



OCTOBER MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Marcela Oliva

Professor of Architecture and Environmental Design, Los Angeles Trade Technical College (LATTC)

For 10 years, I was the Knowledge Architect for the [9 Billion Building Program at Los Angeles Community College District](#) and through an unprecedented collaboration and working closely with USGBC-LA, we envisioned and implemented the largest Virtualization BIM/GIS System in the nation following National Intelligence Standards. This system facilitates, Sustainable Strategies, LEED Buildings, Smart Campuses, and engaged communities. I continued developing a close relationship with USGBC-LA, when we created [Mayor Garcetti's Workforce Initiative Green New Deal](#) for the AEC Industry Cluster—Careers by Design LA

Working as a Professor at the Los Angeles Trade Technical College Architecture and Environmental Design Program, I create an adventure every day. For over 29 years, our courses have focused on improving the social conditions in our surrounding communities. Our hands-on approach in a trade college environment is at the heart of this innovative approach. Some projects include: super shade structures, a landscape design-build project for our campus, tiny houses, net zero “granny flats,” a smart vertical trellis, an historic house restoration, a pocket park, green alleys, Water Collectors Bridge, Los Angeles Neighborhood Council decision-making maps, educational murals incorporating a fabric that cleans the air, Black Panther memorial, recycled Amazon cardboards into biomimicry chairs and more.

I began this exploration back during my thesis at USC and Columbia, to think of humans as envi-organism and co-creators of the environment—not for few but for all. I understood that design is a human right and for us to live sustainably with nature, we need to make it available to all.

My favorite aspect about USGBC-LA is its comprehensive approach to the challenges facing our city, nation, and the world. They understand that solutions have to be thought of as an ecosystem and a complex network. Current sustainable environment movements have tendencies that are specialized, and as a result, social equity is frequently ignored or not understood.

I am beginning to see a new future for the sustainability field, it is already achieving new levels of exchange among diverse fields through immersive platforms and solutions that focus on abundance instead of scarcity. I am collaborating on hybrid, multi-network smart platforms to manage the built environment, provide agile educational solutions for all, use our natural resources efficiently, use business enterprise solutions, and consider all these variables at the same time. We are all rethinking our educational environments and the new green workforce, where all participants thrive. You can also read more about this school of thought in my article [Green Maker Spaces](#).

As part of the Board of Directors for USGBC-LA, I contribute to the [Legacy Project](#), [Green Schools Program](#), [Urban Landscape Committee](#), and the [Talent Portal](#).