

Florida Caribbean regional market brief and snapshot

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The Florida-Caribbean Regional Committee (FCRC) was formed in 2005 to bring together eight USGBC chapters rich in cultural, socioeconomic and bioregional diversity, perspectives, market demographics and community needs. The region includes seven USGBC chapters in Florida and the U.S. Caribbean Chapter, covering the U.S. territories of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. It is home to more than 2,800 active USGBC chapter members and more than 1,600 USGBC member organizations.

Our region has a tradition of fomenting leadership and interchapter engagement, as well as mentoring emerging leaders by combining our regional committee "face-to-face" meetings with regionwide and chapter events. Our annual regionwide events include Florida Advocacy Day, the FCRC Leadership Summit, Smart Sustainable Tampa Bay, the Caribbean Green Expo and the South Florida Gala Verde.

We are proud of our region's numerous green building successes and accomplishments. For example, the Florida-Caribbean region boasts two of the first five LEED for Neighborhood Development 2009 Stage 2 certified projects in the U.S., and it recently surpassed 700 LEED-certified buildings. Below are some other points of pride from around our region that I would like to share with you:

- Florida has the fourth-highest number of LEED-certified buildings in the U.S.
- The Central Florida Chapter's Green Destination Orlando is a collaborative program between the chapter's Hospitality Advocacy Committee and the central Florida hospitality industry that aims to build green awareness and create a totally sustainable guest experience.
- The Northern Florida Chapter is developing a LEED for Commercial Interiors Platinum Regional Sustainability Resource Center and chapter headquarters.

- The Heart of Florida Chapter's work with Alachua County Public Schools recently garnered awards at the EPA's 2012 National "Battle of the Buildings" contest.
- The U.S. Caribbean Chapter held its first Advocacy Day event on May 29, and it held a follow-up presentation at the Puerto Rico Capitol on June 20.
- The South Florida Chapter will host its 2013 Regional Committee "face to face" meeting in September in conjunction with its Gala Verde event.
- The Northern Gulf Coast Chapter hosted a presentation on June 18, Sensible Sustainable Development: Leveraging Restore Act Funding to Create Lasting Value for the Pensacola Bay Area by Rebecca Flora. The presentation was a collaborative effort with the Florida Institute for Human and Machine Cognition and Think Beyond, a regional sustainability think tank.

Green building is here to stay in the Florida-Caribbean region. Just look at the impact we're already having — and we're growing. Our volunteer network is strong, and we continue to reach meaningful milestones. Even with the diversity in our region, a point of pride for us, the [market briefs and state snapshots](#) will allow us to speak with one voice when addressing local and state lawmakers and officials about the benefits of green building. This is important as our region considers merging the seven Florida-Caribbean chapters into one 501(c)(3) organization, with the possible inclusion of the U.S. Caribbean Chapter. The market briefs and snapshots will also enhance organizational visibility and provide solid data to help markets in our region stay informed on our collective and individual progress and better coordinate key events.

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