



# USGBC's Greenbuild International Conference and Expo Kicks off in San Francisco

Published on 14 Nov 2012

Written by Ashley Katz

Posted in [Media](#)



Joe Scarborough poses questions to Biz Stone and Gavin Newsom at the Greenbuild Opening Plenary

*7,000 members of the green building industry convene for opening plenary headlined by "Morning Joe" co-hosts Mika Brzezinski and Joe Scarborough*

San Francisco, Calif. - (Nov. 14, 2012) - U.S. Green Building Council's (USGBC) [Greenbuild International Conference & Expo](#), the world's largest conference dedicated to green building kicked off today at San Francisco's LEED Gold Moscone Center with 7,000 attendees. This morning's opening plenary, headlined by MSNBC's "Morning Joe" co-hosts Mika Brzezinski and Joe Scarborough marked the official launch of the 2012 show.

Now in its 11th year, Greenbuild convenes 35,000 members of the green building industry for three days of education sessions, renowned speakers, networking events, and a vast exhibition floor with thousands of booths. This year's location in San Francisco is ideal: With more than 700 LEED-certified projects and nearly 1,300 LEED-registered projects in the Bay Area, the location encapsulates the 2012 conference theme of bringing technology and sustainability together in the global green movement.

San Francisco Mayor Edwin Lee took the stage first, celebrating recent San Francisco accomplishments in the sphere of green building and sustainability. "There are eight existing, historic San Francisco buildings in the civic center district that are LEED-registered, including city hall, the symphony and the library." He added, "I want to thank Greenbuild for contributing to our success."

USGBC's President, CEO and Founding Chair, Rick Fedrizzi, took the stage to ring in Greenbuild, speaking to the power of the green building movement, the importance of the forthcoming LEED v4 rating system, and the reality of climate change, brought to light recently by Hurricane Sandy.

"In LEED v4 we're turning on the light, because as leaders, we will always fight for more information, more transparency, and more accountability," said Fedrizzi. "If you claim to be the best, if you claim to be healthier, prove it. Do you have a great product? Prove it. Just like leadership, green building is about transparency and accountability."

A recent analysis performed by USGBC found that LEED buildings are in the top 11th percentile for energy performance in the nation.

"Our world has put real data on building performance at our fingertips so we can understand and compare green building projects," Fedrizzi continued. "It's given us new tools to help us tweak that performance on the micro level so we can deliver on the energy savings and water savings that are the currency of our future."

Plenary programming featured Brzezinski and Scarborough as co-hosts with panelists Cory Booker, Mayor of Newark, New Jersey; George Pataki, Former Governor of New York and Founder and Chairman of Pataki-Cahill Group; Biz Stone, co-founder of Twitter; Gavin Newsom, Lieutenant Governor of California; David Kohler, President and Chief Operating Officer of Kohler Co.; Paul Hawken, environmentalist, entrepreneur and author; and urban revitalization strategist Majora Carter.

Brzezinski and Scarborough first hosted a panel discussion with Mayor Booker and Pataki, discussing election outcomes and the future of sustainability politics.

"The American dream must be a green dream now," said Mayor Booker. "We need to stop putting sustainability into left-right terms, which is the broken record of our politics."

Pataki spoke on the state of the Republican Party as well as green economics and climate change. "Through green buildings, we can dramatically reduce energy and have an economic benefit with new jobs," said Pataki.

In the second panel, Brzezinski and Scarborough engaged Stone and Newsom in a discussion on technology and innovation.

Newsom pointed out that there is significant room to grow our use of technology in governance, stating, "We use technology to get elected, but we don't use technology effectively to govern."

"The future of marketing is philanthropy," said Stone. "Consumers are attracted to meaning. Employees are attracted to meaning."

The plenary closed out with a final panel consisting of Kohler, Hawken and Carter.

"We may be preaching to the choir, but that choir is getting a lot bigger," said Hawken. "This is a new age of enlightenment. These voices want to rise up. Falsehoods always fall away."

"The environmental movement has been talking to itself a lot," said Carter. "It's time to move outward."

"One myth is that we have to sacrifice for sustainability," said Kohler. "It doesn't have to be about compromise."

The opening plenary featured video segments highlighting a number of USGBC initiatives, including the [Students@Greenbuild bus tour](#), during which 25 college students from across the United States joined USGBC's Center for Green Schools on a cross-country bus tour to Greenbuild; the launch of the [Green Building Information Gateway \(GBIG\)](#), a new global innovation platform designed to explore and compare the green dimensions of the built environment; and USGBC's [Project Haiti](#), an initiative to build a LEED Platinum orphanage and children's center in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.


Additionally, Rachel Gutter, Director of the Center for Green Schools at USGBC, highlighted green schools efforts, stating, "We need your help to convince every parent, every policymaker, and every voter that where we learn matters." Scot Horst, Senior Vice President of LEED, USGBC, also announced that Google has awarded USGBC a \$3 million grant to transform building materials and materials-related health.

#### About U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC)

The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) is committed to a prosperous and sustainable future through cost-efficient and energy-saving green buildings. USGBC works toward its mission of market transformation through its LEED green building certification program, robust educational offerings, a nationwide network of chapters and affiliates, the annual Greenbuild International Conference & Expo, and advocacy in support of public policy that encourages and enables green buildings and communities. For more information, visit [usgbc.org](http://usgbc.org) and follow us on Twitter [@USGBC](#), and Facebook at [facebook.com/USGBC](https://facebook.com/USGBC).

#### About Greenbuild

The U.S. Green Building Council's Greenbuild International Conference & Expo convenes the industry's largest gathering of representatives from all sectors of the green building movement. Three days of extensive educational programming, workshops, a vast exhibition floor and ample networking events provide unrivaled opportunities to learn about the latest technological innovations, explore new products, and exchange ideas with other professionals. Greenbuild is the four-time recipient of IMEX Green Meetings Award and the 2012 show will be held on Nov. 14-16, in San Francisco, Calif. Last year's conference in Toronto, Ontario, drew more than 23,000 attendees and featured a sold out exhibit hall floor with more than 1,700 exhibit booths. For more information, visit [greenbuildexpo.org](http://greenbuildexpo.org) and follow us on Twitter [@Greenbuild](#), and Facebook at [facebook.com/Greenbuild](https://facebook.com/Greenbuild).



**Ashley Katz**  
Director of Corporate Communications & Marketing  
U.S. Green Building Council

Member employees, USGBC staff

0 comments

[Leave a comment](#)

Leave a comment [Don't have an account? Create one](#)

You must be signed in to leave a comment.

**Email**

**Password**

**SIGN IN**

