Students Gain Practical Lessons Through USGBC's Research to Practice Program

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There are three words that strike fear in college students everywhere: "the real world." People look back fondly on their college years, remembering late nights partying or doing things they would never dream of doing now. Others look back and remember late nights of studying and rigorous coursework. For many, it's a mix of the two. Whatever your memories of college, for most students the specter of the real world looms in the distance, a far off place that you enter the day after graduation.

Bringing "real world" experiences to students before their graduation day is one of the goals of the Research to Practice program. By engaging students in green building research we hope to connect them to professionals, start them thinking critically about green building and all its facets and yes, gain some real life experience. One certainty is that if you want something done, give it to a group of passionate students

Phase I of the program set the stage with a semester worth of research and collaboration. While this pilot year was rigorous, 12 schools took it on with amazing results. Interdisciplinary teams studied topics like occupant comfort, LEED readiness, campus energy policy, performance benchmarking, human behavior and international standards comparison, to name a few. Yes, there was data, but also concrete action steps that in some cases included calculated ROI. Think of the impact on the campuses or in communities if these were implemented - that's what Phase II will do!

Visit our website to read the summaries and find out how to get involved in the 2012-2013 program.

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