

Kresge Foundation Fellowship Program 2009

Strategic Outreach and Education for Advancing Green Building in Higher Education

Networking via Conference Calls

Networking via periodic conference calls has been an integral part of the transfer of information between Kresge Foundation Fellowship (KFF) participants and the KFF group leaders. The conference calls afforded me the opportunity to connect with other higher education institution participants/fellows on matters relating to LEED certifications, green building conference opportunities, and other relevant activities that have been beneficial in equipping me with knowledge and skill to help advance sustainability practices at Houston Community College (“HCC”).

Additionally, information relating to costs of green building, methods by which one may track progress and other information has been available via these calls. Also, indentifying other relevant resources has been a value-added benefit to participating in the KFF.

Green Build International Conference and Expo

The Green Build International Conference and Expo (“Green Build”) was my conference of choice to fulfill one of my KFF requirements. Held in Phoenix, AZ in November 2009, Green Build was the site of over 25 thousand Green Build participants. High profile participants and climate champions like former U.S. Vice President Al Gore and environmentalist/ recording artist, Sheryl Crowe were instrumental in kicking off the event. Moreover, Rick Fedizzi, President, CEO and Funding Chair of the U.S. Green Building Council provided the context for the event – an opportunity to explore and gain knowledge in the green building sector.

These above-identified high profile individuals set the stage for Green Build substantive sessions that included numerous subject matters (e.g., Cross-Campus Green: Unexpected Champions Driving Integrated Designs, Spending Federal Green on Green: Success Stories and Lesson Learned from Implementation of the American Recovery Reinvestment Act, LEED and Beyond-Expanding Sustainable Master Planning for Higher Education).

Green Build participants discovered the process by which an institution could receive LEED certification, while also assessing the return on investment for accomplishing the same. We examined students and the purpose of getting them involved in the green school initiative (i.e., central advancing green building). We identified the more intricate details of the STARS tracking system and the importance of having a “rating” system of this type.

Special Networking with Opportunity with Other Fellows

The KFF program presented a special networking opportunity with other fellows. Specifically, fellows joined each other for dinner where we were able to share our backgrounds and experiences relating to green building and sustainability. This opportunity was effective in helping us establish relationships that should be beneficial to our existing and future endeavors in promoting green building and other

sustainability-related projects.

Conclusion

The KFF is a great medium for networking and gaining additional knowledge and skill to promote green building and advance sustainable practices. This experience has been enlightening and positions me to help advance the efforts of my institution, HCC, while furthering an important initiative that is emerging at an opportune time. Thank you for this experience and the opportunity to present this report.

Kresge Foundation Fellowship Report – Green Build 2009 Report

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