

Based at ECSU, Sustainable CT grows

WILLIMANTIC — Sustainable CT, a statewide initiative that inspires and supports communities in Connecticut to become more efficient, resilient and inclusive, has registered its 85th Connecticut municipality.

The move officially reaches a participation rate of 50 percent of the state's cities and towns. These communities are working toward their own unique sustainability goals through this free voluntary certification program.

"We are excited and inspired by reaching this milestone," said Lynn Stoddard, executive director of the program and director of the Institute for Sustainable Energy (ISE) at Eastern Connecticut State University.

"Half of Connecticut's towns, home to 2.1 million residents representing more than 58 percent of our state's population, are working to make our communities great places to live, work and play," said Stoddard.

"When towns register for Sustainable CT, they send a strong message to their residents and peers that they are

committed to making their communities more sustainable, collaborative and forward-looking.

"We look forward to bringing more towns on board and working with communities across Connecticut to achieve their sustainability goals."

With input from municipal leaders across the state, Sustainable CT was developed under ISE's leadership in partnership with the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities.

To achieve certification, registered Sustainable CT communities work to demonstrate significant achievements in actions in nine sustainability impact areas ranging from thriving local economies and vibrant arts and culture to clean transportation and diverse housing.

As a core part of the program, towns must address diversity, equity and inclusion when completing their certification applications.

Certification submissions go through a series of rigorous reviews by independent experts and Sustainable CT partners.

"It is inspiring to see such incredible momentum in the second year of the program, and the interest points to a bright future for the state of Connecticut," said Katie Dykes, commissioner of the state Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP) and member of the Sustainable CT board of directors. "As we work to achieve our ambitious state levels goals, Sustainable CT serves as a critical framework for engaging our municipalities and supporting local action."

Fairfield, Glastonbury, Greenwich, Hartford, and Stamford achieved "silver" certification, the high-

est honor in the program, in 2018. Seventeen municipalities were recognized at the "bronze" certification level: Bristol, Coventry, Hebron, Madison, Middletown, Milford, New Haven, New London, New Milford, Old Saybrook, Ridgefield, Roxbury, South Windsor, West Hartford, Westport, Windham and Woodbridge. More communities are working toward certification, with an application deadline of Aug. 30.

Sustainable CT is a voluntary certification program to recognize thriving and resilient Connecticut municipalities.

For more information, visit www.sustainablect.org.

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