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Department of Ethnic Studies
711 E. Boldt Way
Appleton, WI 54911
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Subject: Commitment to Renewable Energy Initiatives

Dear Natasha Chevalier,

I am writing in support of the Menominee Community Development and Utilities' renewable energy transition plan. I have worked with the Menominee community for over a decade as an intern, graduate student, postdoctoral scholar, and, starting in September 2024, as an Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies at Lawrence University. Working with the College of Menominee Nation, Woodland Boys and Girls Club, and what is now Medicine Fish, I have collaborated to research and install solar energy in the community.

As a scholar of Environmental Studies, I research and teach about the impacts of climate change and environmental justice, particularly in Indigenous communities. Transitioning to renewable energy and utility control does not only have the potential to provide Menominee community members local, clean, and affordable power, but will also ensure increased sovereignty by placing control of energy production and distribution in the hands of the community. This has the added benefit of cutting the carbon pollution causing climate change.

At Lawrence, I teach a community-engaged course titled, Indigenous Ecology: Ancestral Knowledges and Science in action, where we partner with Menominee organizations on environmental justice and sustainability projects of mutual interest. In this course, students gain hands-on research and advocacy experience while collaborating with Menominee community members. In my capacity at Lawrence, I am interested in building long-lasting, reciprocal, and fruitful relationships within our shared watershed. I believe collaborating on renewable energy research, teaching, and deployment will not only train the next generation in innovative technologies, but moreover, ensure a clean and sustainable environment for generations to come.

As a scholar and teacher, I look forward to continuing to partner with the Menominee community to address the impacts of climate change and build a more resilient, sustainable, and just future.

Sincerely,

Gregory Hitch