



# sustainability



## green 101

### NEWH's inaugural Sustainable Hospitality Leadership Forum starts a dialogue

Photos by Benjamin Kulo

Left, left to right: The NEWH Sustainable Hospitality Leadership Forum panelists: Kenneth Drucker, HOK; Michael Pace, Kimpton Hotels; Pamela Parsons, Host Hotels & Resorts; and moderator Tara Mastrelli, *Hospitality Design* magazine. Middle, left to right: Cliff Tuttle, NEWH Sustainable Hospitality, chats with DB Kim, Westin Hotels. Right: Robin Holt, Callison, and Rob Reinders, Marriott International, chat during lunch.

**MORE THAN 40 INDUSTRY LEADERS** recently participated in NEWH, Inc.—the Hospitality Industry Network's inaugural Sustainable Hospitality Leadership Forum. Held June 6 at New York City's famed Rainbow Room, the three-hour, invite-only event, sponsored by *Hospitality Design* magazine and Fabric Innovations, included networking, lunch, an informative, inspiring panel by three sustainable hospitality experts, and a Q&A session.

"One of the initiatives that NEWH has been working on is to have a series of leadership forums to bring together leading hotel owners, developers, operators, interior designers, and architects to enlighten them about sustainable design and operations practices, develop a dialogue in the industry about this important initiative, encourage a sharing of ideas and sources for sustainable practices and resources, and establish best practices for the hospitality industry," says Cliff Tuttle, director/NEWH Sustainable Hospitality and senior vice president, ForrestPerkins.

Moderated by Tara Mastrelli, managing editor, *Hospitality Design* magazine, the panel (scheduled in conjunction with the NYU Investment Conference) consisted of Pamela S. Parsons, senior vice president of design and construction, asset management department, Host Hotels & Resorts; Michael Pace, director of environmental programs, Kimpton Hotels, as well as general manager, Serrano Hotel; and Kenneth Drucker, senior principal, director of design, HOK.

Each panelist spoke from his/her unique experience. Parsons shared best practices Host is incorporating in its hotels as well as important green statistics, such as the fact that 87 percent of travelers in the U.S. are more

likely to stay at green hotels. Pace, who created Kimpton's successful and innovative eco-program, discussed the simple and seamless things hotels can do to become more sustainable (such as organic food and recycle bins in the guestrooms), the importance of having an eco passionate staff, and why it is now "cool to be an eco-champion." And Drucker, who's firm is a recognized leader in sustainability, pointed out sustainable measures HOK is focusing on, where the majority of green projects are being built (in California but New York is catching up quickly), and a few HOK-designed groundbreaking hotels and communities (such as a zero-carbon town in India). Even though their information was different, their message was the same: the trend of green in hospitality is here to stay.

"I started the program because I felt it was the right thing to do—not for PR or as a sales tool," says Pace, who is now working on creating a green ratings program for hotels. "Start a green program now. Start small, walk before you can run, every little step is huge."

The Q&A discussion conquered questions such as the price for greening the industry, why the hospitality industry is lagging behind other industries in the greening effect, new products, and LEED requirements.

NEWH Sustainable Hospitality is planning future Leadership Forums in other geographic locations to further its mission of sharing, connecting, and educating leadership to setup common sustainable principles in the hospitality industry. "It is important to assemble diverse panelists from different sectors in the industry that can share their current knowledge and speak to the future trends," says Jeanne Varney of Host Hotels and past NEWH president. ■

