

Director's Corner: Summer's No Break at the Center for Green Schools

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It's been a crazy-busy summer at the Center for Green Schools. In the fall, the Department of Education will release the criteria for their Green Ribbon Schools Award and we've been working closely with agency staff and our partner organizations to make sure public and private schools have everything they need to submit applications come winter. The launch of Green Ribbon Schools opens up a new dialogue in the education world, and publications like [Education Week](#), American education's newspaper of record, are calling upon the Center to weigh in on how the green schools movement will transform education as we know it.

Over the past few months, we've hosted many "meetings of the minds" starting with a 3-day training at our national headquarters that brought together more than 30 K12 sustainability leaders from across the country, including our Center for Green Schools UTC Fellows who, last month, began their three year journeys as sustainability directors for the Boston and Sacramento public school districts. Then, our new National Chairs spent a steamy summer weekend in Washington planning for the growth and expansion of the USGBC Students program. Next, we headed down south to Georgia for the 4th Annual Green Schools Committee Symposium; more than 50 dedicated volunteers from a host of USGBC Chapters crafted a strategy to communicate our mission to the mainstream.

On the advocacy front, the Congressional Green Schools Caucus held a briefing on the Hill during which Judy Marks, Executive Director, [National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities](#) (NCEF), Andy Olivastro, Manager, Community Affairs, [United Technologies Corp](#) (UTC) and Susan Castellon, Sr. Project Manager, [Whiting-Turner Contracting Co.](#) engaged in a discussion about the importance of green schools and implementation pathways.

The number of LEED certified projects on college and university campuses in the United States exceeded 1,000 with Harvard University topping the chart with the certification of their 50th LEED project. How cool is it that there are now more LEED registered and certified projects on U.S. higher education campuses than there are campuses in the U.S.?

A personal highlight was joining the advisory board of Parenting magazine's [Mom Congress](#) as its education and advocacy thought leader on green schools. The Moms Congress celebrates and connects moms fighting for better schools, and while I don't have kids of my own just yet – I became a mom of sorts this month when we brought home Bentley, the 9-week old Boglen Terrier responsible for making my personal life as busy as my professional one!

The fall will undoubtedly keep us busy, as the Center will be featured at the [Commit! Forum](#), the single largest gathering of leaders improving business and society, featuring successful practices from the world's 100 Best Corporate Citizens. We'll be calling upon participating corporations to join the Coalition for Green Schools, support our USGBC Students' sustainability challenges or fund a Center for Green Schools Fellow. In October, the Center team will head to Greenbuild 2011 in Toronto to share what's NEXT for the green schools movement. We hope to see you there.

Enjoy the rest of your summer. We will reach out again when the school bell rings!

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