The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign's entry to the 2009 U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon.

America's Top Colleges for Renewable Energy

Who's Leading the Transition to 100% Renewable Energy on Campus?

Small liberal arts colleges, large public universities and community colleges alike, from every corner of the U.S., are leading the transition to a 100 percent renewable energy system. This report ranks the top colleges for renewable electricity use; renewable heating, cooling and other non-electric energy use; and electric campus-owned vehicles.

America's Colleges Are Leading the Way to 100% Renewable Energy

The nation's leading campuses for clean energy – from the University of Minnesota, Morris, to Southwestern University in Texas – are setting a strong example for other colleges and the nation as a whole to follow. More than 40 colleges and universities now obtain 100 percent or more of their electricity from renewable energy sources. Of the 180 schools that report their renewable energy data to the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education's (AASHE) Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS), 91 percent use some amount of renewable energy.

College Campuses Are Ideal Locations for Renewable Energy

College campuses are ideal places to lead the renewable energy transition. Colleges are large energy users, and are uniquely suited to employ microgrids and district heating and cooling systems that expand the potential uses for renewable energy. A 2019 Princeton Review survey of nearly 12,000 college applicants found that 64 percent would factor in schools' environmental commitments – including commitments to adopt renewable energy – when deciding where to attend.

Leading Colleges Are Transitioning to Renewable Electricity

The Top Five Schools for Renewable Electricity per Full-Time Equivalent Enrolled (FTE) Student

Rank	School	State	Total Renewable Electricity per FTE Student (MMBtu)
1	Southwestern University	TX	40.8
2	Austin College	TX	40.7
3	Whitman College	WA	39.8
4	Haverford College	PA	38.1
5	University of Tennessee at Knoxville	TN	34.8

In addition to this ranking, the University of Minnesota, Morris, leads in producing renewable electricity on its own campus with two commercial-scale wind turbines and a solar PV installation. The George Washington University in Washington, D.C., is ranked first for purchasing renewable electricity from off-campus projects, specifically from large solar arrays.

See complete rankings at bit.ly/TopRenewableCampuses.

Future Leaders

In addition to schools that are already leading in renewable energy, more schools have made impressive renewable energy commitments, including:

Harvard University is working to be carbon neutral by 2026 and fossil fuel-free by 2050. The campus is dramatically reducing energy consumption through efficiency upgrades and energy conservation initiatives.

The University of Hawai'i (UH) is committed to producing as much renewable energy as its campuses use by 2035. UH anticipates that UH Maui College will become its first campus to do so once its solar PV plus battery storage system is brought online during 2019.

The University of California system (UC) is committed to be carbon neutral – in both its buildings and campus fleets – by 2025. One of the most impressive parts of UC's commitment is its plan to convert its buildings to be "all-electric" for heating, cooling and other needs that are currently supplied by gas.

The Path to 100% Renewable Energy

To follow the shining example of the schools in this report and transition to 100 percent renewable energy, colleges and universities should:

- Reduce energy consumption through energy efficiency improvements and energy conservation initiatives.
- Use renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar power, to supply 100 percent of their electricity.
- Transition other building energy systems – including heating, hot water and cooling – to be electric or powered by renewable energy sources, such as solar hot water or ground-source heat pumps.
- Swap all fossil-fuel powered campus-owned vehicles for electric vehicles (EVs).

For additional resources, see the Environment America Research & Policy Center reports *Renewable Energy 100: The Course to a Carbon-Free Campus* and *Renewable Energy 101: Tools for Moving Your Campus to 100% Clean Energy* and visit www.Go100RenewableCampus.org.

Top Schools are Cleaning Up Heating, Cooling and Other Energy Needs

Leading campuses are not just cleaning up their electricity use – they are replacing all fossil fuel-powered systems, including for heating, cooling and hot water, with systems that run on electricity or renewable energy, such as solar thermal panels and geothermal heat pumps.

The Top Five Schools for Renewable Heating, Cooling, Hot Water and other Non-Electric Energy Produced per Student

Rank	School	State	Amount of Non-Electric Renewable Energy Produced on Campus per FTE Student (MMBtu)
1	Colgate University	NY	33.5
2	Cornell University	NY	23.6
3	University of Iowa	IA	22.4
4	University of New Hampshire	NH	20.9
5	University of Missouri	MO	20.2

Leading Schools Are Switching Campus Fleets to Electric Vehicles

Campuses are also leading in cleaning up our transportation system. Each of the top 10 schools for electric vehicles (EVs) in this ranking has switched more than 60 percent of their campus-owned vehicles to EVs. Of the 261 campuses reporting campus fleet details to STARS, 88 percent have at least one EV.

The Top Five Schools with the Highest Percentage of Campus-Owned Vehicles That Are 100 Percent Electric

Rank	School	State	Percent of Campus-Owned Vehicles that Are 100 Percent Electric
1	Ringling College of Art and Design	FL	85.4%
2	California State University, San Marcos	CA	78.8%
3	Rice University	TX	75.8%
4	University of the Pacific	CA	73.9%
5	Harvey Mudd College	CA	73.1%

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