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Salvaged Materials Find a Home in America's Greenest Building Project

Kansas City, MO, July 17, 2009 --(PR.com)-- This week marks the grand opening for America's greenest project and one of the world's best showcases for reclaimed building materials. The Omega Center for Sustainable Living (OCSL) in Rhinebeck, New York open its doors Wednesday, July 16. PlanetReuse, a global broker of reclaimed materials, coordinated much of the salvaged building material used in the project.



The OCSL, an environmental education center and wastewater treatment facility, is expected to be certified as the world's first Living Building project, the highest measurable standard for sustainable design and construction. The award-winning building was designed by Kansas City-based BNIM Architects, with John Todd Ecological Design.

"So much building material heads for landfills, when instead it can find new life in new building projects," said PlanetReuse founder Nathan Benjamin. "As the world's greenest building, the Omega Center is a perfect showcase for salvaged materials, but it also demonstrates how easily any building can take advantage of material reuse."

Using reclaimed materials is one of the purest ways to build green, and an important consideration for Living Building certification. To discover effective ways to incorporate these materials into the OCSL, BNIM sought out PlanetReuse, whose focus is linking reclaimed materials with the design community.

With the design team, PlanetReuse identified key areas for the use of reclaimed materials. They worked with five demolition and reclamation contractors (three not-for-profits and two for profit) to procure and test the materials, sourcing close to the project to reduce fuel consumption. The company provided documentation on every step to support the certification process.

Reclaimed materials within the Omega Center include dimensional lumber, plywood, interior doors, beech wood paneling and toilet partitions, among many others. The materials came from warehouses, schools, office buildings and other projects within the source radius. Reclaimed materials typically offer 15 to 20 percent savings over new, and their use earns significant points towards LEED accreditation. Most significantly, reuse keeps tons of building materials out of landfills.

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