their identity and how they engage with community partners.**

- **UD/HSI is a leader in sustainability. They are innovative and approachable.** HSI could provide more education for the community on sustainable issues and possible solutions. How do we approach to keep our community well-informed, and give them action items to be more sustainable? Health and sustainability are similar—research and information is always changing—how do we be forthright with information to support people?

- "There was a 6 week drought on campus…and there's no idea because our campus is lush and green. …there's little about walking through buildings, through classrooms that conveys this commitment to sustainability, that makes these connections visible."

- Best practice research from NC State University's Sustainability Strategic Plan: "GOAL 3: OPERATIONS, PLANNING, AND DESIGN Model sustainability through efficient, innovative facilities and operations that educate the campus community and improve the quality of life."

**HOW MIGHT HSI BUILD BRIDGES BETWEEN SCHOLASTIC RESEARCH AND COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH SO THAT WORK IS ACTION-ORIENTED, RESPONDING TO COMMUNITY NEEDS AND DRIVING CHANGE BOTH IN THE DAYTON COMMUNITY AND ON CAMPUS?**

# BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE COMMUNITY

# TAKE DOWN THE IVORY TOWER

## SUMMARY:

Reciprocal and productive partnerships are critical if HSI strives to lead conversations and actions around sustainability in the greater Dayton community. The structure of those relationships **should be thoughtful and include shared power, shared language, and shared visions**. HSI will need to balance the need to be a thought leader around sustainability while also maintaining an authenticity and approachability that will lead to productive partnerships.

## PERSPECTIVES:
*(quotes and summary statements from focus groups, listening sessions, and interviews)*

- Good partnerships could be long-term relationships that are accountable. **They are transformative, not transactional, and provide meaningful capacity support in terms of financial or time commitment.** These partnerships are long-term, deep, and based on a mutual understanding developed through shared goals, trust, communication, and mechanisms for accountability.

- "**There are no organizations in the Dayton area addressing environmental justice, nor environmental issues in a community-driven way.** I see the role for HSI to network with the non-profits and local community members and to organize from community level up."

- "Who should we be collaborating with? Other centers and institutes, City of Dayton...again act as a convener. **UD has a unique role and can pull people together.** And HSI has respect and good will with the community. [There's a] perception that we could be a neutral party in some cases."

- "**How do you do community engagement and not take power from the community?** I'm worried about sustainability initiatives. It will perpetuate structures of inequity. It will make us more of an ivory tower. It's tricky here."

- **"How well is UD at collaborating without holding the savior mentality?"**

- "How do we market the university? We market this tiny space. When there's an awesome City beyond it." **Connecting to Dayton as a larger community is living out the mission of the Marianist community.**"

- "Working with community partners means listening and community organizing - **having partners define issues and drive their progress**. Need to respond to what you're hearing and not imposing on what you think the community wants. Need to build trust together and relationship based on mutual respect, reciprocity (i.e. helping each other even if issues are different)."

- **HSI can work well as conveners**, especially if there could be more convening on related topics happening off-campus. How can we break down those psychological barriers to bring people to the campus?

- **HSI could be more transparent and inclusive in projects and conversations.**

- "**UD/HSI has the ability to scale up solutions**. Their partnerships within their communities can be leveraged to go "in together" on renewable energy solutions to make actions more economically viable."

## HOW MIGHT HSI BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS THAT LEADS TO RECIPROCAL AND PRODUCTIVE PARTNERSHIPS?

# DEVELOPING LEADERS FOR A JUST FUTURE

# THE POWER OF THE STUDENT BODY

## SUMMARY:

Students are overwhelmed and anxious about climate change, yet some students are struggling to feel as though they know what and how much to do around the issue. UD can inspire and develop a student body that leaves the university educated and prepared to organize and participate in social movements like climate change. Currently the curriculum, campus policies, leadership, and staff are under resourced to support more students finding and living into their collective power, a power they must tap to change the world.

## PERSPECTIVES:
*(quotes and summary statements from focus groups, listening sessions, and interviews)*

- HSI can help students learn how to use their voice in the policy arena; how to participate in the political process; help students engage in advocacy.

- Students are told to organize marches but it cannot look like a protest. No signs are allowed. The Global Climate Strike was one of the first times so many students saw signs on campus. Students aren't getting a sense of how to express collective sentiments and organize (around social change).

- **Some students distrust leadership and organizations/ governments because they haven't seen their voices and concerns represented or witnessed their input lead to any action.**

- Relying on the students who are the green people to push agendas is not the way to make change. **The University Leadership can organize a student-oriented movement, by getting consensus on what students want and follow through with action so that students can start to understand their collective power.**

- Many students coming from private schools have a different relationship with authority—they are taught to follow rules and challenge authority in polite, safe, and structured ways.

- Generation Z experiences major anxiety around massive, seemingly unsolvable social problems (global warming, gun violence) that humans have created over time. Often these issues are so big that students don't know where to start or how to take action.

- From Career Services: **"[Some] students are in a hurry to get to this and start solving problems. Make them feel like they are doing what they are being called to do. We've got a generation who feels called and are quite impatient."**

- "Student-driven initiatives are definitely prioritized and taken more seriously than external professionals coming in and telling us what to do."

- UD students have fresh minds, can think outside the box, and can help design and develop projects that can transform the community through green technology and urban agriculture.

## HOW MIGHT HSI EQUIP STUDENTS TO ORGANIZE, ADVOCATE, AND IMPACT POLICY, PRACTICES, AND DAILY DECISIONS AROUND SUSTAINABILITY?

# EMBEDDING SUSTAINABILITY INTO EDUCATION

## SUMMARY:

Currently, if students are not part of a sustainability major or minor, they must take initiative to weave climate change into their course work. Similarly, if faculty outside of the major or minor want to integrate sustainability into curriculum they must lead efforts on their own. This method is reliant on existing student or academic interest. In order to develop a student body oriented toward playing a personal, social, and professional role in sustaining our planet, students will need to see the connection between the planet, any topic of study, and their daily lives. This can happen both within and outside of the classroom.

## PERSPECTIVES:
*(quotes and summary statements from focus groups, listening sessions, and interviews)*

- "Every student graduating from UD should know what their environmental future looks like, and how to navigate that. Every student should have a foundation in climate science, sustainability, SDGs, critical thinking. It's irresponsible to send students who are oblivious of this into various fields."

- Idea for Sustainability Lab: integrated classes that are hands-on and experiential, working in and with the broader Dayton community. It should NOT be an 'add on' but rather an operationalized way to build sustainability into the curriculum for all courses.

- **"There is no connection between life and studies and climate justice." - student**

- **HSI's role is educating students as best as they can through project based, hands on, in classroom learning about sustainability and integral ecology, and all other facets of sustainability.**

- "Incorporating sustainability into your required classes would be received negatively because you have to take it. Like religion and philosophy. People won't take it seriously."

- **HSI can be integrated across and embedded in all campus divisions.**

- General Education (which is in charge of CAP, Common Academic Program) works across units to "CAPify" their courses. Gen Ed offers workshops to professors to create curriculum and courses in such a way that they can be considered a CAP course. When students in the ENG program can double qualify classes as their credits towards ENG and CAP requirements, then they can take classes outside of the college. This could open them up for other things like sustainability.

- "**UD does a great job connecting across departments, thinking about the Marianist perspective.** I can think of a zillion things across campus. Best ones, diversity and inclusion, vocation mini-grants, collaborations between Education, ETHOS (Engineers in Technical Humanitarian Opportunities for Service-Learning) and Center for Social Concern. By working together, sustainability is bubbling up organically. But because of the way we connect across our UD community so well, there is a huge opportunity to permeate curriculum."

- "It's already hard enough to fit in classes that you're not interested in. I think everyone should be aware of sustainability, but I don't think they have to take a whole semester on it to be educated."

## HOW MIGHT HSI PARTNER WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS AND INITIATIVES ON CAMPUS TO EMBED SUSTAINABILITY EDUCATION INTO EXISTING ACADEMIC COURSES, CURRICULUM AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES (SEMINARS, DISCUSSION GROUPS, ETC) THAT MAY OTHERWISE SEEM DISCONNECTED?

# COMMITMENT TO THE COMMON GOOD

## SUMMARY:

Catholic Social Teaching speaks of Integral Ecology, the recognition that "everything is connected." Damage to land, water, and nonhuman creatures affects economies, political life, families, and souls. The struggle for environmental justice is a spiritual struggle as well as a political and technical one. As a Catholic, Marianist institution, UD has a responsibility to promote these teachings and help students develop habits and skills to practice integral ecology. These include learning to dialogue with others to seek comprehensive solutions that combat poverty, restore dignity to all, and protect nature; challenging the technocratic paradigm; and encountering creation in a contemplative spirit. The commitment to integral ecology and the common good calls people to be agents of "ecological conversion." UD students can learn to be present to the struggles of others, to critically examine where our behavior perpetuates injustice, and to work to change unjust structures that inhibit people and our planet from reaching their fulfillment. Currently, students are not fully connecting how Catholic Social Teaching and Marianist values inform advancing sustainability.

## PERSPECTIVES:
*(quotes and summary statements from focus groups, listening sessions, and interviews)*

- "The heart and soul of HSI's work should be the climate emergency. If it's not, they have gravely missed their moral obligation as a Marianist institution and educator of future world citizens." (Rocky Mountain Institute professional)

- What can we learn from indigenous tribes? They care for the planet because they believe humanity should be in harmony with the planet. We are the environment! Preservation for the planet is not driven by greed or capitalism.

- **We can promote a richer concept of sustainability beyond energy and climate.** Pope Francis' integral ecology – environmental and social problems are intertwined.

- Sustainability is: How does a social system perform its functions into the future into the long-term. **Focus on the social issues: employment, housing, etc. Complexities around humans. How will this region look in the future, will it be a better future?**

- Knowledge alone doesn't change actions. We would still make decisions based on convenience.

- "As a faith-based [institution]: We can emphasize the much needed Value of contemplation, reflection, prayer (time out of rat race and email barrage)...including time outdoors in nature, to think, ponder and thus make wise and better decisions. Cultivate virtue of humility."

- "There is an underlying concern that the university's trajectory for growth has led to a drift away from our Marianist core."

- "My big concern is that of Pope Francis – **environmental and climate problems are critically linking to social-economic problems**. My key recommendation is that UD (Hanley being a key player) pull together an interdisciplinary effort on integral ecology and regional solidarity."

- The Pope wrote an encyclical "Laudato Si" that connects environmental sustainability to our faith tradition and it's something Campus Ministry tries to make people aware of.

## HOW MIGHT HSI CENTER AND MODEL THE CATHOLIC, MARIANIST VALUES OF CARING FOR THE COMMON GOOD AND INTEGRAL ECOLOGY IN THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE AND IN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF SUSTAINABILITY?

# EVOLVING THE INSTITUTION

# CONNECTING SUSTAINABILITY TO OUR CULTURE

## SUMMARY:

Sustainability can feel like a separate part of a person's identity or can only manifest on certain parts of UD's campus. It is not embedded into campus culture— the way students, staff and community think, speak, act, and make. Without consistent and cohesive culture and measured accountability tied to sustainability, actions that lead us to a better world for future generations are forgotten, deprioritized, or seen as something "extra" or burdensome.

## PERSPECTIVES:
*(quotes and summary statements from focus groups, listening sessions, and interviews)*

- "Sustainability shouldn't have a strict definition— it should be just how we live. This idea is also an idea in Native American culture.

- "The problem is that we are dismissed as individuals, as the "green guy". **It [sustainable behavior] should be integrated and automatic so that this is who we are and what we do. Make sustainability accessible for people.**"

- "HSI could serve as a top down hub to integrate things that are already happening. Right now initiatives are connected to certain groups versus a campus wide culture and movement towards sustainability."

- "Where does HSI have the ability to affect day to day living? That's where they will be able to equip themselves vs in the classroom where they are checking the boxes."

- **Sometimes student behavior is unaffected by what is organized on campus.** In other words, even though sustainability initiatives exist on campus, those who are not engaged aren't changing their day to day behaviors and don't feel the urgency to act around sustainability issues.

- Idea: Santa Clara University has Sustainability Guides who are individuals who desire to have campus sustainability knowledge, so that they can serve as a hotspot of information for students, faculty, and staff. There are no prerequisites to being trained; all are welcome to participate and your certification lasts for one academic year.

- **Students are influenced by their peers.** Those students with roommates who are connected to sustainability activities or HSI are picking up on practices and mindsets from their peers.

- **"We [UD] need to offend, inconvenience, and charge ahead. We're too nice."**

- Sometimes regulations that come with being a university contradict sustainability goals. "One of my pet peeves, how much paper we go through. We need paper trails, so we need printing. I'm trying to work with IT to develop workflow; we don't have a good process here."

- "Some of the barriers are financial. The bottom line matters. We are running a business. We would have to make a decision about things that would cost more. **We have to philosophically make a commitment to sustainability. We are making some structural decisions but I'm not sure they are trickling down to the way someone does their job.**"

**HOW MIGHT HSI INSTILL AND MEASURE POSITIVE SUSTAINABILITY MINDSETS AND PRACTICES AMONG STUDENTS, FACULTY, AND STAFF SO THAT IT BECOMES A SEAMLESS PART OF THE CULTURE IMPACTING STUDENTS BEYOND THEIR TIME AT UD?**

# THE HUB AND CONNECTOR

## SUMMARY:

Currently sustainability initiatives are happening within siloed departments or student groups. This organic and uncoordinated approach means that HSI and UD are not leveraging financial, staff, or student resources. Having coordinated efforts would help to build a university-wide culture around sustainability and demonstrate prioritizing in addressing climate change.

## PERSPECTIVES:
*(quotes and summary statements from focus groups, listening sessions, and interviews)*

- "HSI needs to break barriers (between departments, individuals, etc), connect the dots, look at whole systems."

- **HSI could help integrate things that are already happening around sustainability.** Right now initiatives are connected to certain groups versus a campus wide culture and movement towards sustainability.

- When universities have competing offices, overlapping offices or two or more sustainability focused programs on campus that aren't coordinating together, the results are limited.

- UD was overwhelming at first because there were *so many* departments to speak to, started with Ben first as a contact, Ben determined who could play a key role in this relationship and streamlined the relationship...

- "Don't do things to duplicate other entities. If another entity's doing it, let them do it. Like, what's the niche? ... I think facilitating it and providing educational links and systems to help things more effectively."

- Idea: "HSI would be a great project management office, serving as a hub, a bridge between different departments; it (sustainability initiative) can slow down when there's not project management. **If you're at the intersection of the players...you gotta be ready to help manage all of the moving parts and pieces.**"

- Breaking down the silos across campus, so we can get students across various disciplines to address an issue. **Are we involving students across disciplines?**

- "Our strategic plans and jobs should be tied to sustainability. We all need to have ownership over this carbon neutral goal and therefore we need to understand our role and responsibility in it."

- **"One of the challenges with collaboration is money and vision among different leadership, especially when they have competing visions and different priorities. It's important to me personally, but my VP doesn't agree."**

**HOW MIGHT HSI CONNECT AND INFORM SILOED PROGRAMS, INITIATIVES AND DEPARTMENTS AROUND SUSTAINABILITY SO THAT THE EFFORTS CAN BE COMPREHENSIVE, MORE IMPACTFUL AND STUDENTS ARE PREPARED FOR MULTI-DISCIPLINARY CHALLENGES?**

# CONFIDENT CONTRIBUTIONS TO DRIVE CHANGE

## SUMMARY:

While HSI is committed to shaping a more sustainable future for UD and the Dayton community it doesn't have clarity around its decision-making power or sphere of influence. A handful of initiatives and councils have been created to champion sustainable efforts, but it's still unclear around who is doing what or the specific roles and responsibilities they have to lead change across campus. While it's important for all of these sustainable entities to work together, they need direction and clarity around their power and jurisdiction.

## PERSPECTIVES:
*(quotes and summary statements from focus groups, listening sessions, and interviews)*

- **What is HSI's role in convening stakeholders across campus to drive positive change? What is the role of Facilities Management? What are the reporting structures? Does it generate lots of discussion and without a clear mechanism to authorize and implement change?**

- HSI is a highly visible 'face' of sustainability at UD, but it lacks a mechanism to effect changes for sustainability.

- **"There's a need for policy. The people who are doing the implementation are not in these meetings. If we are thinking about doing climate justice, it's the people who are in the implementation roles that need to be in policy-making decisions so that they are bought in. I see a gap in thinking who should be at the policy-making table — students for sure as end-users."**

- Students want to be heard but also they want to see leadership take action. Go beyond feedback.

- HSI can champion and challenge leadership to improve the sustainability of UD's operations.

- **"One of the challenges with collaboration is money and vision among different leadership, especially when they have competing visions and different priorities. It's important to me personally, but my VP doesn't agree."**

- **"We need to offend, inconvenience, and charge ahead. We're too nice."**

- "How can we change our procurement practices? I understand because of donors. But how can we change?"

- **The President's Office Carbon Neutral initiative can be broken out into actions for each department that they can adopt.**

- Best practice research from NC State University's Sustainability Strategic Plan: "GOAL 3: OPERATIONS, PLANNING, AND DESIGN Model sustainability through efficient, innovative facilities and operations that educate the campus community and improve the quality of life."

## HOW MIGHT HSI WORK WITH OTHER LEADERS TO SHAPE AND DRIVE DECISIONS AROUND SUSTAINABILITY?

# DESIGN GUIDELINES

# DESIGN GUIDELINES

Several design guidelines emerged from the community engagement process. These guidelines surfaced as key principles to shape all aspects of the strategic plan. No matter the focus area, these guidelines must be considered for HSI to succeed.

- **LESS IS MORE:** Don't do too much; focus on a few things and do them well.

- **MAKE IT RELEVANT:** Help people see the connection between their day to day behaviors, choices and actions to the future state of the world.

- **MAKE IT ACTIONABLE:** Ensure the strategic plan is action-oriented and big goals are backed with practical, immediate action steps.

- **WEAVE IT IN:** Staff and faculty members' time is limited, find ways to incorporate their involvement into things they are already doing or responsible for.

- **BE TRANSPARENT:** Bring others along and invite people to see what you're doing, how you're doing it, and *why* you're doing it.

- **TAKE RISKS:** Aim higher; don't settle or become complacent.

- **CONNECT TO THE MARIANIST VALUES:** Ensure care for the common good is elevated in the work.

- **BE CONSISTENT:** All of HSI's policies and practices should embody a clear commitment to sustainability even when it's inconvenient.

# THANK YOU

This project was done in partnership between Design Impact and Hanley Sustainability Institute

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