



PRESS RELEASE

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**Center for Green Schools at U.S. Green Building Council Releases
“Best of Green Schools 2011” List Recognizing
Leadership in Creating Sustainable Learning Environments**

*From net-zero schools to game-changing policies,
recipients recognized for efforts to green U.S. school infrastructure*

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Dec. 12, 2011) –The U.S. Green Building Council's Center for Green Schools, working in conjunction with its founding sponsor, United Technologies Corp., today released its inaugural Best of Green Schools 2011 list recognizing school administrators and government leaders in 10 categories for their efforts to create sustainable learning environments.

Recipient schools and regions from across the nation – from K-12 to higher education – were recognized for a variety of sustainable, cost-cutting measures, including energy conservation, record numbers of LEED® certified buildings and collaborative platforms and policies to green U.S. school infrastructure. Their commitments to measurable and innovative sustainable building goals serve as models for schools and campuses everywhere.

“The Best Of Green Schools 2011 recipients represent high notes for the green schools movement over the past year and were selected from the thousands of examples of leadership we have seen from schools, districts, campuses, cities and states,” said Rachel Gutter, director of the Center for Green Schools at USGBC. “Tomorrow’s future leaders are in school today. This year’s designees recognize the importance of educating high-performing, 21st century leaders in high-performing, 21st century classrooms. Why green our schools? Three words: education, sustainability and jobs.”

According to published reports, green schools save on average \$100,000 per year on operating costs — enough to hire two new teachers, buy 200 new computers, or purchase 5,000 textbooks. On average, green schools use 33 percent less energy and 32 percent less water than conventionally constructed schools, and if all new U.S. school construction and renovation went green today, the total energy savings alone would be \$20 billion over the next 10 years.

“Our commitment to green schools is a reflection of our belief in the importance of energy efficiency, sustainability and education,” said Sandy Diehl, Vice President, Integrated Building Solutions, United Technologies Corp., and a Center for Green Schools advisory board member. “These leaders are taking action today to help improve our schools by saving energy and tax dollars and by creating healthier environments for students and teachers.”

The recipients include:

Moment for the Movement – *U.S. Department of Education, Green Ribbon Schools*: Green Ribbon Schools is the first comprehensive and coordinated federal initiative to focus on the intersection of environment, health and education.

Region – *Sacramento area*: Mayor Kevin Johnson has led the charge to bring together mayors and superintendents from across the Northern California region to create a \$100 million revolving loan fund for green school retrofits.

State – *Ohio*: With 315 LEED registered and certified projects, including 19 schools registered in 2011, Ohio leads the nation with more green school projects underway than any other state.

City – *Philadelphia*: The School District of Philadelphia made significant steps in 2011 toward the greening of the city's 291 public schools.

School – *Lake Mills Middle School (Lake Mills, WI)*: In March 2011, Lake Mills Middle School became the first public school in the nation to achieve LEED Platinum certification.

Higher Ed Innovator – *University of Texas at Dallas*: The University's new LEED Platinum Student Services Building, which was the recipient of this year's Innovation in Green Building Award, was designed to improve departmental efficiency and interaction, includes terra-cotta shades on the building's exterior to provide a unique energy efficient shading strategy and was built \$1.1 million under budget.

Collaborators – *Kentucky Reps. Jim DeCesare (R) and Mary Lou Marzian (D)*: This bipartisan team has led Kentucky's green school efforts and is a model for teaming on green school collaboration. Together, they've worked with their colleagues in the Kentucky General Assembly to *unanimously* adopt resolutions in support of green schools, and have encouraged other states to work across party lines on similar efforts.

Convener – *Boston*: In September 2011, Mayor Menino hosted the Research Summit on Childhood Health and School Buildings, which brought together a team of interdisciplinary researchers to explore the connection between school facilities and student health. Boston's public school district is also home to one of the first Center for Green Schools Fellows – a sustainability coordinator who will work within the school district for three years, bringing together faculty, administration, facilities staff, teachers and students to advance whole-district sustainability initiatives.

Policy makers – *District of Columbia City Council*: In May 2010, the Washington, D.C. council unanimously passed the Healthy Schools Act of 2010, building upon the District's existing LEED Silver requirement and encouraging schools to achieve LEED Gold certification. 2011 updates to the bill included participation in the U.S. Department of Education's Green Ribbon Schools program, making D.C. the first – before any state – to sign up for the voluntary federal program.

K-12 Innovation – *Public-Private partnership in Illinois*: A report outlining a plan to green all K-12 schools in Illinois was released in March 2011 as a result of a public-private partnership commissioned by the Illinois' General Assembly's October 2009 adoption of House Joint Resolution 45.

Please visit centerforgreenschools.org/bestof2011 for more information on each of this year's recipients.

About U.S. Green Building Council

The U.S. Green Building Council is committed to a prosperous and sustainable future for our nation through cost-efficient and energy-saving green buildings. With a community comprising 79 local chapters, nearly 16,000 member organizations, and more than 175,000 LEED Professional Credential holders, USGBC is the driving force of an industry that is projected to contribute \$554 billion to the U.S. GDP from 2009-2013. USGBC leads an unlikely diverse constituency of builders and environmentalists,



corporations and nonprofit organizations, elected officials and concerned citizens, and teachers and students. For more information, visit www.usgbc.org, on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

About the Center for Green Schools at the U.S. Green Building Council

The Center for Green Schools is how USGBC is making sure every student has the opportunity to attend a green school within this generation. From the kindergartner entering the classroom, to the Ph.D. student performing research in a lab, the Center provides the resources and support to elevate dialogue, accelerate policy and institute innovation toward green schools and campuses. High-performing schools result in high-performing students, and the Center works directly with staff, teachers, faculty, students, administrators, elected officials and communities to drive the transformation of all schools into sustainable places to live and learn, work and play. For more information, visit www.centerforgreenschools.org, or [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

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