

NAWIC's Annual Block Kids Building Competition Goes Green

The Atlanta Chapter of the National Association of Women in Construction will hold its annual Block Kids Competition January 31, 2009 at the Atlanta Community Food Bank. The participants will include young girls from Girl Scout and Brownie troops in and around Northwest Georgia.

NAWIC is very excited to have the opportunity to work with the Girl Scouts, and this year to add to that excitement a new element has been created in "going green" with the event. The theme will be, Building a Greener Tomorrow, One Block at a Time. The focus will be on using recyclable materials throughout the day. Participant t-shirts will be organic and the supplies will be recycled at the end of the event.

"We feel that it is a wonderful opportunity to educate them on sustainability in the construction and design industry," said Stacey H. Chapman, CIT, the event chairperson. "Each year, we have demonstrators that provide hands on education for the children - this year, each demo will be tied back to sustainability. The signage will be printed on 97 percent recycled boards by ABC Imaging and one of the demonstrators from Heery International will focus on how the supplies used that day will be recycled into various construction materials. The competition provides girls with the tools, opportunities and interest to achieve academic success in non traditional careers.

"Our goal is to build interest in the construction and design industry early in their lives and continue

to foster that interest through other NAWIC educational programs which are geared towards children ranging from elementary school all the way to college."

There is no participation fee; however, each child is asked to bring a minimum of two cans of food as a donation to the Atlanta Community Food Bank. The Atlanta Chapter of NAWIC will match the food drive by the children.

The Block-Kids Building Program is a national building competition that is sponsored on the local level by NAWIC chapters and other organizations. The program is open to all elementary school children in grades 1 through 6 and is free of charge to the children. The competition involves the construction of a structure using interlocking blocks and three of the following additional items: a small rock, string, foil, and construction paper. Each participant is interviewed by a variety of local industry professionals as to what they built, who will benefit from its use and what they want to be when they grow up. These "judges" review notes and the "projects" to determine the winner. Local winners advance to the regional competition, and one semifinalist from each region is entered in the national program competition. National prizes are awarded to the top three projects.

For more information on the program or to become a sponsor, please contact Stacey H. Chapman, CIT at schapman@heery.com.

priorities. This will be one of the most significant changes to the system, and will increase the importance of green building as a way of contributing immediate and measurable solutions toward energy efficiency, climate change mitigation and other global priorities.

LEED 2009 incorporates eight years worth of market and project feedback in the form of precedent-setting Credit Interpretation and Requirements which will ensure clarity for project teams. Coupled with a new credit structure designed to create a more elegant and harmonious certification system, LEED 2009 will reset the bar for the certification of high performance green buildings.

Process innovation in how new technical advancements are incorporated into LEED will also be introduced alongside LEED 2009, including a "pilot process" for individual credits that will allow new technical developments to be flexibly trialed, evaluated and rated into LEED.

"The conclusion of the balloting process marks the culmination of tireless work done by representatives from all corners of the industry," said Brendan Owens, vice president, LEED Technical Development, U.S. Green Building Council's. "We have the deep gratitude for our volunteer leaders and for their bold steps towards raising the bar for green building leadership and challenges the industry to move faster and reach further."

The first public comment period for LEED 2009 opened in July, followed by a second in late August. USGBC had received nearly 100 comments from members and stakeholders at the conclusion of the second public comment period on September 2. The final stage of the consensus development process for LEED 2009 was to be held on November 14, a pass/fail vote among USGBC's 18,000 member organizations. LEED 2009 successfully passed member ballot on November 14. Detailed information about specific proposed technical changes to the system can be found in the background documents that accompany the public comment forms on USGBC's Web site.