



The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) is a U.S. based community of members and volunteers focused on the transformation of the built environment at the national, state, and local level through the engagement of local communities, membership and national stakeholders. While USGBC's work is focused on the United States, their mission, programmatic platforms, certification tool (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, or LEED®) and certification organization (the Green Business Certification Inc., or GBCI®) are global and have been leveraged in nearly 190 countries. Through [LEED](#), a comprehensive green building system that has certified over 105,000 buildings globally, USGBC is working to change how buildings and communities are designed, built, and operated.

Peter Templeton

[Peter Templeton](#) is President and CEO of USGBC and GBCI. Passionate about health and equity, Peter directs organization-wide efforts to increase the reach and impact of green buildings and green business market transformation activities around the world with the purpose of improving lives. He leads the execution of strategic plans and partnerships that expand local capacity and deliver new tools for advancing smart, healthy, socially responsible, and environmentally sustainable buildings and communities. Over Peter's tenure at USGBC, LEED has become the most widely used and respected green building program in the world. Peter serves as a board member of the World Green Building Council and Sustentabilidad para Mexico (SUME). Peter's previous roles include President and CEO of Cradle to Cradle and President of Green Business Certification Inc. (GBCI).

Sarah Zaleski

[Sarah Zaleski](#) is USGBC's newly appointed Chief Products Officer. An accomplished government leader, Sarah has worked at the intersection of sustainability, climate, and the built environment with senior roles at the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and the City of Baltimore's Office of Sustainability. Sarah works collaboratively with the CEO, boards of directors, and members of the executive team to lead strategy, development, delivery, and optimization of the global portfolio of USGBC and GBCI programs and services.

Elizabeth Beardsley

[Elizabeth \(Liz\) Beardsley](#) serves as Senior Policy Counsel and Head of USGBC's COP Delegation. Liz brings more than 25 years of experience working on environmental and climate issues both as an engineer and lawyer. At USGBC, Liz provides strategic building law and policy guidance and direction across the international, federal, state, and local spectrum, and her work focuses on connecting building policy to climate mitigation and adaptation. She has provided testimony to committees of the U.S. Congress, as

well as numerous state legislative committees. Liz is an executive committee member of the Virginia Energy Efficiency Council and previously served as a board member of the National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO).

Hilari Varnadore

[Hilari Varnadore](#) is Vice President for Cities at USGBC. She leads business development for LEED for Cities, the global sustainability framework and certification program built by and for local governments. Committed to public service for three decades, Hilari has led community-based and national nonprofits as well as served as a principal planner and sustainability director in government. At USGBC, Hilari has contributed to the development of formal governance, stakeholder engagement, and standards setting for the LEED for Cities program. Collectively, this work has helped USGBC pivot from an organization focused on singular green buildings to one that aspires to impact the sustainability and quality of life of entire jurisdictions.

Deepthy Kanneri Balagangadharan

[Deepthy Kanneri Balagangadharan](#) is USGBC and GBCI's Regional Director for Middle East & North Africa (MENA). Based out of Dubai, Deepthy is a sustainability professional with over 15 years of experience in the built environment sector. She was instrumental in establishing the USGBC and GBCI HQ for MENA and leads our MENA regional work.

Sara Neff

[Sara Neff](#) serves as a board member of GBCI. Sara is Head of Sustainability at [Lendlease](#) America, a globally integrated real estate group and a USGBC LEED Gold level member. Sara leads Lendlease's corporate sustainability framework in the Americas region. Prior to joining Lendlease, Sara was Senior Vice President, Sustainability at Kilroy Realty Corporation. Under her leadership, Kilroy has been recognized as a leader among publicly traded real estate companies on sustainability in the Americas by GRESB as well as by NAREIT and achieved carbon neutral operations at the end of 2020.

Gautami Palanki

[Gautami Palanki](#) currently serves as Senior Vice President, ESG Strategy, at The Howard Hughes Corporation, where she leads sustainability strategy to advance the commitment to innovative placemaking, design excellence, and operational high performance. For more than a decade, Gautami worked in both private and non-profit environments, where she led architectural design projects, technology implementation and deployed global sustainability standards and technical programs. Passionate about community-based climate action, Gautami has also keynoted talks and led workshops for audiences in more than 20 countries and is on the board of mission driven organizations. She is a Licensed Architect and LEED Fellow.