



Session Spotlight: Sowing a New Crop of Sustainable Leader

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Eden Hall campus at Chatham University

What would Rachel Carson do?

That's the mantra behind the [School of Sustainability and Environment at Chatham University](#), the alma mater of *Silent Spring* author and environmental activist (and our superhero) Rachel Carson.

Situated within Chatham's 388-acre Eden Hall campus, the School of Sustainability and Environment is "...a place of regenerative design and living that builds community, strengthens ecosystems, creates habitat, integrates disciplines, and is a net exporter of energy, food, and innovative thinkers for generations to come," according to David W. Goldberg, a member of the project's design team.

Sound interesting? David and other design leads, in addition to the Dean of Chatham's School of Sustainability and Environment, will share their journey and seek audience feedback during their session, "[From the Ground Up: Sowing a New Crop of Sustainable Leader](#)" at USGBC's forthcoming [Greenbuild International Conference and Expo](#) in San Francisco.

Can't wait 'til Greenbuild to hear about this ground-breaking project? We caught up with the three session speakers: David Hassenzahl, Dean of the School of Sustainability and the Environment at Chatham University; Erin English, Associate Engineer at Biohabitats, Inc.; and David W. Goldberg, President of Mithun.

Read on for the dirt (quite literally, we talk horse manure in the final paragraph) and details.

Why is the topic of [your session](#), "[From the Ground Up: Sowing a New Crop of Sustainable Leader](#)," important?

David W. Goldberg: As a legacy 388 acre farm outside of Pittsburgh, The Eden Hall Campus is emblematic of the land use issues facing similar areas across the country under the pressures of urban, and sub-urbanization. The adaptation of this land is as a model community for a "New Farm" that produces resources, builds habitat, and inspires future generations of environmental leaders is an important, and replicable model.

Erin English: Aqua es la vida. Water is Life. Radically shifting our relationships to the way we use, treat and disperse this precious substance is essential to restoring and maintaining the ecological health of the planet. Humans have altered the natural balance of water flows, which has impacted not only our own livelihood, but that of all creatures. Chatham University has taken a strong stand in redefining our approach to the human use of water, and this session will highlight some of the process they went through on that path.

David Hassenzahl: We are developing a unique campus that incorporates sustainability across our buildings, the surrounding community, and our academic programs. If we can do this well, our campus will serve as a model for others around the world, to learn from both our successes and our failures.

Why should Greenbuild attendees register for the session?

DWG: Greenbuild attendees should attend this session because we need their great ideas for the development of this evolving campus! David, Erin and I will be co-leading this session and engaging the audience to help inform future phases of the campus. Ideas from this session will be brought directly back to the President of the University and Board of Trustees for consideration and discussion.

EE: Our session is hosted by an architect, educational leader and engineer, with

diverse perspectives on what it takes to walk with a client along the cutting edge of creating a place/campus that is aspiring to transform sustainability education. The ideas covered can be transferred to a variety of professions and applied to a range of project types, making the ideas accessible to many different kinds of Greenbuild attendees.

DH: This is the first campus of its sort. Ever, anywhere. We are designing our campus to produce more energy than it uses and manage water sustainably. We have already begun to develop sustainable agriculture, and are incorporating campus design into our academic programs - so far, a Master of Arts in Food Studies and a Master of Sustainability. Further, we will use the campus to continue learning about how to do sustainable development, and as a tool to share what we learn with the world. Mostly, though, you should come to our session because we think YOU can provide input to help us do this better.

What's the most interesting experience you've had in the green building/sustainability world?

DWG: Working with San Francisco Zen Center on a 500 year master plan for their Green Gulch Farm campus in Marin County. Considering that Zen practice is all about living in the moment, Zen Masters are remarkably good long-term thinkers...

EE: I've been humbled working with a coalition of local New Mexico Native American pueblo and community activists as their technical expert in support of their pursuit to clean up polluted stormwater discharges from Los Alamos National Lab's (LANL) "legacy" nuclear R&D contamination sites. The process has brought me to a surprising place of fostering collaboration between the LANL staff charged with the cleanup, and the communities downstream that depend upon clean water for native ceremony, agriculture and drinking water supplies, including Santa Fe and Albuquerque, NM.

DH: Participating as academic lead in development of master plan, building plans, and fundraising for a 388 acre net-zero energy, net-zero water academic campus, which will eventually house 1,200 residential students.


What's the most interesting non-green building related fact about yourself?

DWG: I make great sushi rolls!


EE: I am a techno and underground dance music DJ, and as a hobby, work with a collective of cutting-edge artists, producers and DJs to foster community-oriented electronic arts and music events in Santa Fe, NM. I also grow a whole lot of food on my property, with a greenhouse, gardens, grape arbors and chickens, much of which is watered from harvested water and an outdoor shower.

DH: I recently signed a purchase order for almost \$1000 of horse manure. Then again, maybe that is green building related. You decide.

Editor's note: Over the next 10 weeks, we'll be profiling [Greenbuild 2012 sessions](#) and the speakers behind them: some of them sustainability celebrities, others unsung heroes. Check back weekly for more of these behind-the-scene looks at education at Greenbuild.



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