



PRESS RELEASE

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USGBC Announces National Finalists of the 2010 Natural Talent Design Competition

*Finalists' designs to be built into four affordable LEED Platinum homes in
New Orleans' Broadmoor neighborhood*

New Orleans, La. (August 27, 2010) – The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) has announced the four finalists for its 2010 Natural Talent Design Competition, which gives students and emerging professionals the opportunity to apply sustainable design principles to the ongoing the rebuilding efforts in New Orleans. The jury deliberation at the Andrew H. Wilson Charter School in the Broadmoor neighborhood in New Orleans and the announcement of finalists occurred in conjunction with the release of a [five-year retrospective update](#) released by USGBC earlier this week.

After a day of deliberation, the jury selected two student and two emerging professional teams whose designs for small, affordable, ADA-compliant (American Disabilities Act), LEED Platinum homes demonstrated innovative green building principles and will save the future homeowners money over the life-cycle of the home. These designs maintained respect for the Broadmoor aesthetic and respected the opinion of the neighborhood as captured by the community vote, held earlier in the summer. The four finalists are:

Emerging Professional Team: “The Little Easy”, USGBC Connecticut Chapter: This team first came together when they led Cornell University’s 2005 DOE Solar Decathlon Team. After graduation, the group founded ZeroEnergy Design, an architecture and energy consulting firm as well as FreeGreen.com. Their design included an “outdoor living room” – a porch that functioned as an extended room, a wheel chair lift, providing greater ease to elderly or disabled homeowners and a storm water collection system.

View their designs here: <http://openarchitecturenetwork.org/projects/little-easy>

Emerging Professional Team: “RAMPed Up”, Urban Green USGBC New York City Chapter: The team from Buro Happold Consulting Engineers and Rogers Marvel Architects placed high importance on a structural system that resists both gravity, wind and flood, strategically placed windows and ceiling fans to promote passive ventilation during fall and spring and a rainwater harvesting system to mitigate storm water runoff, reducing the impact of heavy rains on the city’s overburdened storm drainage system and covering 100% of the home’s irrigation demand.

View their designs here: http://openarchitecturenetwork.org/projects/ramped_up

U.S. GREEN BUILDING COUNCIL

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Student Finalist Team “E.A.S.Y. House”, USGBC Green Building Alliance Pittsburgh: The E.A.S.Y. (Efficiency. Accessibility. Safety. You) House is an ambitious design and was the single effort of five-year Carnegie Mellon architecture student, Wuijoon Ha – the only one-person design finalist. His design built is to be easy on every aspect with the design focused on the many functional aspects of the house including operable skylights, a green roof and a wheelchair lift.

View the design here: http://openarchitecturenetwork.org/projects/easy_house

Student Finalist Team “Greenboy Productions”, USGBC Hawaii Chapter: This team from the University of Hawaii includes members from Thailand, Vietnam, and the United States (Los Angeles and Las Vegas). Their design created an affordable, adaptable and accessible home elevated to 8'-0" above grade allowing the space below the home to serve as a carport. An integrated ramp and stair system quickly brings the owner and visitors to the side entry where the structure splits Las Vegas through the center of the East and West elevations creating an inviting side patio with integrated local fauna at the elevated level allowing passive ventilation to draw air from the cool air below the structure. View their design here: http://openarchitecturenetwork.org/projects/broadmoor_greenboy

“USGBC is honored to be hosting the 2010 Natural Talent Design Competition in New Orleans – this competition represents years of dedication to the Gulf Coast region particularly in areas with underserved populations that are arguably the most in need of sustainable, affordable homes and buildings,” said Rick Fedrizzi, president, CEO and founding chair, USGBC. “USGBC’s commitment to New Orleans extends beyond the competition, as we’ve worked to have the Recovery School District build all schools to LEED, the Make It Right community is the largest grouping of LEED Platinum homes in the country, and we have advocated for and supported city-wide environmental goals such as 30% energy reduction among all municipal buildings.”

The competition, which is a collaboration with the Salvation Army's EnviRenew, is an opportunity for undergraduate and graduate design students as well as young green building professionals, to design a 800-square-foot LEED for Homes project that is priced affordably and is functional for elderly occupants. The four homes, once built, will enter a measurement and verification phase in which they will be graded on energy efficiency, water reuse and indoor air quality among other categories. The design team whose home performs best during measurement and verification will be awarded the final grand prize at Greenbuild 2011.

“Though steady progress has been made in the recovery of the city of New Orleans, a vital part of true long-term recovery is ensuring that resiliency is deeply embedded in both the built environment and the communities that live there,” said Lindsay Jonker, Director of The Salvation Army’s EnviRenew. “By focusing on energy-efficiency in the service of affordability for households and sustainability in the service of durability of the urban fabric, the drive to both recover and strengthen the future prospects of the city of New Orleans, at both the neighborhood and city-wide levels, can be better met.”

Ten jurors with unparalleled commitment to sustainable design and devotion to rebuilding the Gulf Coast have spent countless hours over the course of six months, carefully reviewing over 360 design submissions. From those 49 semi-finalists were selected, which then the panel of jurors sat in an all-day deliberation and selected the four teams whose designs will be built. The 2010 Natural Talent Design Competition jurors are:

- *Bob Berkebile, Principal, BNIM*
- *LaToya Cantrell, President, Broadmoor Improvement Association*

- *Valerie Casey, Founder & CEO, Designers Accord*
- *Rick Fedrizzi, President and CEO, U.S. Green Building Council*
- *Rose Jackson Flenorl, Manager of Social Responsibility, FedEx*
- *Captain Ethan Frizzell, Area Commander, Salvation Army New Orleans*
- *Kurt Hagstette, Associate Director, Eskew+Dumez+Ripple Architects*
- *Lindsay Jonker, Executive Director, Salvation Army's EnviRenew*
- *Liz Ogbu, Associate Design Director, Public Architecture*
- *Cameron Sinclair, Co-founder, Architecture of Humanity*

[Read bios for the distinguished panel of jurors here.](#)

For more details about the 2010 Natural Talent Design Contest, visit: www.usgbc.org/designcompetition.

Though the competition focused on building new affordable homes, a significant component of USGBC's sustainable rebuilding efforts in New Orleans has been focused on schools – successfully working to make every school in the Recovery School District (RSD) built to a minimum of LEED Silver. Rebuilding the school district has taken enormous efforts by private industry, nonprofit organizations, and local and federal government. To enable the completion of the School Facilities Master Plan, which includes six phases touching 85 school buildings, the federal government has allotted \$1.8 billion to the schools' rebuilding – the largest federal investment in school infrastructure since the Civil War.

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U.S. Green Building Council

USGBC is helping create buildings and communities that regenerate and sustain the health and vitality of all life within a generation. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., the Council is the driving force of the green building industry, which is projected to contribute \$554 billion to the U.S. gross domestic product by 2013. USGBC leads a diverse constituency of builders and environmentalists, corporations and nonprofit organizations, elected officials, concerned citizens, teachers and students. The USGBC community comprises 80 local chapters, 17,000 member companies and organizations, and more than 150,000 individuals who have earned LEED Professional Credentials. Visit www.usgbc.org for more information.

The Salvation Army's EnviRenew

EnviRenew is a program supported by The Salvation Army that seeks to address the glaring discrepancy between good quality, sustainable homes and their high purchasing and occupancy costs. The New Orleans Salvation Army became acutely aware of this incongruity during the housing crisis that followed Hurricane Katrina; it was incredibly difficult for low-to-moderate New Orleanians to return after the levee failures to rebuild not only their homes, but also their communities. The Salvation Army created the EnviRenew initiative to tackle both of these issues.

EnviRenew aims to establish a replicable model for affordable housing while at the same time establishing community capacity so that New Orleans communities can grow even stronger than before. For more information visit www.envirenew.org