



Campaign Spotlight: Home Grown Initiatives Make Green Building a Win-Win

Published on 18 Nov 2011 | Written by Matt Pearce | Posted in [Advocacy and policy](#)

USGBC's 79 volunteer-based chapters are consistently finding new and exciting ways to elevate green building practices and programs. Today, I'll spotlight two chapters, whose creative and proactive advocacy initiatives advance the green building conversation and serve as great examples of how USGBC chapters are advocating for more responsible building practices in their communities. [USGBC's Central Florida Chapter](#) has launched a new campaign entitled **Green Destination Orlando** aimed at making Orlando's hospitality industry the greenest in the world. [USGBC Indiana's](#) new initiative - **Beat the Meter Blitz** - is educating the residents of Bloomington, IN to the benefits of energy efficient upgrades for their homes.

Green Destination Orlando

[Green Destination Orlando](#) (GDO) is redefining how sustainability can play an integrated role in the experience of visitors to Central Florida. For visitors, GDO strives to position Orlando as a beacon of green business and travel options. For participating hotels and other businesses that support Orlando's hospitality industry, GDO offers not only a clear roadmap to more responsible and efficient business practices, but also a competitive advantage - both locally and regionally. After signing the pledge, GDO helps businesses conduct an initial business analysis. Many of the recommended improvements to procurement, facilities operation and equipment would put these properties on the road to certification with [LEED for Existing Buildings: Operations & Maintenance](#).

But GDO doesn't just lead to better building practices in Orlando; it will also educate every guest or conference attendee that stays at a participating resort to the healthy impact of green buildings. The scope of GDO is a great example why multi-layered advocacy campaigns make sense and advance the green building conversation.

The draw of this campaign may be best [summarized](#) by DeeDee Baggitt, Director of Engineering for program participant Rosen Hotels and Resorts. "Many of these practices also save money in the long term. In addition, our guests notice and appreciate our efforts and reward us with their loyalty, so it's a win-win situation."

Beat-the-Meter Blitz

[USGBC's Indiana Chapter](#) is making the case to local homeowners that energy efficiency at home both makes sense, and is easy to do. Called the **Beat-the-Meter Blitz**, this program provides free home energy assessments in exchange for a meaningful commitment: Prior consent to commit to at least some of the recommended upgrades in home energy efficiency. The Indiana Chapter 's Beat-the-Meter program, now in its second year, is a program in partnership with the City of Bloomington.

By focusing on both homeowner education and the benefits of home energy efficiency improvements, USGBC Indiana is not only showing residents how they can save money in the short term, but are laying the groundwork for future city programs that may harness the many benefits of cleaner, greener homes. Partnering with local governments is a great way to maximize program capacity and advance the green building conversation.

Congratulations, Central Florida and Indiana, on a job well done. Other chapters, if you are looking for your next great idea, always start by looking at what works in other states. While every state, city, and community is different, there is always enough commonality in advocacy efforts to help inspire your next great campaign. What are you doing to advance green building in your community today?

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