

For Immediate Release

Green Building United Celebrates Groundbreaking Projects and Leaders in Sustainability

The 2021 Groundbreaker Awards recognize innovation in sustainable building, design, and leadership.

Philadelphia, PA, December 17, 2021 – [Green Building United](#), the region's leading organization for green building education and advocacy, recognized five projects and individuals for their advancements in sustainable design. Green Building United's annual Groundbreaker Awards celebrates leaders in the green building industry that demonstrate innovation, commitment to sustainability in the built environment, and environmental, social, and/or economic impact. Awardees were announced at a virtual ceremony on December 16th.

"We're continually impressed by the Groundbreaker Award project submissions and seeing how they are pushing the industry forward. This year's awardees include a collaborative large-scale solar project, an innovative school building renovation, and leaders who have had measurable impact on their teams, industries, and the region," said LeAnne Harvey, Policy and Program Director of Green Building United. "As businesses, cities, and countries work to reduce carbon emissions from the built environment, recognizing projects and leaders is a vital way to uphold best practices toward a carbon neutral world."

2021 Groundbreaker Awardees include the following projects and individuals.

Project Awardee: SONO/Yards Solar

500 Spring Garden Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19123

Regionally, over 15 local workers interacted with the project. It paid Prevailing Electrician wages to Philadelphia-based employees who live in low-to-moderate income neighborhoods. The installation team reflected the City's diversity and included numerous returning citizens (previously incarcerated), as well as acted as a learning ground for students learning about the industry who are interested in joining. This project literally changed the lives of inner-city Philadelphians who worked on this job at \$100+ per hour, folks were able to put down payments on homes and cars that previously were unable to do so.

Project Awardee: Amos Hall, St. Andrews School

350 Noxontown Road, Middletown DE, 19709

St. Andrew's School, located in Middletown, Delaware, took the environmental leadership role of prioritizing sustainability in the major renovation of the 29,000 SF Amos Hall science and mathematics building. The school's commitment to reduced energy use, water use and preservation of their expansive natural lands campus goes beyond the formal LEED certification awarded under the LEED v4 Building Design and Construction: Schools Rating System. From the early stages of planning the project team engaged a wide variety of stakeholders including students and sustainability leaders on campus to infuse green building practices into decisions made at each phase of the project. St. Andrew's School committed to delivering a transformative educational environment that provides optimum learning environments with extensive natural daylighting, outdoor classroom opportunities and open, flexible learning spaces. The LEED certification served as the framework to realize their commitment to

sustainability in not just the building but engagement of the school community during the process and buy-in to utilize the building as a true teaching tool once completed.

Community Leader Awardee: Efrie Escott

Architect and Research Associate, KieranTimberlake

Efrie Escott explores materials, digital technologies, and environmental systems as an Associate in the Research Group at KieranTimberlake. As a researcher and licensed architect, she works with design teams to translate data-driven research into design practice. Efrie leads KieranTimberlake's efforts to reduce embodied carbon, in addition to being a member of the award-winning development team for Tally, a BIM-integrated tool that measures environmental impacts. Efrie also co-leads KieranTimberlake's taskforce investigating applications of new and emerging interdisciplinary practices and technologies to architectural workflows. Efrie lectures internationally about environmental research and teaches at the University of Pennsylvania. She is a member of the USGBC Materials and Resources Technical Advisory Group, founder of Philadelphia's Dynamo User Group, and Philadelphia Women in Architecture Co-Chair.

Community Leader Awardee: Paul D. Spiegel

Director of Energy and Sustainability Services, Practical Energy Solutions, a Division of Spotts, Stevens and McCoy

Paul is committed to the idea that people and organizations can be motivated to action when they are well educated in and guided through the process, and understand the cost-effective benefits of clean and renewable energy. Working with building owners and managers throughout the region, community leaders in over 100 local municipalities and over 75 local schools, he has advanced the adoption of energy-related strategies, including energy conservation, efficiency, and renewable energy. In addition to his training programs, webinars, and in-person speaking engagements that have reached thousands of people in the Philadelphia region, Paul is an active member in various community groups and professional societies as a passionate advocate for energy and environmental policies that will move our region toward a clean energy economy.

Community Choice: Micah Gold-Markel

Founder, Solar States

Micah Gold-Markel is a Philadelphia-born-and-raised entrepreneur setting a healthy, inclusive foundation to our region's green-collar economy. His company, Solar States, was founded with a dual-mission to educate the next generation of solar installers and install. His Find Your Power curriculum is used in solar training programs throughout the area, and he currently employs a number of graduates from these free programs. He's bringing Philadelphia the most equitable, inclusive, beneficial model to solar installations, and he's been at it since 2008.

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About Green Building United

Green Building United, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, is committed to promoting sustainable building in Greater Philadelphia, the Lehigh Valley and Delaware. Through education and advocacy, Green Building United aims to create a sustainable, healthy and resilient built environment for all. Green Building United offers its members and partners a wide variety of resources, tools and events to help them stay informed of the latest green building news and trends. For more information, visit www.greenbuildingunited.org and connect with us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

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