



Media Release:

Carlson Earns Green Credential

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Public Relations Professional Earns Green Credential

(FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE February 1, 2009 Sarasota, FL) Grace Carlson, APR is southwest Florida's newest "green associate." Owner of the eco-PR consulting firm, Carlson Studio Marketing (CSM), Carlson is now accredited as a LEED GA. The credential for LEED Green Associate is designed for professionals who "possess the knowledge and skill to understand and support green design, construction and operations," according to the GBCI, which administers the credentialing process for the U.S. Green Building Council. The LEED Green Associate credential was introduced in May, 2009 as the first step in becoming a LEED Accredited Professional.

Carlson started Carlson Studio Marketing, formerly Grace Unlimited, in January, 2005. The agency shares its LEED CI-Silver certified headquarters in downtown Sarasota with Carlson Studio Architecture, a sustainable building design firm owned by Michael Carlson, AIA, LEED AP. As an eco-PR consultant, Carlson evaluates sustainable initiatives and policies of businesses and organizations and develops marketing communications and outreach strategies to achieve her clients' mission-driven goals and objectives.

"As more clients are looking to add 'sustainable' operational practices into their brand standards, it was important for Carlson Studio Marketing to remain a leader in the public relations field as a consulting firm who adds value to this process," explained Carlson. "In addition to collaborating on a number of sustainability projects since the firm's inception, this LEED accreditation provides 3rd party validation of my expertise."

LEED, which stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is part of the U.S. Green Building Council, whose mission is to "transform the way buildings and communities are designed, built and operated, enabling an environmentally and socially responsible, healthy and prosperous environment that improves the quality of life." For exam eligibility, LEED GA candidates must have either worked on a LEED-registered project, been employed in a "sustainable" field or have engaged in

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an education program addressing green building principles. A LEED credential provides employers, policymakers, and other stakeholders with assurances of an individual's current level of competence and is the mark of the most qualified, educated, and influential green building professionals in the marketplace.

In addition to eco-PR consulting, Carlson Studio Marketing provides educational and community outreach. Carlson serves on the collaboration committee of the Myakka River Branch of the Florida Gulfcoast Chapter of the USGBC and is the Transportation Committee chair of the Sarasota Chamber's Green Business Leadership Council. The firm is a member of Sarasota County's Green Business Partnership, the Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce, the Manatee Chamber of Commerce, Central West Coast chapter of FPRA and the Tampa Bay chapter of PRSA.

To learn more about the services CSM offers, visit www.CarlsonEcoMarketing.com or call (941) 362-3011.

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About Carlson Studio Marketing: **Carlson Studio Marketing** (CSM) is a Florida-based public relations and marketing communications' corporation established in 2005 (formerly Grace Unlimited). The company is a Florida-certified Minority Business Enterprise.

About Grace Carlson, APR, LEED GA: **Grace Carlson** is an accredited public relations professional with the Florida Public Relations Association and Public Relations Society of America. She chairs the Sarasota County Tobacco Free Partnership and serves on the board of directors for *Giving Matters*, an initiative of the Association of Fundraising Professionals. She is also a member of the board of the Sarasota American Cancer Society where she serves as Advocacy Chair and she is Communications Chair for the Sarasota County Democratic Party.

About U.S. Green Building Council: The Washington, D.C.-based **U.S. Green Building Council** (USGBC) is a 501 c3 non-profit organization committed to a prosperous and sustainable future through cost-efficient and energy-saving green buildings. Buildings in the United States are responsible for 39% of CO2 emissions, 40% of energy consumption, 13% water consumption and 15% of GDP per year, making green building a source of significant economic and environmental opportunity. Greater building efficiency can meet 85% of future U.S. demand for energy, and a national commitment to green building has the potential to generate 2.5 million American jobs. The USGBC's mission is to transform the way buildings and communities are designed, built and operated, enabling an environmentally and socially responsible, healthy, and prosperous environment that improves the quality of life.

About Green Building Certification Institute: **GBCI** was created to administer certification and credentialing programs related to green building practice and to ensure that the LEED Accredited Professional (LEED AP) program continues to be developed in accordance with best practices for credentialing programs. To underscore this commitment, GBCI is undergoing the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) accreditation process for personnel certification agencies complying with International Organization for Standardization (ISO) Standard 17024. Early in 2009, GBCI assumed responsibility for administering the LEED certification program for the more than 25,000 commercial projects seeking third-party verification of compliance with the industry's leading green building rating system. For more information, please visit www.gbci.org.

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