

LBC-LA: Women in Sustainability - Emily Hand

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Women have a crucial role in nudging the sustainable building industry in the right direction and we at LBC-LA support and encourage that. This year LBC-LA will be celebrating some of the most amazing, ambitious and bright women working in our industry! In a weekly Q&A post, read about what inspires them to be this awesome and get inspired by them!
#womeninsustainability #womenpower



This week, meet Emily Hand, Sustainability Manager at Verdical Group. She brings a wealth of knowledge to the team with her wide-ranging experience of existing and new construction green building projects. A team player and a highly positive person, she is a delight to work with!

1. What inspired you to jump into the field of sustainability and what is your favorite part about doing what you do?

I believe growing up in the small, environmentally conscious town of Ashland, Oregon, and a lot of exposure to the great outdoors is what inspired me to get into the field of sustainability. It wasn't until I took AP Environmental Science my senior year of high school, though, that I truly realized that I could have a career in sustainability. I remember seeing a documentary in class that talked about green building and sustainable architecture and I fell in love.

My favorite parts of doing what I do are effecting change via sustainability in the built environment, working with like-minded and hard-working individuals, and inspiring others about the positive impacts of green buildings.

2. What's the one thing you wish you knew in the first year (or five years) of your career, that you want to share with someone early in their career?

The path you are on and the path you are creating is YOUR path, and it only needs to make sense to YOU! It is easy to compare yourself to others. Don't worry about what others are doing or aren't doing - just focus on being the best version of yourself and set goals to keep growing.

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3. Why does empowering women make the planet more sustainable?

Where to start! For me, what it comes down to is: empowering women - and really every human - expands our ability and capacity to solve challenging problems the world faces. A diversity of people, gender, backgrounds, color, race, sexual orientation, religion, opinion, creed, experiences, knowledge, etc. is our biggest asset and allows us to see complex problems from different perspectives. By empowering women and embracing diversity, we will have more tools to make the planet more sustainable and overcome obstacles.

4. If you had to write your CV as a tweet, how would you write it in 280 characters?

Emily Hand, LEED AP BD+C, GGP. Experienced green building consultant for new & existing buildings. Sustainability Manager @VerdicalGroup. LMU Alumna - Natural Science, Environmental Studies, Cheer, Delta Gamma. Detail oriented, results driven and persistently positive.

5. When the world gets crazy, what keeps you motivated and your vision and passion alive?

I am motivated and grounded by my family, boyfriend, friends, and nature. On days I need encouragement, I seek the wisdom of my loved ones. On days where I find myself getting caught up in the day-to-day or need a gentle reminder of why I do what I do, I seek nature. "I love places that make you realize how tiny you and your problems are." A trip to Joshua Tree or looking out at the vast ocean helps me to put everything into perspective and keep my passion alive.

Also, coffee. And hot Cheetos. :)

Emily Hand is Sustainability Manager at Verdical Group, responsible for business development and project management on a variety of green building and sustainability projects. With broad building experience spanning commercial, residential, industrial, gaming and hospitality projects, she helps clients achieve their building certification and efficiency goals. Emily is a frequent speaker on green buildings and net-zero design and supports the firm's mission to inspire a net zero future in our built environment.

Emily previously worked with Verdical Group program management client, the Los Angeles Better Buildings Challenge, managing marketing and operations for the program. She was also previously a Senior in the Indirect Tax, Credits & Incentives and Climate Change & Sustainability

Services department at Ernst & Young LLP (EY), where she consulted with Fortune 500 companies to integrate environmentally sustainable practices into their operations. Her work facilitating the green building certification process for over 100 million square feet of building space, resulted in over \$50 million in tax incentives for clients.

Emily has worked with high profile clients including: MGM Resorts International, Wynn Resorts, General Electric, Seagate, Teknion, LA City College, and Miramar College. She holds LEED AP BD+C and Green Globes Professional (GGP) credentials and is an active member of the Living Building Challenge LA Collaborative and the USGBC-LA Chapter where she served on the Greenbuild 2016 Los Angeles Host Committee. Emily holds a B.S. in Natural Science and Environmental Studies from Loyola Marymount University (LMU).