



## Central Texas - Balcones

P.O. Box 1633  
San Antonio, TX 78296-1633  
<http://www.usgbc-centraltexas.org>

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Lake/Flato Architects

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*Co-Vice Chair*  
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LBJ Wildflower Center

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**Robert Harris**

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### SCRC REPRESENTATIVE

**Heather Venhaus**

*Board Representative*  
LBJ Wildflower Center

**Alison Rivenburgh**

*At Large Representative*  
Sustainable Perspectives Group

## 2010-2011 Board Member Application Form

**Nominees:** Please answer the following questions in the space provided and return this completed Application Form plus the signed attached Commitment Form to [buhrich@usgbc-centraltexas.org](mailto:buhrich@usgbc-centraltexas.org) in an electronic format by 5:00 pm, Monday, October 5, 2009. Email or call Brian Uhrich at **210-546-0200** with any questions. The Committee reserves the right to delete narrative exceeding the space provided. Application material will be made available to the Nominating Committee for evaluation and to the chapter membership if selected as a candidate. Thank you!

### Submitted By:

Name: Heather DeGrella  
Title: Project Manager/Designer  
Organization: Lake/Flato Architects  
Address: 311 Third Street  
Membership Category: Professional Firm (Architect)  
Telephone: 210-227-3335  
Email: [hdegrella@lakeflato.com](mailto:hdegrella@lakeflato.com)

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**Questionnaire** – Please note that answers will appear online as they are answered below:

**a. In general, why do you wish to be a member of the Chapter Board?**

As a founding member of the USGBC Central Texas – Balcones (CT-B) Chapter, I have had the distinctive experience of growing a 20 member organizing, all-volunteer committee to a 700+ member organization with paid staff. During my term as board chair in 2008, the board executed a first-rate search for an Executive Director, undertook a full board-diagnostic by a 3rd party, and fully revamped their strategic plan. With these organizational advancements and the hiring of our Executive Director, our committees are now strengthened with the volunteers and resources needed to excel. In turn, the Board is now positioned to become a strategic thinking board to provide the creative direction needed to take us to the next level, and I am very eager to be a part of this next step by staying on as a board member.

**b. Please provide a summary of your professional qualifications, knowledge and experience of most relevance to the Chapter. Also indicate the degree to which you have senior management and executive level experience.**

I have 11 years of experience at Lake|Flato Architects, winner of the AIA's prestigious National AIA Firm Award (2004), as a project designer and project manager. At L/F, I have worked for a number of institutional clients, non-profit organizations and government agencies, as well as private owners. I have pursued my interest and passion in sustainability through graduate study at the University of Texas at Austin and continuing education, practical application on a variety of projects – many undergoing the LEED process- and through professional service as an active member of the U.S. Green Building Council, CT-B Chapter, where I have served as both Communication Director and Chair. I lead Lake|Flato's internal "green team," helping to ensure that sustainability expertise is shared across the firm. As a sustainability leader at Lake/Flato Architects, I have lead in the establishment of the firm's expertise and credentials as one of the most respected and admired architectural firms in the country. Lake/Flato has been awarded more COTE Top 10 Awards than any other Architecture firm to date.

I was the first LEED Accredited Professional in San Antonio. I have been involved in virtually every area of the local Chapter, from Director of Communications to the Executive Committee for the past three years, as well as the Green Schools Committee liaison. Because of this varied and constant involvement, I have kept current on all the Chapter activities, both public and behind the scenes. I have also formed strong ties with the management team at the National Level during this time.

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- c. The Chapter is committed to strengthening its membership diversity. What resources could you bring to bear (e.g., demonstrated expertise, leadership positions, and willingness) to help further Chapter participation from high priority sectors including: real estate, energy/utility, finance/insurance, residential, corporate, and product manufacturing? You can also address other sectors you think require greater involvement in the Chapter.**

Through ongoing activism in both the Chapter's Advocacy and Green Schools Committees, I have forged relationships with many local City and County Government Officials. I served on the Advisory Committee for the development of Build San Antonio Green, San Antonio's residential green building program, along with members of the local energy and utilities companies, finance companies, and local builder's association. This past year I also served on the Steering Committee for the Historic Preservation Master Plan as representative of the CT-B Chapter. Through these relationships, I have been able to encourage the participation of a variety of the above mentioned priority sectors. Additionally, I served as the Chair of the Local Chapter's Nomination Committee in 2004, and have provided assistance since by actively recruiting nominees from various sectors to run for the Board.

- d. One of the important functions of Board members is fundraising and other activities to support priority needs of the Chapter. This may take many forms, including: direct sponsorships; helping secure funding or otherwise opening doors from corporate, governmental, and charitable sources; seeking third-party sponsors; recruiting important new members; in-kind support, etc. Please explain your ability and willingness to participate in resource development.**

We have a challenging time ahead of us, having hired our first paid staff during a down-economy – just when we need funds the most, they appear to be less readily available. However, our mission and value are more than worthy of support, and feeling secure in that respect I believe I can earnestly deliver the right message. Additionally, the board has undergone several fundraising trainings this fall, and I feel well prepared and enthused to do my share to help with securing sponsorships.

- e. Describe what expertise, experience and resources you would bring to any of the following priority activities: advocacy, LEED, education, research, community and organizational excellence**

In 2007, I helped spear-head the effort to grow a local workshop on renewables for schools into a full day and a half symposium on Green Schools with nationally known speakers. The symposium was repeated again this year with success, and planning has already begun for next year's event (to be held in Austin). As a member of the Chapter's Advocacy Committee, I have been highly involved in lobbying for the implementation of City initiatives and standards that would promote sustainable building. I have

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given educational presentations on LEED and sustainable building to a variety of groups, including the San Antonio AIA Chapter, IREM, AFCEE (Air Force Center for Environmental Excellence), the Masonry Association, the City Planning Department, the San Antonio Gardening Club, and to Architecture students at UTSA School of Architecture.

A combination of good organizational skills and excellent written communication skills were a catalyst for my having been named the Director of Communications.

**f. Describe your experience from other organizations with successful chapter programs.**

I have been an active member of the AIA's Committee on the Environment for several years and have recently contributed to the AIA SA's bi-monthly newspaper column. I have had experience working with Scenic San Antonio, the local chapter of Scenic America. Through volunteer work with this group, I gained experience in campaigning for policy change at the State Government level. I have also had experience working with Smart Growth SA, a non-profit organization that helps to safeguard clean air and water in San Antonio.

**g. Leadership positions (volunteer or professional staff) with nonprofit governance.**

2003-Present, US Green Building Council - Central Texas Chapter, Immediate Past Chair

2009 Steering Committee for the Historic Preservation Master Plan

2003-2006, "Build San Antonio Green" Advisory Committee

2005-2007, USGBC Central Texas Balcones Chapter – Director of Communications

2003-2005, USGBC Central Texas Balcones Chapter – Steering Committee/Organizing Group

2005, USGBC, National – Peer Reviewer, proposals for educational session, Greenbuild

2004-2005, Scenic San Antonio – Secretary

**h. Other areas you believe are critical for the Chapter.**

Education, education, education! We need to provide our members and the industry with high quality programs that help them not only get up-to-speed, but ahead of the curve for green building.

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- i. Please identify any affiliations, memberships, and accreditations which may be pertinent for Chapter leadership.**

USGBC, member  
USGBC Central Texas-Balcones Chapter, member  
AIA SA Chapter (Committee on the Environment member & "Building San Antonio" Express-News contributor)  
Green Spaces Alliance of South Texas, member  
Clean Tech Forum, member  
BSAG (Metropolitan Partnership for Energy), member  
Smart Growth Coalition 2004-2005  
Scenic San Antonio, 2004-2005  
LEED Accredited  
Masters of Architecture, UT Austin 1998  
Attendance at National Greenbuild Conferences, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2006, 2007 (2009)  
Participation in USGBC Chapter Leader Day 2004, 2006, 2007 (2009)

- j. Are you a chapter member in good standing and employed in the membership category depicted above?**

Yes, I am a chapter member in good standing

- k. Are you able to attend at least nine of the twelve regularly-scheduled Board meetings each year?**

Yes, I will make it a priority to attend.

- l. The Board's conflict of interest policy is summarized in the Fact Sheet. As the full statement indicates, conflicts are not inherently improper but Directors must be conscious of such conflicts and act with candor and care in dealing with such situations. Will you abide by the Chapter's conflict policy and can you do so without significantly affecting your Board responsibilities?**

Yes, I will abide by the Chapter's policies.

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