



GWI 2025 COLLABORATION SERIES

GREEN WILL INITIATIVE

Session 2: Building Capacity Through Training

INTRODUCTION

This session marked the final virtual collaboration event of the year for the Green Will Initiative (GWI). A panel of GWI members shared insights into focusing on training within organizations to build workforce capacity, embed sustainability, and scale knowledge for decarbonization and efficiency.

GWI MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS IN ATTENDANCE

- Akelius
- Canadian Blood Services
- Colliers (Trioest)
- Crown Realty Partners
- Exhibition Place
- George Brown Polytechnic
- Hazelview Properties
- InterRent REIT
- Menkes
- Minto Properties
- Montez Corporation
- Oxford Properties
- Quadreal
- Realstar
- SickKids
- Toronto Catholic District School Board
- Toronto Community Housing
- Toronto District School Board
- University Health Network
- York University
- YMCA of Greater Toronto

GREEN WILL INITIATIVE (GWI) UPDATES

New Members:

- Montez Corporation and Akelius have recently joined the GWI network.

Training Opportunities:

- The final CIET training of 2025, *Energy Efficiency for Building Operators and Maintenance Staff (EEBO)*, will be held on *November 20, 2025*.
- A virtual “Energy Hunt” will provide members with customized building performance data, proposed measures, and a post-course coaching session.

Upcoming Event:

- The Net Zero Community Leaders Recognition Lunch is scheduled on *December 1, 2025*, at the UHN BMO Education Centre.
- This flagship event will feature networking, leadership panel discussions, and recognition awards exclusive to GWI members.

PANEL INTRODUCTIONS



Trevor McLeod, Sustainability Manager, *Hazelview Properties*



Alex Ly, Senior Manager, Facilities Business Operations, *SickKids*



Zaheer Khalfan, Senior Energy Manager, *Trioest (now Colliers)*

HAZELVIEW PROPERTIES – PRACTICAL STAFF TRAINING

Trevor McLeod oversees portfolio-wide sustainability programs across 200+ multi-family properties nationwide. He shared details of Hazelview's recent pilot sustainability training program across its Toronto and Alberta regions.

- **Format:** Four half-day sessions combining classroom instruction and in-building walkthroughs.
- **Focus:** Energy and water use awareness for property managers and maintenance staff.
- **Outcome:** Staff were able to identify real equipment and system improvements directly during the building tours.
- **Lessons Learned:** Keep material accessible—avoid overcomplication and overly theoretical content to ensure broad staff engagement.
- **Next Steps:** Recordings of on-site sessions are being developed into online modules for scalability and onboarding integration.

SICKKIDS – EMBEDDING SUSTAINABILITY IN HEALTHCARE

Alex Ly leads sustainability strategy and culture-building initiatives across the healthcare campus. He emphasized the importance of aligning sustainability training with the hospital's mission: "Healthier Children, a Better World."

- **Strategy:** Link sustainability to patient safety and quality of care.
- **Approach:**
 - Integrate sustainability modules into new staff onboarding.
 - Deliver department-specific training for clinical, procurement, and facilities teams.
 - Establish departmental Green Teams and Green Champions to maintain ongoing engagement.
- **Key Advice:** Avoid adding extra workload—embed training into existing HR and operational processes for stronger adoption.

TRIOVEST/COLLIERS – INTEGRATING PROGRAMS ACROSS ORGANIZATIONS

Zaheer Khalfan focuses on identifying building-level efficiency opportunities and coordinating sustainability training within a rapidly growing organization. He described the challenges and opportunities of merging sustainability training following Trioest's acquisition by Colliers.

- **Current Focus:**
 - Integration of separate utility management and training systems.
 - Creation of a unified, phased training framework across more than 2,600 employees.
- **Existing Practices:** Annual Sustainability Symposiums, IESO-delivered workshops, GWI training participation, and tenant-focused Green Team events.
- **Challenges:** Scaling across a larger workforce, limited budgets, and ensuring accessibility for building operators unable to leave sites.
- **Opportunities:** Mutual exchange of training modules, broader access to internal expertise, and expanded peer learning.

SCALING & FORMAT CONSIDERATIONS

Panelists agreed that scalability and accessibility are critical for long-term success:

- **Blended Models:** Combine in-person, virtual, and self-directed online modules.
- **Consistency:** Online modules ensure baseline knowledge across regions and are suitable for annual refresher training.
- **Engagement:** In-person “energy hunts” and building tours remain the most impactful for on-the-ground awareness.
- **Integration:** Partner with HR teams to embed sustainability learning into existing compliance or onboarding processes.

EXTERNAL TRAINING & PARTNER PROGRAMS

Panelists discussed the value of external training opportunities offered through GWI and other programs:

- Viewed as *complementary* to internal programs, filling knowledge gaps in specialized areas like BAS operation or data analytics.
- Cited cost and time as constraints; scalability often depends on internal adaptation of these programs into shorter, role-based modules.
- Noted the value of GWI’s Strategic Carbon Management and RETScreen courses for applied skills and portfolio-level analysis.

TRAINING WISH LIST

When asked about future training priorities, panelists identified two key areas of need:

- **Advanced Building Automation Systems (BAS):** Deeper training for operators and managers on optimizing controls for energy efficiency.
- **Energy Management Platforms:** Broader training to help staff analyze and act on consumption data effectively.

CONCLUSION

The session emphasized that training is the foundation of organizational sustainability capacity.

From healthcare to property management, panelists demonstrated that successful training programs are:

- Purpose-driven and aligned with organizational missions.
- Scalable and adaptable across departments and job functions.
- Focused on empowering front-line staff as daily sustainability champions.

The session was concluded by thanking members for their engagement throughout the Green Will Initiative 2025 Collaboration Series and encouraging continued participation in upcoming CIET training and the Members Recognition Event.



For more information on upcoming GWI events, training, or recognition opportunities, visit:

www.toronto.ca/greenwillinitiative