

# 2011 Media Kit



*Last updated June 17, 2011*

# Introduction

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# Company Overview

## Firm Profile

O'Brien & Company is a nationally recognized leader in sustainability and green building consulting. We guide clients towards sustainability by translating the best industry information and by leading a collaborative process to arrive at the most practical, sustainable result.

## Services

**Green Building Consulting.** We consult on green building projects from pre-design to occupancy. We have expertise with a wide variety of rating systems including LEED, Living Building Challenge, and Built Green. From large institutional and commercial projects to single- and multi-family residential projects, we help our clients achieve their performance goals.

**Education & Training.** We provide engaging learning experiences that help people create a more sustainable built environment. Our trainings are led by working professionals who bring their insights and experience to the classroom. With each course, we focus on preparing students to achieve sustainability on a practical level. We have a catalog of off-the-shelf classes and also develop custom curricula and workshops.

**Programs, Planning & Policies.** We assist the public and private sector in the design of programs, plans, and policies that improve the sustainability of our built environment. Our work includes the development of sustainable operations and maintenance guidelines for buildings, sustainability strategies for municipalities, new green building programs, and more.

## Products

Our education and training products include short "Learning Lite Bite" courses, all-day LEED Study Sessions for professionals preparing to take the LEED accreditation exams, and more.

## Stats

**Founded** July 13, 1991

### Staff by the Numbers

Owners	4
Employees	13
Certified Sustainable Building Advisors	13
LEED Accredited Professionals	13
Energy Star Performance Testers and Verifiers	4
LEED Homes Raters	4
Built Green Verifiers	3

### Green Building Consulting

LEED Projects	
Certified 52 / Registered 77	
LEED for Homes (in units)	
Certified 243 / Registered 353	
LEED Platinum projects	12
Living Building projects	3

### Education

Professionals taught	5000+
Unique courses developed	14

### Programs, Planning & Policies

City sustainability strategies developed	4
Built Green programs developed	9

**WMBE Number** W2F5111057

**Federal Tax ID Number** 65-1313009

# Company Overview

## Mission

Our mission is to create a sustainable built environment that ensures a better quality of life for present and future generations.

## Vision & Values

We believe in a collaborative process that is integrated and inclusive. Our values are:

**Change.** We are committed to supporting and inspiring changes people make from where they are towards sustainability.

**Leadership.** We're successful when we create strategies that solve multiple problems, leverage existing resources and provide added value.

**Respect.** Respect for people and our planet is the foundation of everything we do.

## Target Audience

We provide green building consulting and training to building owners, developers, architects, contractors, municipalities and other organizations who influence the built environment.

Our focus is on helping clients build their own capacity to achieve sustainability on a practical level. We work with firms that are just starting to incorporate green values into their practices—and in some cases have helped transform them into market leaders in their realm. We also work with the most cutting-edge and progressive organizations to help them push themselves even further along the path to sustainability.

## Markets

We work primarily in the Pacific Northwest, Hawaii, California and Alaska.

## Clientele

### Architects

- Callison
- LMN
- Miller | Hull
- Mithun
- Perkins+Will

### Builders

- GLY Construction
- Mortensen
- RAFN
- Unimark
- Walsh Construction

### Real Estate and Developers

- CBRE
- Lorig
- Port Blakely Communities
- Quadrant Homes
- Vulcan

### Government Agencies

- King County
- Port of Seattle
- Seattle Public Utilities
- State of Hawaii
- US Coast Guard
- Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction

### Non-Profit Organizations

- Built Green Washington
- Cascadia Green Building Council
- Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance
- Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County
- King County Housing Authority

# Management

## The Transition Begins

Kathleen O'Brien announced this year that she will transition to a special projects role in 2011 as she completes 20 years of company ownership. The three existing part-owners, Elizabeth Powers, Alistair Jackson and Donna Trost, will continue running the firm.

"I am thrilled to be handing the O'Brien & Company reins over to this team," said O'Brien. "They are seasoned managers and leaders in sustainable building in their own right. I trust them completely to honor the legacy of O'Brien & Company while taking the company to new heights."

Although many in the architecture, engineering and construction industry know the firm for its LEED consulting, Kathleen's earliest work will continue to be part of the firm's core: sustainability policy development and industry education. As she transitions to a 'special projects' role, the staff members in these teams will take on additional responsibilities.

Andrea Lewis, has been promoted to Senior Project Associate to lead the firm's programs, planning, and policy work. Andrea is a deft project manager and has worked hand-in-hand with Kathleen and other staff to create city sustainability strategies and develop sustainability policies for companies, non-profits and governments. She managed the National Sustainable Building Advisor Program for three years and also continues to serve as recruitment director.

As a leader in green building education for the industry, O'Brien & Company will continue to provide trainings, develop curriculum, and create educational products designed to build the capacity of the industry. Kelly Kirkland leads the firm's curriculum development and custom training work in an addition to her Marketing Coordinator and Project Associate roles. Kelly is also Lead Instructor for Seattle Central Community College's Sustainable Building Advisor Program.

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### Company Timeline

July 31, 1991  
O'Brien & Company founded as  
the first green building  
consulting firm in the state

2001  
Elizabeth Powers joins the firm

2002  
Alistair Jackson joins the firm

2005  
Donna Trost joins the firm

2006  
Company moves  
from Bainbridge Island  
to historic Colman building  
in Seattle.

2009  
Office receives LEED Gold

June 2011  
Kathleen Transitions from  
ownership to special projects

July 13, 2011  
Firm celebrates 20 years

# Management

## **The Transition Begins (continued)**

Michelle Bombeck coordinates the off-the-shelf educational courses available in through the Building Capacity Marketplace, including LEED exam prep courses, technical lunch and learn sessions, and the Build It LEED Toolkit and Training.

Senior Project Associate, Nora Daley-Peng has an increased her role in leading green building consulting services for commercial and institutional projects, leveraging 10 years of experience as project manager and landscape architect. She is the company lead on master planning, sites, and neighborhood development work.

Colleen Groll has been promoted to Residential Services Manager in recognition of her deft administration of O'Brien & Company's LEED for Homes Provider role. Colleen is also leveraging her healthcare background to expand the company's green healthcare focus and is point person for the firm's work in Alaska.

Elly Bunzendahl, Jodie Clark and Chris Edlin are taking on increased project management responsibilities for a variety of project types. Jodie is the primary manager for LEED projects and has a specialty working with contractors. Chris Edlin is leading Living Building Challenge project work and Elly is the company lead in Hawaii.

Project Assistants Shino Severson and Michelle Bombeck are providing more direct assistance to client projects in addition to their administrative responsibilities supporting consulting services.

Either Alistair Jackson or Elizabeth Powers will serve as Principal-In-Charge on all company projects as well as teach classes.

# Organizational Chart

## Owners

**Alistair Jackson**  
Principal

**Kathleen O'Brien**  
Principal, Founder

**Elizabeth A. D. Powers**  
Principal

**Donna Trost**  
General Manager

## Senior Project Associates

**Nora Daley-Peng**  
Green Building  
Consulting  
Services Manager

**Colleen Groll**  
Residential  
Services Manager

**Andrea Lewis**  
Programs,  
Planning & Policies  
Services Manager

## Project Associates

**Elly Bunzendahl**

**Jodie Clark**

**Chris Edlin**

**Kelly Kirkland**  
Marketing  
Coordinator,  
Education  
Coordinator

## Project Assistants

**Michelle Bombeck**  
Office  
Coordinator,  
Marketplace  
Assistant

**Shino Severson**  
Residential  
Administrative  
Assistant

# Kathleen O'Brien

## Founder

Kathleen O'Brien is a nationally recognized leader in the field of sustainability, having been in the field as a writer, educator, strategic planner, facilitator and project consultant for nearly 25 years.

She has won many leadership awards including recognition by the Cascadia Green Building Council as a Cascadia Fellow – a lifetime achievement award (2008). Kathleen is a LEED Accredited Professional, a Certified Sustainable Building Advisor, and earned her Masters at Antioch University in Environment and Community.

Since founding O'Brien & Company, Kathleen has been instrumental in creating sustainability programs, plans, and policies for government agencies, industry trade groups, and non-profit environmental groups. The results have been strategic plans and technical guidelines that have met the needs of diverse stakeholders with multiple interests and brought about practical and measurable change. The impact of these initiatives has been wide ranging and multi-faceted, touching every aspect of the built environment, from educational facilities, civic buildings, commercial enterprises, infrastructure facilities to affordable and market rate residential developments.

Kathleen's leadership style, while taking practicality into account, energizes and inspires innovation, making measurable advancement possible. She subscribes to the philosophy and practice of Servant Leadership, giving priority attention to the needs of her colleagues and clients. Throughout her career Kathleen has honed her skills in listening, empathy, foresight and community-building to become a true authority in her field.

## Milestone Achievements

### Sustainable Building Advisor Course

Kathleen led the development of this nationally renowned, 9-month long professional certification course. As the founding Director for the nonprofit National Sustainable Building Advisor Program (now the Sustainable Building Advisor Institute) she was responsible for overseeing more than twenty program providers around the country. Over 1000 professionals have taken the course, and more than 600 professionals have earned the Certified Sustainable Building Advisor (CSBA) designation, which is earned by passing the exam that Kathleen initiated.

### Sustainability Strategy Development

Kathleen has developed sustainability strategies, plans and frameworks for organizations, municipalities and corporations. As part of this work, she has facilitated focused and productive conversations among diverse and sometimes contentious stakeholders. Her hand is on many of the sustainability strategies around the region, including those for the cities of Shoreline, Kirkland, Sammamish, and Ellensburg.

### Green Building Guidelines

Kathleen helped to define green by assisting trade associations, governments, and professional groups in the development of more than a dozen achievable guidelines for green building. Her legacy includes programs for K-12 schools, light commercial projects, and residential construction (market rate and qualified income). Examples include many Built Green programs and the ASHRAE's Design Guide for K-12 Schools.

# Elizabeth A. D. Powers

## Principal, Part Owner

Elizabeth uses the knowledge she's gained from seventeen years in the field and her skills motivating people to facilitate the process and practice of sustainable development. She serves as the Principal-in-Charge on three dozen LEED and sustainable building projects for the company; oversees a number of the company's key outreach projects; teaches and develops trainings; and serves as part of the company's management team.

Whether leading company practices, consulting on a green building project, or managing a complex, multi-stakeholder green building program, Elizabeth focuses on an integrated process that is inclusive and finds creative solutions within the constraints of the real world.

Elizabeth provides technical consulting on low-impact development, green building materials, sustainable construction practices and green building ratings systems. She is the lead instructor for the Seattle Sustainable Building Advisor certificate program, a LEED Accredited Professional, and is completing a Masters degree in Landscape Architecture. She serves on the Seattle steering committee for Cascadia Green Building Council and previously served 6-years on the EcoBuilding Guild Seattle Steering Committee.

Prior to joining O'Brien & Company, Elizabeth worked for seven years at the Greater Seattle Chamber of Commerce where she conducted business outreach on recycling, water conservation and energy efficiency, and developed a sustainable building assistance program.

## Areas of Expertise

### **Integrated Process and Charrette Facilitation**

Elizabeth is passionate about helping clients navigate the best pathway to achieving their sustainability goals. For 10 years, she has enthusiastically coached home owners, public sector staff, and private property owners in brainstorming, prioritizing, and organizing successful plans for a sustainable built environment. She also recently served on the peer review committee for the development of an ANSI standard for Integrated Process for the real estate, design, and construction industries that will be used in LEED 2012.

### **Master Planning and Sustainable Sites**

Elizabeth is an advocate of early consideration of sustainability in planning and site development. She has worked with private schools in Hawaii to develop campus wide sustainability plans, developed conceptual plans and sustainability guidelines for an industrial park on the Olympic Peninsula, and crafted sustainable site selection criteria for a local healthcare company. She is currently managing two Sustainable Sites Initiative (SITES) pilot projects exploring the application of the standard to new and existing infrastructure projects.

### **Commercial and Institutional Rating System Consulting**

Elizabeth is an expert in applying rating systems, like LEED, the Living Building Challenge, SITES, and others, and at helping clients select the best rating system for their project. From the earliest O'Brien & Company LEED project, Merrill Hall at the University of Washington, to the multi-phased Amazon Headquarters, Elizabeth has assisted three dozen projects become greener and create value through green building certification.

# Alistair Jackson

## Principal, Part Owner

Alistair has been working in the field of sustainability for more than 16 years. He uses his background in sustainable business to provide strategic and business management leadership to O'Brien & Company. His education in environmental sciences informs his approach to his work which is rooted in a strong belief as nature as model and mentor.

Over the last decade, he has worked on many sustainable design and green building projects providing design facilitation, technical consulting services, diagnostic analysis and performance verification of projects at all levels of performance. Although he is a technician, he achieves success through his ability to translate the complexities of building science and natural systems dynamics into clear, accessible concepts and ideas.

He is a skilled trainer and sought-after presenter with a long list of presentations in his portfolio. He speaks regularly on residential green building performance and green affordable housing topics, and is a LEED for Homes Faculty Member for the US Green Building Council. He also develops curricula that respect adult learning styles, especially those courses aimed at builders and the construction trades. He manages O'Brien & Company's Building Capacity Marketplace of off-the-shelf classes and training tools.

Based in Bellingham, WA, Alistair is actively involved in his community contributing personal time, energy and resources in his role on the Board of Directors of RE-Sources for Sustainable Communities. RE-Sources is one of the largest and most effective environmental advocacy and outreach organizations in Washington state, the parent of Bellingham's Sustainable Living Center and of The REStore building materials salvage stores in Bellingham and Seattle.

## Areas of Expertise

### Residential Green Building Consulting and LEED for Homes Provider

Alistair has overseen dozens of high performance residential projects as design process facilitator, construction verifier, field trainer and building science diagnostic analyst. He assisted the US Green Building Council with the development of the LEED for Homes rating system and, in 2007, O'Brien & Company was selected as a Provider. Alistair serves as the firm's LEED for Homes Quality Assurance Designee and senior technical consultant. He also consults on Living Building Challenge, Energy Star and Built Green certifications.

### Organizational Sustainability

Alistair has helped many organizations define policies and strategies to enhance their competitiveness in the future. He has helped the King County Housing Authority, Schuchart, Port Blakely Communities and Quadrant homes identify sustainability goals, targets and/or tracking tools for their building projects and internal operations.

### Green Building Program Development

Alistair has used his technical knowledge and facilitation skills to support communities in the creation of custom green building programs that respond to relevant market, regulatory and climate factors. He has worked on five Built Green programs in rural and urban counties across Western Washington, and additional programs in Hawaii and California.

# Company News

## Blog Articles

[www.buildingcapacityblog.com](http://www.buildingcapacityblog.com)

First Time LEED Construction Project Manager Beats Gold and Helps Build Schuchart's Green Portfolio

*Interview with Joe Giaudrone*

Shoreline's Sustainability Strategy Bears Fruit

*Interview with Juniper Nammi, Associate Planner, AICP*

Creating Effective Energy Efficiency & Conservation Strategies in Your Community

*By Kathleen O'Brien and Katie Spataro*

Workforce Training Tool Responds Directly to Industry Needs

*Interview with Laurie Black, Director of Workforce Initiatives*

How Does a Community Support the Use of FSC Certified Wood in its Built Environment?

*Ian Hanna, FSC-US Director of Development, Responds*

What's a Blogathon, and Further More What's an EcoCribz?

*By Kathleen O'Brien*

Why Must we Reinvent the Wheel When Conducting Collaborative Change Projects?

*Kathleen O'Brien and Yvonne Kraus*

Transforming Markets and Practice through Environmental Procurement

*Interview with Shirli Axelrod, City of Seattle*

## Published Articles

[www.obrienandco.com/publications/articles](http://www.obrienandco.com/publications/articles)

### Fall 2010 - Trim Tab

"Creating Effective Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategies: A City's Guide for Getting Started"

By Kathleen O'Brien and Katie Spataro

### Nov. 2009 - Buildings Magazine

"Operations and Maintenance: Keys to Energy Management"

By Kelly M. Kirkland

### Apr. 2009 - Scottsman Guide

"Smaller Homes Becoming a Bigger Deal"

By Kathleen O'Brien

### Mar. 2009 - Better Bricks

"Central Kitsap School District Strikes it Rich with Commissioning"

By Kelly M. Kirkland

### Feb. 2009 - Daily Journal of Commerce Green Building Special Section

"Small Measures Can Save Big Bucks During Downturn"

By Kathleen O'Brien

### Nov. 2008 - Sustainable Industries Journal

"Liberty, Justice and Green Building for All"

By Kathleen O'Brien

### Oct. 2008 - Seattle Post-Intelligencer

"Green Building is an Environmental Solution"

By Kathleen O'Brien and Rachael Jamison

### Sept. 2008 - CitiesGoGreen

"The Intersection of Community Design and Green Building"

# Company News

## Quote Sheet

“Thank you again for a fantastic 2-day presentation/study session. I have already been able to use what you taught in the sessions in one of my projects.”

- *Client at Boeing*

“I’m so glad we hired O’Brien as this is the kind of oversight [our LEED project] needed.”

- *Client at Seattle University*

“You have done an amazing job on understanding the ‘flow’ of material as the student will see online. I don’t often get to work with people who do and I appreciate it!”

- *Client at Distance Learning division of RealEstateCE.com*

“If more firms could provide the kind of client services to residential builders that OBCo does, my job would be sooo much easier. When you’re on site, I’m consistently impressed with how engaged the contractors and subs seem to be regarding energy performance details.”

- *Partner at the WA Energy Office/WSU*

“[Thank you for the] energy, charm, enthusiasm and professionalism each of you brought to the event. Not only were your contributions valuable in imparting information about the resources you provide, you made the workshop fun and entertaining.”

- *Client at the City of Seattle*

## Projects In The News

[www.obrienandco.com/news-and-events/projects](http://www.obrienandco.com/news-and-events/projects)

**Dec 9, 2010 - Daily Journal of Commerce**  
Salishan Phase Seven

**Nov 29, 2010 - Daily Journal of Commerce**  
Bastyr University Student Housing

**Sep 7, 2010 - Daily Journal of Commerce**  
San Ysidro Land Port of Entry

**Jul 26, 2010 - Daily Journal of Commerce**  
University Center

**Summer 2010 - NAHB Land Development Magazine**  
Low Impact Development Manual

**Jun 17, 2010 - Daily Journal of Commerce, King 5 News and archinnovations**  
Bertschi Living Classroom

**May 26, 2010 - Daily Journal of Commerce**  
SITES Initiative Pilot Projects

**May 11, 2010 - SchoolFacilities.com video**  
Hawai'i Preparatory Academy Go Green Initiative

**Apr 28, 2010 - World Architecture News**  
Providence Health Systems Office

**April 8, 2010 - Northwest Navigator**  
Navy Bachelor Enlisted Quarters

**Mar 10, 2010 - Daily Journal of Commerce**  
Bardessono Inn and Spa

**Feb 22, 2010 - Daily Journal of Commerce**  
Puget Sound Energy Factoria Service Center

**Feb 17, 2010 - Seattle Times**  
Northwest Maritime Center