



# 2010 VENUES TODAY WOMEN OF INFLUENCE AWARDS

Houston, July 25, 2010

photos by VENUES TODAY



**1 >>** John Bolton of the BOK Center in Tulsa, Okla., managed by SMG, a sponsor of the WOI reception, is seen here with VT's Senior Writer and Assignment Editor Dave Brooks.  
**2 >>** 2010 Women of Influence Award winner Tammy Koolbeck is pictured here with husband Mike Koolbeck and her son Tyler Koolbeck.  
**3 >>** Past and current Women of Influence Award winners are seen here, including Christy Castillo Butcher from the Staples Center and Nokia Theater at LA Live, Jane Kleinberger of Paciolan,

Kim Bedier of Comcast Arena in Everett, Wash., VT Publisher Linda Deckard, Donna Dowess of XOXO Media, Liza Cartmell of Aramark Sports and Entertainment and Tammy Koolbeck from VenuWorks.  
**4 >>** Kim Bedier of the Comcast Arena in Everett, Wash., a 2007 Women of Influence recipient, sports her best western look with VT's very own Samantha Le.  
**5 >>** Representatives from Miller Coors - Jonathan Smith, Jack Heid, Phil Blavat, Joe Capone and Jack Jensen - join VT's Rich DiGiacomo at the VT Women of

Influence reception in Houston.  
**6 >>** 2010 Women of Influence Award winner Christy Castillo Butcher of the Staples Center and LA Live in Los Angeles is seen here with Staples Center alum Danielle Edouarde.  
**7 >>** This group of men are pretty influential in their own right. Pictured are Lee Zeidman from the Staples Center in Los Angeles, Mike McGee from Ticketmaster, Bob Hunter from Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment (an event co-sponsor), and Brad Mayne from the American Airlines Center in Dallas.

**8 >>** VT's Linda Deckard presents Christy Castillo Butcher of Staples Center and Nokia Theater at LA Live with the 2010 Women of Influence Award.  
**9 >>** Ticketmaster's J.T. Tepolt enjoyed the Women of Influence reception with his wife Michelle Kennedy Tepolt.  
**10 >>** Brad Clark of Populous was one of four sponsors supporting this year's Women of Influence Awards.  
**11 >>** VT's Linda Deckard presents Liza Cartmell of Aramark Sports and Entertainment with the 2010 Women of Influence Award.



# THE GREEN ISSUE

## STEWARDS OF SUSTAINABILITY AWARDS

We honor the class of 2010 and the nominees who strive to protect Planet Earth

by DAVE BROOKS

For the second year in a row, *Venues Today* salutes the live entertainment industry with the Stewards of Sustainability awards. Our readers provided this year's nominees, and our editorial team picked three finalists who not only undertook efforts to promote sustainability, but helped create a culture of stewardship within their own organization.

These three finalists are not alone in their pursuit of long-term sustainability. Below are a few additional examples of individuals who have done their part to contribute to protecting the planet.

**Saint Paul (Minn.) RiverCentre, Xcel Energy Center and The Legendary Roy Wilkins Auditorium** for launching the "50-50 in 2" campaign to increase their recycling rate to 50 percent and decrease trash by 50 percent over two years.

**Greg Poole from Toyota Center, Houston**, for developing a plan for increased water efficiency by incorporating a drip system for irrigation, reducing landscape watering by 50 percent.

**Carrie Steward from the Ford Center and Cox Convention Center** in Oklahoma City for renegotiating the facili-

ties' trash contracts to secure recycling bins and cardboard balers that were delivered to the center in January 2010, saving \$30,000-\$40,000 per year.

**Scott Jenkins, VP of Ballpark Operations for Safeco Field, Seattle**, who implemented programs to recycle 80 percent of the waste stream, cut electricity use by 30 percent and shrink natural gas consumption by 60 percent.

**Jorge Costa, Giants senior VP of Ballpark Operations, San Francisco**, who brought a new attitude of sustainability to AT&T Park, including a seventh-inning stretch with an announcement from Giants

manager Bruce Bochy asking fans to help pick up recyclables.

**Chris Oxley of the Portland (Ore.) Rose Garden**, for supervising the first LEED Gold certification for an existing building with strategies aimed at improving energy savings, water efficiency, and environmental stewardship.

**Allison Jones, Client Services manager at the Lakeland (Fla.) Center**, for initiating recycling programs for concessions refuges and working with concessionaire Ovations Food Services to complement the building's efforts.



>> GREEN ISSUE <<

# WASTE NOT, WANT NOT

Georgia World Congress Center Achieves Great Diversion Rate for Microsoft Show

by LINDA DOMINGO



The Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta; (right) a recycling bay where cardboard and trash are sorted and separated.

**M**icrosoft Corporation held its Microsoft Dynamics customer conference, Convergence, at the Georgia World Congress Center (GWCC) on April 24-27. The conference produced 57 tons of waste during the four-day period. However, Microsoft, GWCC's Building Services department and in-house caterer Levy Restaurants coordinated to divert a whopping 36 tons of that waste away from the landfill, achieving a diversion rate of 63.6 percent.

"We went into the Convergence event knowing that we had a lot of opportunity to divert a lot of the waste from the landfill, but we didn't set a number. It's just too difficult; there are so many moving parts and every event is a little bit different," said Patrick

Skaggs, assistant general manager of the GWCC. Although the three organizations did not set a specific goal percentage, they did depend on three strategies to achieve such a high diversion rate. The GWCC baled and recycled cardboard, plastic, aluminum, paper and glass; donated unused food to the Atlanta Union Mission; and sent food waste and other compostable materials to local composting facility, Closed Loop Organics.

The GWCC has 185 stainless steel recycling containers set up in the lobby and public areas of the building and over 300 in the exhibit space for guests to use. However, the GWCC did not rely solely on guests to do the proper sorting. Staff collected materials from the bins and sorted them into wet waste, compost, plastics and mixed recyclables, and cardboard to bale.

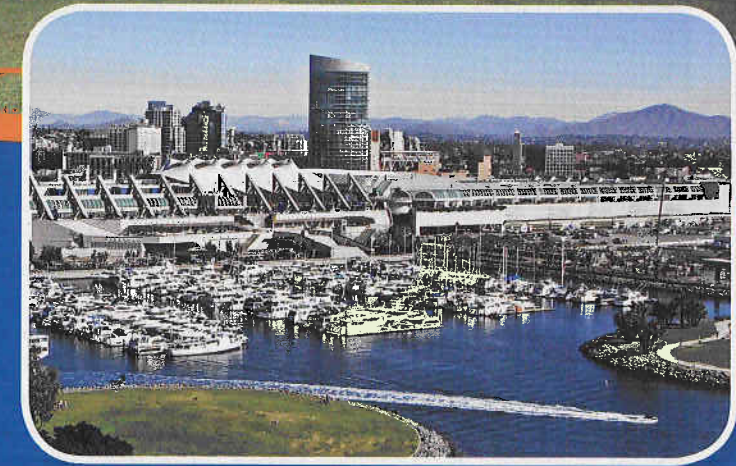
"We have to sort it before we send it," said

Skaggs. "If some food were to be dumped into a recyclable container, it can be considered contaminated and it would be sent to the recycling plant and get sent away as trash." Skaggs explained that the amount of contamination allowed is very small, less than 10 percent. The GWCC was able to capture and recycle 4.2 tons of plastic, aluminum, paper and glass. In order to make things easier for staff, the GWCC color-coded the path of recyclables around the building. Recycling bins have a blue lid and blue bag, and dumpsters that hold recyclables are blue. Employees take the dumpsters down to the docks, and place them against a blue wall to be collected.

Tradeshows traditionally produce a significant amount of cardboard. To prevent this recyclable material from ending up in a

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**WASTE NOT, WANT NOT** CONTINUED FROM PAGE 26  
landfill, the GWCC currently has one baler onsite, and is in the process of adding another. At Convergence, the GWCC baled and recycled 1.4 tons of cardboard. "The cardboard is a challenge because you have to capture it on the exhibit hall floor, but it's definitely the most profitable," said Skaggs.

Although the Convergence event produced 1.4 tons, Skaggs explained that other events produce much more, upwards of 13,000 to 14,000 tons of cardboard. Each bale averages 1,200 to 1,300 pounds.

**"AT A 6,000-PERSON CONVENTION, WITH ONE OR TWO WATER BOTTLES PER DAY OVER A FOUR-DAY PERIOD, IT ADDS UP." — PATRICK SKAGGS**

The GWCC has been working with recycled and converted paperboard manufacturer Carastar for the past six months; the company buys the bales from the GWCC, not only preventing landfill waste but also cutting costs for the GWCC. "It depends on the market, but we get paid anywhere between \$80 and \$125 per bale," said Skaggs. Facilities must pay a fee for dumpsters to be taken away, and the GWCC pays about \$270 to \$300 per dumpster, which is reduced significantly when waste is diverted through methods like baling and recycling.

In addition to the GWCC's efforts to recycle, Microsoft issued reusable water bottles for every participant at the conference, significantly reducing water bottle waste. The GWCC has water coolers in every one of their 106 meeting rooms.

"At a 6,000-person convention, with one or two water bottles per day over a four-day period, it adds up," said Skaggs. "Any time you can have an event step up and do that type of thing, it really helps our efforts."

Composting played an even larger role in the GWCC's high diversion rate at Convergence. Twenty-nine tons of food waste

and other compostable materials were sent to Closed Loop Organics.

Rather than having concessions spread throughout the building, Convergence had a large dining hall where guests ate. Containing the eating area played a large role in making the collection of compostables much easier.

"If we're in control of it, Levy is able to have folks in the prep areas, out on the floor

with the containers and busing the tables and sorting," said Brian Lapinskas, assistant director of operations for Levy Restaurants at the GWCC.

Lapinskas explained that Levy draped off an area where staff brought all food waste to be sorted. "We had a huge catch rate that we could compost...If the guests were trying to sort it themselves, we might have a little more contamination," said Lapinskas. Like with recyclables, compostables are only allowed a very small percentage of contamination. Levy had one staff member for every six tables at the event, and had upwards of 1,100 tables. This allowed for quick busing and sorting; Levy only took about 20 minutes after guests were gone to finish busing.

Skaggs and Lapinskas explained that Microsoft's willingness to use compostable flatware was another factor in the quick turnaround. The compostable material was slightly more expensive, for example, a compostable cup is about two to three cents more than a regular cup. However, the compostable materials made sorting easy and fast since staff could just throw them in with the leftover food.

While composting was the GWCC's solution to leftover food and used plates, silverware and cups, completely unused food and materials were donated. The GWCC has had a relationship with the Atlanta Union Mission,

which is located around the corner from the venue, for over three years. The convenience in location has allowed the GWCC to donate goods regularly, only costing them the labor and time to get the goods over to the mission. Donated items from the Microsoft event included soda, unused foods, unused flatware, cups and napkins.

"Whatever we donate not only helps them, but it doesn't end up in the landfill. Even though food composts eventually, it still ends up in the landfill and we're paying to send it there. There's a benefit to us. So it's a win-win," said Skaggs.

The GWCC is continuously looking for ways to divert even more waste at future events. A "green team" of about 15 people work to develop and execute strategies that will make the venue more environmentally friendly and sustainable. Future plans include replacing 1,500 lights in the 1.4 million square-foot exhibit hall, and hiring a full-time sustainability coordinator. "You really need somebody that has his eye on it every day of the week, every hour of the day," said Skaggs.

The waste diversion rate at Microsoft's Convergence event was a huge success for the GWCC and Levy Restaurants, but it did not come without its challenges. Lapinskas explained that these environmental efforts require a large amount of staff training. "It does take some organization to get everybody to buy into the program. You do have to invest some time with staff. Our biggest risk is that there's no breakdown in the system, because if there is, then it could turn into a bigger headache than you want it to be," Lapinskas said. The GWCC trains both front and back of the house staff daily, and sets up monthly sessions to teach staff about composting.

"The system is only as good as the weakest link, and when you have a lot of temporary staff who don't work here very often, and some guests that take interest in being green and others that don't, you have a lot of challenges," added Skaggs.

Interviewed for this story: **Patrick Skaggs**, (404) 233-4022, **Brian Lapinskas**, (404) 223-4800

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