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The U.S. Green Building Council released its annual list of Top 10 States for LEED - Massachusetts named number two

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Boston, MA The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) released its annual list of Top 10 States for LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), the world's most widely used green building rating system. The list ranks states based on the number of LEED certified s/f per person in 2018. After taking the top spot on the list for the past two years, this year Massachusetts came in at number two.

“Over the past 25 years, the U.S. Green Building Council, its member companies and the green building community have come together to make our planet stronger, greener and more sustainable through LEED,” said Mahesh Ramanujam, president and CEO, USGBC. “These Top 10 states are examples of how we can create lasting, measurable change and improve the quality of life for everyone in our communities. A better future requires a universal living standard that leaves no one behind—and that future would simply not be possible without the extraordinary work being done in these states.”

The states that made this year's top 10 are home to 128 million Americans, and the more than 1,800 buildings that certified in 2018 represent more than 468 million gross s/f of space. Buildings that are LEED-certified create healthier spaces for people, as well as use less energy and water, reduce carbon emissions and save money for families, businesses and taxpayers.

Massachusetts certified 122 green buildings in 2018, representing 5.3 gross s/f of LEED-certified space per resident. Notable projects that certified in Massachusetts in 2018 include:

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. School, LEED Platinum, which served as a prototype for the Cambridge Green Schools Initiative and changed the way the district thinks about building energy while also using its design as a teaching tool for students;
- Bentley University Arena, LEED Platinum, the first LEED-certified building on Bentley University's campus, which features energy efficient lighting, heat reclamation systems, and a solar array that provides 40% of the building's energy;
- 111 Huntington, LEED Gold, one of the most recognizable skyscrapers in Boston and has re-certified to LEED through Arc three times, showing an ongoing commitment to performance monitoring;

- Woodland Elementary School, LEED Silver, built to accommodate the growing elementary-aged population, incorporates healthy, sustainable building materials and design tactics with the health of the children and staff of the school in mind; and
- Williams College Bookstore, LEED Platinum, which is one of the more heavily trafficked buildings on Williams College's campus and was built with local materials, providing an inviting place for students and the community alike.

"LEED is a proven tool for economic development, and it supports state and local strategies to mitigate climate change and enhance sustainability across the state," said Meredith Elbaum, executive director of USGBC Mass.

"We anticipate that Massachusetts will continue to grow upon its successes in green building over the past year, and be a leader in sustainable development into 2019," said Vincent Chiusano, vice president of strategic relationships at USGBC. "We hope that with LEED v4.1, the expertise of builders and developers, and the dedication of our USGBC members, we can continue to lead the growth of green building in the country in the coming year."

Now in its ninth year, the 2018 Top 10 States for LEED list is based on 2010 U.S. Census data and includes commercial and institutional green building projects that earned LEED certification in 2018.

USGBC calculates the list using per capita figures to allow for a fair comparison of the level of green building taking place among states with significant differences in population and number of overall buildings. In the U.S., 2,886 commercial projects certified in 2018. Globally, there are currently more than 96,275 registered and certified LEED projects in 167 countries and regions around the world.

Recently, USGBC introduced LEED v4.1, the latest update to the rating system, and released beta versions for existing buildings (LEED v4.1 O+M), new construction (LEED v4.1 BD+C) and interiors (LEED v4.1 ID+C). LEED v4.1 emphasizes human health and integrates performance metrics using Arc to encourage ongoing tracking. Recent research shows green building will continue growing through 2021.

Client demand remains the top reason to build green in the U.S. and occupant health and well-being emerged as the top social factor. Through LEED, USGBC pushes the market toward higher performing buildings that also improve quality of life.

The impact of buildings, cities and communities on people continues to be a priority for USGBC and across industries. In an effort to expand USGBC's global green building efforts and ensure that LEED is not only the de facto leadership standard, but also the pre-eminent living standard, USGBC launched the Living Standard campaign at 2018's Greenbuild in Chicago. Focused on the belief that storytelling can lead to a more sustainable world, the campaign aims to highlight stories – big and small – that capture how USGBC, LEED and other sustainability programs are raising the quality of life for people around the world. By visiting livingstandard.org, individuals and companies can join the campaign and submit stories.

