

# New Partnership Set to Accelerate Study of Green Building, Human Health

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Our buildings usually keep us safe and comfortable, but sometimes their design and operation can also contribute to significant public health challenges, including obesity, asthma, physical inactivity and chronic disease. Dr. Matt Trowbridge thinks that thoughtful, evidence-based design can help make our built environment part of the solution, contributing to better public health outcomes. He calls this idea "green health."

Over the past several years, [Dr. Trowbridge](#), a physician and researcher at the University of Virginia, has led an interdisciplinary effort to understand these issues and explore linkages between public health and green design. With an initial focus on [schools](#), he has examined a range of topics from physical activity to nutrition, creating high-level research agendas and practical guidance for design professionals.

On Friday, we announced the Green Health Partnership, a joint project involving USGBC, the University of Virginia and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, that will accelerate the work Dr. Trowbridge began. This two-year effort will include applied research and thought leadership activities to help:

- Understand health metrics in the context of LEED rating systems;
- Recommend new measures of success that quantify health impacts; and
- Demonstrate the application of new health metrics in the [Green Building Information Gateway](#).

This work will increase our understanding of the fundamental issues associated with green health, while providing practical new tools for green building practitioners.

As part of the Green Health Partnership, Dr. Trowbridge has also been recognized as [USGBC's 2013 Ginsberg Fellow](#), a prestigious award recognizing the foundational role of [Mark Ginsberg](#) in the establishment of USGBC during his service at the U.S. Department of Energy.

[Dan Winters](#), the recipient of the 2012 Ginsberg Fellowship, brought about exciting new engagements between green building and the finance community, leading to the creation of the new [FTSE-NAREIT-USGBC index family](#).

In the coming year, we hope that Dr. Trowbridge will play a similarly transformative role with respect to the public health research community, creating bridges between disciplines and helping green building to emerge as a leading strategy to address some of society's biggest health challenges.

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