

# Letter from Rick: Looking back on twenty years

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Dear friends of USGBC,

What were you doing 20 years ago?

I was standing in front of 60 organizations, along side green building pioneers David Gottfried and Mike Italiano, at the first-ever meeting of the U.S. Green Building Council. As the three co-founders of USGBC, we were idealistic. We were nervous. And we had one very important quality in common with everyone sitting in that room: we knew, without any hesitation, that the journey we were about to embark upon was the right thing to do.

We knew that better buildings would pave the way to a better quality of life for everyone - from the grade school student learning in a sun-filled classroom to the community enjoying produce from a local building's rooftop garden. The benefits of green building are bold: resource savings, energy efficiency, water conservation, greenhouse gas mitigation. And those positive outcomes trickle right back down to the people inside of these incredible buildings – to our colleagues, our customers, our families and our communities.

Twenty years later, that common commitment to the green building mission continues to be the backbone of our organization and the enormous community that has rallied around it. Folks, I've been mentally drafting this letter since 1993. Did I think we'd make it to 20 years? I hoped so. Did I imagine our success would be comparable to where we stand today? Not a chance.

That success is because of you. USGBC grew from a gathering of three founders in 1993 to a movement of millions today. We created a platform around which we could congregate, and you supplied the passion, the energy, the ingenuity and the outstanding projects and products.

USGBC's community is its foundation and strength, which is why the theme of this 2012 report is "Strength in Numbers." That strength propelled us through a landmark 2012. Here are just a few highlights of what we accomplished together:

1. With unprecedented feedback and input from the industry, we made extensive strides in developing the next update to LEED [LEED v4](#).
2. On the first-ever [Green Apple Day of Service](#) we made our mark on nearly 1,300 communities across the world.
3. We [launched the Green Building Information Gateway \(GBIG\)](#), a game-changer for creating transparency and data awareness in the industry.
4. The year [came to a close at Greenbuild in San Francisco](#), where we were inspired by the likes of Mika and Joe from MSNBC's "Morning Joe," Newark Mayor Cory Booker, and Twitter founder Biz Stone.

For the first time, this annual report is not just a look back at the previous year – it's a look back at the last 20 years. I hope you'll enjoy thumbing through our timeline of 20 organizational milestones, and that you'll take the opportunity to share your own green building triumphs using [#USGBC20](#) on Twitter.

Hitting the 20-year milestone gives us the opportunity to draw a line in the sand: to look back at the past two decades, learn from our challenges, rally around our triumphs, and bound into the future. We are no longer an organization in its infancy – USGBC has arrived. So let's look forward to what's next.

Thank you for an unforgettable year, and two truly unbelievable decades of commitment to our cause. I look forward to the next 20 years, knowing that, with your continued engagement, our vision of green buildings for all will become a reality.

With gratitude,

S. Richard Fedrizzi  
President, CEO & Founding Chair



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