

# **Bonny Gray on Revolutionary Water Systems, Building Re-Use, and the Future of Prefab Construction | Transcript**

Welcome to Green Building Matters, the original and most popular podcast focused on the green building movement. Your host is Charlie Cichetti, one of the most credentialed experts in the green building industry and one of the few to be honored as a LEED fellow. Each week, Charlie welcomes a green building professional from around the globe to share their war stories, career advice, and unique insight into how sustainability is shaping the built environment. So settle in, grab a fresh cup of coffee, and get ready to find out why green building matters.

00:34

Charlie

Hey, everybody. Welcome to the next episode of the Green Building Matters podcast. I'm your host, Charlie Cecchetti, and I've got the easy job. Once a week, I get to just talk to someone that's just amazing in this sustainability movement, this green building movement. And this is one of my newer friends, a LEED fellow. We all hung out a couple months ago in Austin, Texas, and I'm really excited for you to get to know Bonnie. How are you doing today, Bonnie?

00:58

Bonny

I'm wonderful, Charlie. Thanks for having me.

01:01

Charlie

I only know a little bit of your story when we're all hanging out, and us LEED fellows like to get together and have a happy hour and just give each

other energy on, hey, what else we got to do in this movement? And you did that for me and my friends. So do this for our listeners. We've got thousands that listen every week, and some are all over the world. But take us back. Where did you grow up and where?

01:23

Bonny

I grew up in Corning, Corning, Iowa, as a matter of fact. A farming country, very small town. What's interesting, there's some good and there's some bad about this, we have beautiful four seasons weather, which is awesome. However, it is what's considered a coal country. There's a small town outside of Corning called Carbon, Iowa, and it was called Carbon because they mined so much coal in the early 1900s. It had its own little town with schools and stuff. It no longer mines coal, but I never realized that until I was in middle school. I thought, this is strange, but then realized we live in a 1916 home that was built in 1916. Four full stories. The heat was fueled by coal. And I never knew that.

02:29

Bonny

We had cellar doors that opened in August or September, and the truck would come and would dump coal into a room in the basement. And I thought, what in the world is this? And realized the furnace ran on coal. That room to this day haunts me because it was dirty, it was icky, it smelled funny and I never wanted to go in it. And I realize now it's the cold that made me not want to be there. On the other hand, my. The 1916 house that we lived in because it was four stories, a full attic, a beautiful full attic, had an attic fan in it, which at the time was what conditioned the air when it was built. So this attic fan was 15ft in diameter.

It was taller than us and we would turn it on in the summer and we'd have return air grills in the upstairs and it would cool the entire house. So I still think about that and look up how we could do these full attic fans today. It's just a really good idea and still works. So we did have. We never had central air at all and worked from the attic fan, which is pretty cool. I went to

school at the University of Nebraska in architecture. I went to Lincoln undeclared and went through general admission and realized that architecture hall was so beautiful that I had to do this.

To go into architecture. It is the oldest building on campus. I believe it's an 1886 red brick building. It was the old law college, but I thought that's where I want to go to school. This is what I want to learn. And majored in architecture and went from there. So I graduated with an architecture degree and then became an architect and rolled into everything sustainable.

04:40

Charlie

t I love walking through the architectural school and saying this is what I want to do. That's beautiful. I love honey visiting architect offices. And you're right, I didn't think about it at the colleges too. Okay, so that's your aha there. Growing up in Iowa architecture. But sustainability. When did it start showing up? Was it solar panels? Was it energy efficiency? As we know, LEED didn't really start happening until about 2000. So what was sustainability when you were studying in your early career?

05:11

Bonny

What's interesting, when I was growing up still at home in middle high school, we were taught to value our land and community. We were told we could not watch TV during the day. This was during the entire summer. And after school we had to play outside. We worked or we in the summer we would do. We'd go out to the lake or we would do hikes. In the winter, we would ice skate on the ponds. We knew how to value the land. So I think it started there when I was in early college. I think my freshman year, the community that I'd lived in was building a. A baseball park. And that land had many beautiful black walnut trees on it. My father helped build the baseball park, but of course, because of baseball fields, they did need to cut down some of the trees.

06:11

Bonny

What my father did was save every one of those trees, take them to a sawmill, and have them milled into rough sawn lumber. And then he stored them in a barn for 35 years. I now have furniture and memorabilia from that black walnut. So things like this made me realize we need to preserve the land. We need to preserve our air. We need to preserve everything. And it was pretty cool. My mother was very creative and very colorful. She taught us a lot about gardening. We had a quarter acre of garden and flowers, lilac bushes, everything that we ate all the time. So it was really cool that we could use the value of the land and everything, of all the vegetables. So it taught me a lot about the background of sustainability when I graduated. You know, sustainability was never a word.

07:20

Bonny

In college, we didn't talk about that, but we did talk about how to orient buildings, how to capture this soft daylight, how to turn your buildings so that we're shaded from coniferous trees and not deciduous trees. Place berms on the north and northwest side to stop that biting winter wind. We knew how to do that. We were designing sustainable, even though it didn't have a word for it. So I contend that everyone that goes through architecture school knows how to do this, knows how to design sustainably, because they were taught it.

08:04

Charlie

That is fantastic. You would like my mom because her favorite wood in the world is black walnut. She's had a landscape business in the North Georgia mountains where we grew up. And just anywhere she could get black walnuts that just needed to be taken down, she would get it, mill it, and air dry it. So you two would really hit it off.

08:24

Bonny

Yes, we would. I'd love to see some of the things she had made. We had. The

best thing my father made out of that is a wooden rocking horse for our son. And we'll pass it down to him when he has children. But it's wonderful. It's wonderful wood. It's beautiful wood. So I couldn't believe he had all those logs there. Just amazing.

08:51

Charlie

Thank you for telling us that story. Okay, we've connected the dots on sustainability architecture. Let's talk a little more. Kind of early career. Did you have any mentors along the way?

09:02

Bonny

Mentors? It may sound corny, but my mom and dad were mentors. They taught me to think forward and to use what we have to. Be careful of the earth, be careful of the land. My father was a banker and did a lot of bank loans for farmers. And a lot of the farmers, some of the farmers would come and have dinner with us. It was really interesting to hear what they did about just planting the land and making sure that they were yielding what's needed and making sure the land was working the way it should be working. Just really cool stuff. As far as mentors, I really. I think a lot about my structural professor who was a structural engineer at the University of Nebraska. He taught us a lot because he was in the real world doing this.

10:01

Bonny

And I still remember to this day steel versus concrete design. Concrete has really never changed as far as design. As far as the design. Now what's in it that's different. Steel is always 25 pages of what is designed to go into it. So let's think simplistically to make sure that we. When we design, that we design correctly, that we design sustainably and make sure it works for where we're at in the world also.

10:36

Charlie

Yeah, I love your view on that. And mentors are interesting. Sometimes we read their books to that person, we see them on stage, but we don't really get immediate contact. Sometimes it is someone we meet with, we have lunch, they challenge you, they open doors. And I think we're fortunate to both be LEED fellows, and there's just a great peer group there, too. Sometimes a mentor can be peers. And you were a sustainability boom. And you probably had some peers that you all had to figure it out together.

11:04

Bonny

It's funny, a lot of the sustainable items that I did or projects, it was really on my own. I would mentor interns in the office to help me, but make it the person, and I know, you know her. That has helped me a lot to know that I was doing the right thing. As far as sustainability is Marnie Evans, we're good friends. She has such an enthusiastic attitude about sustainability when sometimes it can look very bleak. And I rely on her a lot. I can contact her on any random day and ask her certain questions. And she's been very helpful. I was actually her vendor, one of her endorsers on her LEED fellowship. So things like that really are helpful. So when I have a question that I can't answer, I will contact Marnie.

12:05

Bonny

I may contact Gail Victori or Liana at the City because we're all good friends and we're all good colleagues and we can bounce really good ideas off of each other.

12:17

Charlie

We have had Marnie on the podcast. It has been a long time. I'm going to reach back out. This is a good reminder for me. And we've had Gail on the podcast. Just amazing people here. Let's talk about what's on the highlight reel. Bonnie, I got to know you've worked on some incredible projects, but just what else? What are some of your proudest achievements?

12:37

Bonny

Well, my proudest achievement is graduating from the University of Nebraska with a degree in architecture. I was one of two women in the class. I went through this when it wasn't a thing for women to you. Nowadays you'll hear that 50% of the class are females, but that was one of them. The birth of our son, that was another one passing the architect's exam. A lot of people do go through and get a degree in architecture and then they never go forward and take the architects exam. But doing that opened up everything with LEED with sustainability. And then of course the biggest one was obtaining and being given the LEED fellowship in 2022. It's like, this is crazy.

13:33

Bonny

Really, everything I did to get to that point were things that I loved and things that I thought were something that needed to happen to make our community more sustainable, to teach people that we need to think globally and not in a little bucket. It's everything we need to think about. So those are my proudest achievements for sure.

14:02

Charlie

I love it. And LEED fellow. It's just a great club here. For anyone that's listening, that's a LEED professional. While there are some requirements and it's really peer nominated, something to really consider once you've been doing this for at least over a decade and that's. I know it means a lot to me and I know it means a lot to you. Okay, so let's talk about the present day. Bonnie, get us up to speed. Like tell us about your company and what's a day in the life of Bonnie right now?

14:26

Bonny

My company, Lawrence Group is an established 40 year old architecture

firm with offices in St. Louis, Austin, New York City and Florida. We do a lot of healthcare, we do a lot of a variety of things, public buildings and such. Right now I have, I know you've heard of Austin Energy Green Building, which is the equivalent of LEED in the city of Austin. LEED was based on the Austin Energy Green Building. I do have a couple of AEGB buildings that I am working on. I have other projects. I do have a reclaimed water project which is coming on board, which is really cool. I have never been able to capture points under reclaimed water. I want to hear the history of why the client is doing this, which is really awesome to think about because water is one of our main scarcities in Texas and really in the United States. I do every year work with USGBC, reviewing the latest LEED fellow applications for 2025. It's interesting to see what everybody is doing. Very, very great to hear the different ways that they've looked at 10 years of sustainability. And I also work with Greenbelt selecting programming for each green build which is going to be in LA the first week in November.

16:01

Charlie

Well, for anyone listening that hasn't been to Green Build. It's one of my favorite times of the year. You know you've been to Wild Bonnie, I have too. But you can still go and just at some point it's not just the latest technology or I need my continuing ed. It's just where everybody that's like minded, arguably from all over the world getting together and supporting each other and you know, coming out of it could be new business partnerships, it could be I just needed, I needed a spark, you know.

16:29

Bonny

That is so true, Charlie.

16:31

Charlie

And so you leave there just so energized. For the next three months.

16:35



Like minded is the key. When we can talk like minded issues, it makes so much of a difference in attitudes and a spark. You're right that we may need to move forward. That's true.

16:54

Charlie

So that's a green build. And then again we've talked about the LEED fellow side, I'm a big fan of credentials and there's a lot of good credentials out there that just help you along the way. Okay, so at your business there and you've been doing this a while, just what are some projects that you can talk about? I know some might be confidential, but are there some just to kind of show the disciplines that your team is working on and how you're applying sustainability? Maybe we can come back to water in a minute too. But what kind of projects are you working on?

17:21

Bonny

Well, one of the Austin Energy green building projects, Austin is set up, the city of Austin is set up where certain swaths of the city you must meet began. We happen to fall into that swath. This is actually a medical building and medical can be difficult because the air exchanges are way high for it. But if you ever look at a spreadsheet for a checklist, you would say one would say, my gosh, this looks like a LEED checklist. It's just a matter of pulling together site work. The good thing about AEGB is they also look a lot into the community. If you place a sign that promotes AEGB in front of your construction, you could get a point or things like that. So. And we also can call up our members at AGB and ask them questions, which is really helpful when that.

18:26

Bonny

When that happens. I do have. Let's see. So. And really the two. The other project has not started construction. It is in the swath, actually in the capital complex of Austin Energy Green building, which will be challenging, but it is right downtown, which is always really helpful on LEED or AEGB

projects, where you have density like crazy. You have bus lines that will help you immensely. I mean, you've got everything that helps you. So we're just now starting that project, but we'll be tracking it when it gets started in construction for each point that's available.

19:09

Charlie

Well, I just have the national codes programs like leed, but in Austin, a very green city. Another layer.

19:16

Bonny

Yeah, it is another layer, and it's nice. We have a lot of cool tours or talks that Austin Energy does for the community. And I try to encourage everyone to go because you can learn so much. It's not just on the commercial side, but also on the residential side, which is very cool. Passive housing is very big with the Austin Energy Green building. Everybody wants to save money on their energy bill that lives here. So it's a really cool program and you can learn so much by tending and listening.

19:57

Charlie

With Austin, which is one of my favorite cities, you mentioned water efficiency. I mean even though we might have that occasional bad storm or flood in general throughout the year, I mean, it's this is. This is something that you need more of. So. So how do you plan for that?

20:14

Bonny

Well, it's interesting. One of my largest projects is one of my favorite projects that I've worked on in Austin, the AMD campus. Gail Vittorio also worked on this. We. Water was the biggest item. You know, AMD said our biggest concern is the scarcity of water and how we can capture this and make sure that we're doing our part. For this project. We actually build. We built the biggest cistern in the world underneath a parking garage.

Everything was structured parking, by the way, a cistern underneath it, which captured all the water that was flowing from the site from the roofs and then was recycled for irrigation and also for the. The condensing units that were in the cooling tower, which is pretty cool. Are all of our buildings. We had seven of them. Six or seven had inverted roofs like a butterfly.

21:19

Bonny

So everything, all the water came down and went into the cistern and then was back out. Another good tidbit about that. When we decided where the buildings were being placed on the site and it was, I believe it was 40 acres. We sited the buildings and then removed all of the native vegetation from those building footprints, took it back to the labor wildflower center, kept them alive as much as we can during construction and then brought them back and replanted them on the site.

It was a really cool project that ended up being a LEED gold project. It was really fun. Another tidbit about that project. When we did our topping out ceremony, we had a real life tree on top of the steel. It was in a bucket. And we ended up planting that tree after the topping out ceremony on site. So it was a really cool, fun project. The reclaimed water that I'm talking about that's coming online is a building downtown for the city of Austin. It's actually one of their headquarters for Austin Water. So of course they're thinking mind like about how we can capture this gray water in order to make it work. For us because you know, we're on the forefront of water. So let's make an example of how we can do this.

22:54

Bonny

I said before, I don't know a lot about it yet. I want to find out for sure and I will find out. But it's a really good idea in order to do this because if they can do this downtown, anybody can do it.

23:12

Charlie

We need that. These are fantastic projects. I know your city's growing. I think it's one of the two most popular places that people want to end up. Maybe Austin, Nashville, maybe a couple others. But anything else to add about what's easier to do in your region or what's harder to do when it comes to green buildings?

23:30

Bonny

It's easier to gather information because Austin is a very sustainable city and like minds think alike. I have actually authored a few LEED green associate classes that I can get people in to take the class. I did get the instructor from Austin Community College who is the sustainability director to teach them. And one of the things that we did for one of the classes for each one of them was to have the students tour a LEED building, a newer LEED building in the town which puts items that are on paper in real life. I would print the LEED checklist and have each one of them ask questions about the LEED each point. And they learned so much. I learned so much. It was just really awesome. So that's the good thing about Austin. I just. It's funny we just talked about this earlier.

24:38

Bonny

I worked with South by Southwest Eco when South by Eco was a huge thing for five years and selected all the programming and did all that. It was so wonderful to get in these cool speakers that were way different than just green buildings. But just today I'm looking at who I talk to try to resurrect this and make sure that we get the light south by Eco portion of the music festival also because it's really cool to be able to hear and see different sustainable initiatives to different audiences also.

25:24

Charlie

Well, thank you for showing us all the activity around you in the Austin area. You've been in the green building movement a long time. You've seen

a lot. I've seen a lot. But what's next? So Bonnie, what are you kind of excited about? What's coming at us next?

25:37

Bonny

I'm hoping and I think maybe we do need pre-assembled facades, 3D printed buildings. I'm sure the audience knows of icons in Austin that actually preprints buildings. I was concerned about that because it is concrete and I wanted to make sure that we weren't putting more carbon into the atmosphere because of this. But they are now using carbon X which takes a lot of the carbon out of the concrete. It's a pretty cool idea the way they look like it just with a. I don't know what you call it. If you're frosting a cake and you're pushing it out and that's what it looks like. But when you think about it, the kit of parts is not new. You may remember if you ever had a Sears catalog. Sears gave us houses that we could buy.

26:34

Bonny

And there are many Sears houses that were kits of parts that are still standing. Maybe that's what we need to do. And I think it would be a good idea to start looking at pre assembled facades, the pre manufactured homes that we see these days. You know, I always had a negative connotation that those are trailers. That's not good. But start looking up pre manufactured homes. They're incredibly sustainable, very sustainable. They have less waste, they know exactly what pieces go into it. So there's something to be said about preassembled facades, pre manufactured homes. And also we need to repurpose more existing buildings. I wrote an article for USGBC about the benefits of existing buildings, the sustainable benefits.

27:28

Bonny

And you know you can take the most mundane building and make it into something brand new that is just amazing and sustainable because you are not putting any more embodied carbon out into the world when you use an existing building. So that's what I'm thinking. We need to be shifting to use

more existing buildings. Look at preassembled facades. Look at something where we can not rip out tenant finish outs every six years and build again. Let's figure out how we can make this more sustainable.

28:04

Charlie

Okay, that is happening right around the corner. And I love that phrase, kit of parts. Sometimes we have to keep it simple. What's common sense is not always common practice. Maybe we've comprehensive.

28:16

Bonny

Exactly right.

28:17

Charlie

Well, let's go to the kind of rapid fire part of the interview. Bonnie, this is great to get to know you better. What would you say is your specialty or gift?

28:25

Bonny

Mentoring. I realized that as far as strictly architecture, I relied on a lot of mentors. I mean, you have to learn how to do this. You know, you get out of school, but you don't know what is in the real world. So I try to mentor interns with sustainability items, with architecture, and I think it's working. I had someone ask me today how do you get into all of the green initiatives? And I said, do you think about your passion? And you start going to meetings, you start going to coffees, and you're going to meet people that will become your lifelong friends and you'll see what we can do. So that's part of it.

29:12

Bonny

And also I think outside the box, the only way I got into the south by Eco,

which turned out to be amazing, is because I was tired of getting the same continuing education credits for architects from the same people in town every single year. And I'm like, we need to mix this up, make this more interesting. And I thought, this is perfect. If they'll let me do this, I can bring in all the architects and engineers into the south by Eco to get their CEUs and learn. So it's really cool. Really cool. So I think it's just thinking outside the box.

29:53

Charlie

Absolutely. A question about a mentor. There might be someone listening now. They're curious, hey, how do I get a mentor? And maybe I'll start, and I'd like you to fill in the gaps. My mentor isn't necessarily going to meet with this person every week forever. Everybody's busy, but it could be just one meeting. It could be one conversation, it could be one email exchange. I think sometimes maybe a young professional feels like, gosh, I have to have something I can give Bonnie before she gives me any wisdom. I don't know, what's your thought on how to even have a conversation around mentorship?

30:24

Bonny

I get asked a lot of tough questions about projects, and then I'll just sit down with them and go through why. Why is this being asked? What's in the documents? I try to walk them through why it was asked in the first place and go from there. I. I think they enjoy it. I think they learn it. I mean, I don't expect people to come up and say, oh, gosh, I want to. I want an hour of your day or an hour of your week to mentor. But it's just. It's kind of the way I was taught. You know, I would figure out everything I could and then go ask several questions at once to the mentor that I knew, and that's how I would learn. So I tried.

31:11

Bonny

I always ask people to go tours, USGBC tours, because you learn so much.

It's a different mindset when you go here or to lectures. And I think that's it. I think they listen to me, but. And I also say I'm not going to be here forever. You're going to be here a lot longer than me. So learn everything you can. Learn everything you can about architecture, about sustainability. This works, and how we can make the world better because of it a little bit.

31:46

Charlie

All right, so do you have any good habits or routines, rituals that help you stay on point?

31:53

Bonny

I hope they're good. I've run a lot, and I've been running for. Well, since college, and I shifted everything to in the mornings, early morning. It actually sets my mind right. And I think of a lot of things when I run. So running helps me. I always say stay sane, but it helps me ground to what is needed. I also picked up the last 15 years watercoloring. I realized that what I know how to do perspectives. I know how to do all this stuff. And I have taken several watercolor classes. And so now every time we're on vacation, I do have FACA watercolors that I do take. And I make sure that I capture it because it's. It's. It means a lot more than a photograph. So. And. And it. It's able to capture the essence of what the world is.

32:52

Charlie

Well, that's fantastic.

32:53

Bonny

And it's minor. I can just go through four hours of watercolor. I'm like, what? Four hours is raw? Is all gone. Yeah, it just goes like that all right.

33:02

Charlie



That is a lot better than electronics playing on her phone. It just sounds peaceful yet creative and just good for you. Thank you. So I'm a fan of the bucket list. Not everybody has a bucket list. But do you share? Maybe travel, adventure, maybe write a book? I don't know what's on the bucket list?

33:21

Bonny

Well, I have thought about that question. It's not so much travel because we travel when we can. I think it's more of things I would love to see. One of them is I don't want to hear LEED Light ever again. I'm still hearing this in 2025 from developers or people. I'm like, why? What do you mean? What does it even mean if it's LEED? Like it isn't LEED, it's not third party verified. So somehow I would love to shift the mindset of a developer and say no, it isn't LEED. Like you either have a LEED building or you don't.

34:09

Bonny

So that's one of my bucket lists where I don't want to hear that come out of anyone that I work with and I know you probably hear it too and I haven't been able to, and I probably said that when you were here in Austin too. How to respond to something like that is. It's difficult. It's difficult. So I'd like to get rid of that so people can actually think like minded and realize when you have a LEED project it means that another group of people have verified that you are very sustainable. This is awesome. You can be proud of that and everything's going to come in your roi, your smaller energy bills, just everything about it will work if they could just think beyond the initial costs.

35:03

Bonny

The other thing on my bucket list, and this is personal eradicate dementia from the Earth. My mother has been diagnosed with dementia, which is really a terrible disease. I've been looking and looking. I really think if everyone could keep a strong mind, interaction, communication and mood, just walk. A lot of this would stop. I just had a friend at lunch tell me about.

I think it's the blue edge. The blue. I think it's the blue edge about certain places in the world where people are living into their 90s and completely able bodied, complete. Their mind is beautiful. It's because of their diet, because of the error, because of their walkability and because they're communicating with people around them. This has everything to do with sustainability and if we can help the Earth is going to help us.

36:09

Charlie

I love that it's the blue zones.

36:12

Bonny

And also the blue zones. That's right.

36:14

Charlie

And just less stress.

36:16

Bonny

And I believe it's on Netflix.

36:18

Charlie

There's a great documentary, but if you study those diets, a lot of them are in and around the Mediterranean, but not all. There's other parts of the world too. So you have to pick up on the best practices and that quality of life. All the blue zones. Okay, that's everyone here. That's your challenge. I'll put a link to the show in the podcast show notes too. That's fantastic. Well, I love that your bucket list includes still fighting the good green building and LEED fight and let's just make this common practice. So is there a book you'd recommend? You just recommended a great documentary, but.

36:51

Bonny

Yeah, that's a documentary. I do have a book, the Sustainability Revolutionists. If you don't know Lucia Athens, she was the first sustainability chief sustainability officer for the city of Austin. She came from Oregon, very sustainable, like minded. It's a really cool book about a great blend of environmental, social and economic needs. It really talks about trying to make this not about the word sustainability, because when you place that word in front of people, they're like, wait a minute, what is that? But if you look at how they work together, the environment, the social aspects and the economic needs of everyone, it all blends and it makes it build sustainability. So that is the Sustainability Revolutionists by Lucia Athens.

37:49

Bonny

And then for fun, I read at lunchtime Dan Brown books, written the Benchy Code, which is an awesome book, but I'm now reading Origen by Dan Brown. It's still full of history, good history, accurate history and architecture and suspense. It's just, you can't put it down. You just can't put it down. The Da Vinci Code was like that too, but that's for fun. And he even says in every place that he's talking about is a real place, is a real building and you can look it up and see it. It's pretty cool. So if you could read the Dan Brown series, it keeps your mind at ease.

38:34

Charlie

We got some good book recommendations. I'll put links there in our podcast show notes. So just a couple more things, Bonnie, as we kind of wind down, but this has been fantastic. As you look back on your career, is there anything you wish you'd have known earlier, learned earlier in your career?

38:51

Bonny

I do. I wish that I had asked more questions early and be bolder when

asking them. I recall graduating from college thinking I Don't know anything about architecture. I don't know how anybody would hire me. But I then realized everybody's in the same boat. You learn, really when you're out of college. But those questions. Don't be afraid to be wrong. Instead, be inquisitive. When we are inquisitive people go, she's thinking there. She's thinking about what could be. Create your passions. I wanted to go back south by Eco. I wanted myself to have better and more interesting continuing education units. And I realized the way to do this is right next door downtown. Go talk to these people and get these people. Get the speakers in. So create your passion. What do you want?

39:57

Bonny

And go from there. Organize LEED tours. You know, people always say, oh, gosh, what does this mean if you're in a LEED building? I mean, if you've never. If you walk into the Harvey Milk Terminal at San Francisco International Airport immediately I notice this is a special building. This is brand new. This has to be a LEED building. It has to be a well building. There's daylight, there's greenery, there's. Everything about it was comforting. And come to find out, it was LEED Platinum. WELL platinum. Everything about it. It even has views from the tarmac. Beautiful views. So look around you when you're going places and find the place that makes you happy. Figure out why. You know, is it because it's daylight? Is it because it's beautiful? It makes me feel good. And also get involved.

40:58

Bonny

Get involved with USGBC, with the Committee on the environment. It's amazing what you can learn when you do that.

41:07

Charlie

Gosh, so much wisdom here. And I just love your energy towards all this. Like this is just fantastic. All right, so last question. Let's say someone listening, Bonnie, is just. They're just now jumping into this movement, the

green building movement. Maybe they're later in their career. They're making a career change. Maybe they're young, professional. Maybe they just passed their LEED Green associate exam. Any words of encouragement for someone that's now jumping in?

41:34

Bonny

If they're just jumping in, I want them to go to their local USGBC website, whether it's USGBC Texas or whatever it is. Look at the calendar, look at the people who are there. And then go to the coffees, go to the tours, Go to it if they want. If they're too afraid to do it, I'll go with them and make sure they know that they're welcome and they're going to learn everything. I mean, that's what needs to happen if they want to get further into it. Start looking at the websites, look at AIA Committee on the Environment. They also have tours, they also have lectures. Look at Austin Energy. They also have tours, they also have lectures. It's really easy to get involved in the city of Austin and the area. So that's what I would suggest.

42:31

Bonny

And then I would follow up with them and say, have you done this? And see what you're going to say.

42:36

Charlie

Well, you heard it here. There's your challenge. But so much in between. What a great story. I just can't stop thinking about you walking through that architecture school and saying this. This is what I want to do. I mean, that's.

42:48

Bonny

It was awesome. It was really awesome. And I still, to this day, we go back every fall for a football stadium or for a football game, and we tour Architecture Hall. All right, well, so good.

43:02

Charlie

I want to make sure you have my cell phone. I want you to text me a picture when you're there. I'd love to see that. Okay. That is your homework, so please do that to our listeners. I know you've enjoyed this. Please connect with Bonnie on LinkedIn. Let her know what you thought. If you're ever in Austin, there's some great sustainability minds there. Look them up and check out what the Lawrence Group is doing. Bonnie, thanks for being on the podcast today.

43:24

Bonny

Thank you, Charlie.

43:26

Speaker 4

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