



Green Apple Partnerships Come to Life @Greenbuild

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For me, one of the highlights of [Greenbuild 2012](#) in San Francisco was the faux show hosted by Mika Brzezinski and Joe Scarborough at the opening plenary. I was particularly struck by Biz Stone, the founder of Twitter, who came on stage and announced that “philanthropy is the new marketing.” He described a world in which a company would spend more money on philanthropy than they would on actually promoting the work that they did to further elevate their brand.

This in particular resonated with me, as we at the Center for Green Schools have spent a tremendous amount of time in the year leading up to Greenbuild and the launch of the Green Apple initiative thinking about how we could make good on our commitment to have corporate partners as opposed to corporate sponsors. We, along with a number of other non-profits, are on a mission to redefine what an effective public/private partnership can look like. This aspiration was, in fact, one of the primary motivators of the creation of green apple as a cause-marketing brand. We didn’t want our relationship with corporations and foundations to be purely monetary in nature. And yet, conversely, we were cognizant of the inherent challenges in the intersection of corporate interests and our evolving strategy for delivering on our promise to put every student in a green schools within this generation.

My experience at Greenbuild was affirmed to me that we are on the right track by seeing the tremendous work that our Green Apple partners put in. [Interface](#) helped us to design a stunning green apple carpet, welcoming attendees into our Green Apple booth. Melissa Vernon, Director of Sustainability Strategy at InterfaceFLOR, was part of a three-person panel that I hosted and spoke specifically to the way in which we were rethinking what a truly effective partnership could look like.

At another speaking engagement, Jessica Hubbard from our newest partner [Houghton Mifflin Harcourt](#) stated that “it is more effective for us to share core competencies than it is to share dollars.” And we couldn’t be more excited to advance several joint initiatives with HMH in the coming year, including what we hope will be a game-changing effort to embed sustainability efforts into the [Common Core](#), so that we never have to treat this subject as an add-on in K-12 ever again.

Green Apple Project Manager Pat Lane and [Excel Dryer’s](#) Bill Gagnon debuted the new Green Apple hand dryer that will dry your hands in style starting early next year. Be sure to look for one coming soon to a bathroom near you.

We’ve launched an amazing [portion-of-proceeds model](#) with our partner [SolarCity](#). During Greenbuild and moving forward into 2013, we’ll be encouraging all of our solar-sleuthing friends to qualify for their \$500 off a solar installation on their home. Matching funds will be directed toward the work that the Center and our partners are undertaking.

My other Greenbuild highlight also took place during the opening plenary, when I had the distinct pleasure and privilege to announce on stage with Geraud Darnis, President and CEO of [United Technologies](#) Climate, Controls & Security, to award a pair of very deserving college presidents for their deep and lasting commitment to greening their respective campuses. Mr. Darnis introduced our community to the green apple truth: where we learn matters.

Early next year, we’ll be releasing new information about the dire state of schools across the United States. It’s a problem that is several hundred billion dollars large. We cannot crack the code for putting every student in a green school within this generation without the support of not only our tremendous and dedicated volunteers and our NGO and association partners, but also from like-minded corporate partners.



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