Messages of Optimism, Perseverance, Inspiration Bring Greenbuild 2012 to a Close

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Greenbuild 2012 Closing Plenary Credit: Oscar Einzig

Governor Jerry Brown, Jane McGonigal and William McDonough deliver a galvanizing closing plenary to packed house in San Francisco

Nov. 27, 2012 (Washington, DC) – The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) welcomed close to 25,000 to San Francisco, Calif. for its 11th annual Greenbuild International Conference & Expo, the world's largest conference dedicated to green building. At its closing plenary, industry thought leaders from the business and environmental communities joined social leaders and representatives from USGBC for an inspiring conversation about the future of green as a human and ecological health imperative, and a profitable business strategy for sustainable growth.

More than 5,000 gathered in the LEED Gold Moscone Center for the closing plenary, which featured several announced speakers and special guests, including California Governor Jerry Brown; Director of Game Research and Development, Institute for the Future, Jane McGonigal, PhD; Architect, Designer & Sustainability Advocate, William McDonough; Scot Horst, Senior Vice President, LEED, USGBC; Roger Platt, Senior Vice President, Global Policy & Law, USGBC; and Chris Pyke, Ph.D., Vice President of Research, USGBC.

"My message today is these things go together – a healthy climate, healthy environment, healthy individuals," said Governor Brown. "California is at the forefront of innovation... and it's up to you to galvanize the rest of the United States."

"I see this conference as a mobilizing vehicle to help get this job done," Brown concluded.

USGBC's Chris Pyke demoed the newly launched Green Building Information Gateway, or GBIG, and explained how the web-based tool will deliver greater transparency and understanding of the green dimensions of the built environment, while accelerating market transformation.

"Today, we stand on the cusp of a new era, where evidence and information become the rocket fuel for our movement," said Pyke. "Imagine what you will do with GBIG."

Pyke's presentation used gaming structures to showcase GBIG as a lead-in to Jane McGonigal's discussion about how games are transforming the way we lead our real lives and the role that "gamers" can play in solving real-world problems, and increasing our resilience and well being.

"When scientists fail, it's time to call in the gamers," said McGonigal, who demonstrated how her "World Without Oil" simulation game helped to identify weaknesses in society, and how a ten-year mystery surrounding an AIDS-causing protein was solved in ten days by gamers playing "Foldit."

"How can you use the one billion gamers out there to make real change?" McGonigal asked Greenbuild attendees.

The LEED v4-inspired thread of material transparency woven throughout the 2012 show came to a head at the closing plenary. LEED v4 will launch in 2013 and is the next version of the LEED green building rating system.

USGBC's Scot Horst recognized the 50-year anniversary of Rachel Carson's seminal *Silent Spring*. He drew parallels between reactions from industry special interests when the seminal book was published in 1962 to responses in 2012 to the draft of LEED v4.

"It isn't us versus them," he said. "It is us together. We don't want a war. We simply want a healthier world. And standing up to the divide-and-conquer techniques of yesterday by working together as concerned citizens is our path to making this happen."

After announcing a new version of the Cradle to Cradle product standard earlier in the week, William McDonough led a closing plenary discussion about the global commercialization of product and systems based on criteria for material health, materials revitalization, renewable energy, clean water and social fairness for a beneficial future.

"We're talking about what it is we leave behind, by design," concluded McDonough.

McDonough invited representatives from leading companies in the private and public sector – to the stage for a panel discussion about the role of transparency in product development.

Representatives included Paul Murray, Vice President, Sustainability & Environmental Affairs, **Shaw Industries**, chemist; Angela Nahikian, Director, Global Environmental Sustainability, **Steelcase**; Gabe Wing, Director of Environmental Health and Safety, **Herman Miller**, chemist; Jared Blumenfeld, **EPA Regional Administrator for the Pacific Southwest**; Doug Brown, Manager for Commercial Construction of **The BASF Center for Building Excellence** in North America; Dan Probst, Managing Director, Head of Global Sustainability, **Jones Lang LaSalle**; and Coert Zachariasse, Owner, **Delta Development**.

Greenbuild convenes the green building industry for three days of education sessions, renowned speakers, green building tours and networking, plus the biggest expo hall in Greenbuild's 11-year history, featuring three floors and 1,660 booths displaying the latest technological innovations and cutting-edge products.

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 and connect on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn.

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 2013 show will be held on Nov. 20-22 in Philadelphia, Pa. For more information, visit greenbuildexpo.org and follow us on Twitter @Greenbuild, and Facebook at facebook.com/Greenbuild.

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