



Local Initiatives Support Corporation
501 Seventh Ave., 7th floor
New York, NY 10018
(212) 455-9800
(212) 682-5929 fax
www.lisc.org

LISC LAUNCHES GREEN DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Madeline Fraser Cook heads up unit that connects green development movement to full range of neighborhood projects as well as next generation of low-income community workers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Stephanie O’Keefe
(202) 739-9271
sokeefe@lisc.org

Madeline Fraser Cook
(617) 338-0411 ext. 223
mfcook@lisc.org

NEW YORK (March 5, 2008) – In its role as the national force behind comprehensive community revitalization, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) today announced the launch of its Green Development Center to support green design, construction, and management principles in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods. LISC thinks that greener buildings are key components in achieving sustainable communities of choice and opportunity – good places to work, do business and raise children.

Madeline Fraser Cook, a national expert in providing technical assistance to community-based organization on green and sustainable design techniques, has been hired to head up the new unit.

While the official unveiling of LISC’s Green Development Center is new, the company’s emphasis on sustainable building and management principles is not. Since 2004, LISC, through grants and technical assistance, has been encouraging its community development partners to design and build energy-efficient and resource-efficient buildings with healthier indoor air. The benefits include 1) preserving family income and wealth by lowering utility bills and increasing home values, 2) connecting neighborhoods to green-related job opportunities in the design and building trades, 3) providing schools with better learning environments, and stronger operating margins, and 4) supporting healthier lifestyles by exposing residents to fewer toxic substances, lessening respiratory problems.

With support from The Home Depot Foundation, LISC in the San Francisco Bay area launched “Green Connection,” a program to educate new affordable housing developers about green building principles, and to make greener capital improvements and maintenance practices into existing properties.

In Boston, LISC created a “green screen” assessment tool with partner New Ecology, Inc. that helps developers take maximum advantage of greening opportunities in their projects.

In Duluth, LISC is involved in a number of green building projects, including a solar demonstration model home and a 70-unit supportive affordable housing building serving homeless people.

LISC is supporting similar efforts in Hartford, Indianapolis, Jacksonville, Milwaukee, Minneapolis/St. Paul, Philadelphia, Virginia, Washington, DC and a number of rural areas. Regional partners include Earthpledge, Global Green, New Ecology, Inc., and Southface Energy Institute.

“It’s clear that embedding green principles into all facets of neighborhood revitalization leads directly to results consistent with LISC’s mission of helping to build sustainable communities that are better places to live and work,” said Greg Maher, LISC’s senior vice president for lending, who has been a major proponent of this work. “Lowered operating costs, increased household income, and the improved health of children – these are direct results of green-focused development.”

Fraser Cook is ideally suited to direct LISC’s green initiative. Since 2004 she has been vice president of New Ecology, Inc., the Cambridge, Mass.-based organization that supports green technologies in underserved urban communities. She managed the greening of affordable housing developments, guiding developers through the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification process. She also presented training seminars on costs and benefits of greening affordable housing.

From 2001 to 2004, Fraser Cook was director of special projects at New Ecology, where she initiated statewide educational efforts around green affordable housing and sustainable development. Earlier, as an analyst at Abt Associates in Cambridge, she implemented program management for HUD HOPE VI grants and assisted housing authorities with HOPE VI projects. She has a bachelor’s degree from Swarthmore College and a master’s of city planning from the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

About LISC

LISC combines corporate, government and philanthropic resources to help community-based organizations revitalize underserved neighborhoods. Since 1980, LISC has raised more than \$8.6 billion to build or rehabilitate more than 230,000 affordable homes and develop 32 million square feet of retail, community and educational space nationwide. For more information, visit www.lisc.org.

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