

**“Driving Sustainability Forward:
Beyond Compliance to Competitive Advantage”**

PRECONFERENCE AGENDA - Tuesday, November 4, 2025	
11:00 AM – NOON	Xcel Energy French Island Tour – Limited to 20 \$25 French Island is a combination generating plant and resource recovery facility. The plant’s two generating units burn wood waste and processes municipal solid waste, called refuse-derived fuel (RDF). French Island’s resource recovery facility has the capacity to process more than 100,000 tons of municipal solid waste each year.
11:00 AM – NOON	Empire Screen Printing Tour \$25 Discover how Empire turns innovation into environmental action. Since pioneering UV LED ink curing in 2011, Empire has continued to innovate with eco-friendly technologies that reduce energy use, VOC emissions, and environmental impact. The facility tour highlights Empire’s one-piece flow cellular manufacturing process, advanced automation, and award-winning UV LED technology. You’ll see firsthand how we align lean manufacturing with sustainable practices to deliver high-quality, durable products while supporting ESG goals. Learn more at www.empirescreen.com
11:30 – 1:00	<u>ASHRAE Lunch and Learn</u> Building Services Systems for Building Decarbonization \$10 members bring free guest NOVBOGO Join the La Crosse Chapter group for a special joint meeting with the Sustainable Business Council (SBC) at the Trane Erickson Building 13. This engaging session will explore strategies for building decarbonization, focusing on electrifying space and water heating systems to maximize energy efficiency and reduce carbon intensity. Featured speaker Mr. Nall—an ASHRAE and AIA Fellow with extensive experience in high-performance building design—will share insights from landmark projects and discuss how to align comfort, cost-effectiveness, and climate goals.
1:00 – 3:00 PM	Community Trail Farm Tour \$25 Just minutes from downtown La Crosse, an exciting transformation is underway! The Outdoor Recreation Alliance (ORA Trails) has acquired a historic farmstead and is turning it into a vibrant hub for sustainable outdoor recreation. This evolving space will feature multi-use trails, community gardens, and inclusive infrastructure designed to welcome everyone. Join Josh from ORA Trails for a guided walking tour and Q&A session to learn more about the vision, progress, and future of this incredible project. It’s a great opportunity to connect with nature, ask questions, and see firsthand how this land is being revitalized for community use. For the latest updates on the project, visit ORA Trails
1:00 – 3:00 PM	Panel Discussion: Building a Sustainable Building: Strategies for Success - Hosted at Trane \$40 Join a distinguished panel of industry experts from Hunzinger, EUA, Urban Ecology, and Trane for an engaging discussion on sustainable building. This session will explore how to successfully align sustainability goals with budget constraints, offering practical strategies and real-world insights from a collaborative project. Panelists will share valuable tips on stakeholder engagement and project planning to help ensure successful outcomes. Whether you’re involved in design, construction, or sustainability leadership, this conversation will provide actionable guidance to support your next sustainable project.
1:00 – 4:30 PM	<u>Upper Midwest Energy Forum</u> – Hosted by Citizens Utility Board of WI Join the Citizens Utility Board of Wisconsin for a deep dive into the evolving energy landscape at our upcoming Upper Midwest Energy Forum, designed to equip business leaders and professionals with the knowledge and strategies to navigate critical challenges in the evolving energy landscape. Attendees will

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	leave with actionable solutions and insights to help guide their business decision making and operations moving forward. Learn more and Register
3:30 – 4:30 PM	Trane Facility Tour - Building 13 Discover the future of HVAC innovation with an exclusive tour of Trane's Erickson Building 13 on the La Crosse campus. This state-of-the-art facility, a training ground for new Trane sales professionals attending the Graduate Training Program (GTP) and skilled workers, houses the revolutionary Thermal Battery Storage-Source Heat Pump System. Witness how this groundbreaking technology redefines all-electric heating, thriving in cold climates and dense urban environments with limited roof space. By transforming thermal storage from a cooling solution into a versatile heating and heat recovery system, it offers unparalleled efficiency and substantial tax credits, making it one of the most economical electrified heating and cooling solutions available today. Join us to experience firsthand how Trane is setting new standards in HVAC excellence.
5:00 – 9:00 PM	Sustainable Business Awards Dinner & Green Masters Program® Celebration \$50 Join us for an inspiring evening celebrating sustainability leadership across the region. Enjoy a locally sourced dinner, connect with fellow professionals, and hear compelling stories of impact from businesses driving meaningful change. This year, we're also proud to honor participants of the Green Masters Program®, recognizing their commitment to advancing sustainability.

	CONFERENCE AGENDA - Wednesday, November 5, 2025
7:00 – 8:30 AM	<i>Registration, Breakfast, Exhibit Hall, Student Posters</i>
8:00 – 8:30 AM	Networking Breakfast: Grab a seat at a Guided Table to connect with fellow attendees!
8:30 – 9:00 AM	Welcome by Jessy Servi Ortiz, Executive Director, Sustainable Business Council
9:00 – 9:30 AM	Morning Keynote Address: Leading Boldly: Why Sustainability Is a Business Imperative by Zack Main with Trane
9:30 – 10:00 AM	Keynote Panel: The Green Masters Program® as a Tool to Advance and Integrate Sustainability Moderator, Erin Bauer , Founder & Principal, Tack & Clew LLC, Instructor - Uof WI-Green Bay Jennifer Koenig, Chief Sustainability Officer at Brunswick Corporation - Cheryl Hytry, Facilities Planner at UW Credit Union Alexis Marsh, V.P. of Operations at Empire Screen Printing

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10:00 – 10:30 AM	<i>Break for Networking, Exhibit Hall, <u>Student Posters</u></i>
	BREAKOUT SESSION ONE
10:30 – 11:30 AM	<u>Room A Track A: Operationalizing Sustainability: Systems, Strategy & Storytelling Leverage your EMS to Move Beyond Compliance</u> Is your organization striving to move beyond compliance and realize its full potential with its sustainability efforts? Environmental Management Systems (EMS) are often developed to support meeting compliance requirements, but their full value is best realized as a strategic planning process tool for goal achievement. In this Q&A session, panelists from Empire Screen Printing and Brady Corp will share how their organizations have evolved EMS frameworks into strategic tools that drive sustainability and business value. Through these real-world stories attendees will gain insights into integrating EMS with broader sustainability initiatives like the Green Tier and Green Masters Program®. The conversation will explore how EMS planning can unlock competitive advantages, reduce emissions, and support long-term environmental goals. Whether you're just starting your EMS journey or looking to elevate your existing system, this session will offer practical takeaways and inspiration from experienced sustainability leaders. Speakers: • Jamie Marie Wallner, Director, Global Compliance & Sustainability, Brady Corp • Jennifer Schloesser, Creative Director, Empire Screen Printing • Moderator, Doug Johnson, Co-Owner Keen Works, LLC <u>Room B: Track B: Environmental Impact & Innovation Leveraging Data for Sustainability: The Role of LCAs in Business Strategy and Innovation</u> This panel session explores how life cycle assessment (LCA) data can drive business strategy, innovation, and measurable sustainability outcomes. Experts will share practical applications of LCA—from building enterprise-wide data systems to implementing product-level insights. Join us to learn how LCA tools are evolving to support decision-making, align with corporate goals, and add value across industries. Speakers: • Cassandra Thiel, CEO Clinically Sustainable Consulting • Jana Fogarty, Program Manager, TrueNorth Collective • Laura Loucks, Sustainability Project Manager, Rockwell Automation <u>Room C: Track C: The Human Element: Culture, Leadership & Engagement for Sustainability Building a Culture for Sustainability Buy In</u> Gaining buy-in from high profile leaders and building key partnerships is vital to advance sustainability efforts. But industry jargon and sustainability terminology can create misalignment, conflict, and confusion. By adapting your role, identifying archetypes of common sustainability behavior, and utilizing Sustainability Tension Management (STM) to focus on business value, sustainability professionals at all levels can improve their strategies to gain buy-in and cross-functional alliances. This interactive session will help you navigate the nuances of leadership perspectives, communication styles, and workforce development to build a culture of sustainability.

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10:30 – 11:30 AM	Speakers: • Erin Bauer, Founder & Principal, Tack & Clew LLC, Instructor - University of WI-Green Bay • Matt Meuleners, Executive Partner, Focus Training Room D: Track D: Driving Toward Net Zero Smart Buildings Are (Artificially) Intelligent Buildings: A Real-World Case Study This session dives into a highly functional building from Gundersen’s portfolio to showcase a real-world example of Trane’s Autonomous Control (AI) platform. The goal was to understand how effectively the AI could optimize building operations. In this session, we’ll walk through the process of preparing a building to be “AI ready,” share insights learned to date through a case study and explore how to leverage available rebates to support the transition. Speakers: • Moderator: Jane Stull, Smart Buildings Marketing Leaders, Trane Technologies • Ben Black, Account Manager, Controls at Trane • Mike Mihalek, Facilities Manager for Clinic and Outpatient Buildings, Emplify Health Room E: Track E: Navigating the Green Masters Program® Green Masters Program® Demo & Info Session Want to see how the Green Masters Program® works in real time? This interactive demo will walk participants through the application process, scoring system, and key features of the program. Learn how to navigate the platform, understand what’s required, and discover how the program can support your sustainability goals. This session will cover: • Step-by-step walkthrough of the process and materiality worksheet • Tips for completing prioritizing topics effectively • How scoring works and what it means for recognition • Ways to use the program to drive internal engagement and external credibility Bring your questions and get hands-on guidance to help you confidently participate in the Green Masters Program. Speaker: Christa Kananen, Associate Director, SBC
11:30 AM - 12:45PM	Buffet Lunch + Exhibit Hall, Student Posters, Green Masters Program Photo Booth Open
12:45 – 1:15 PM	Afternoon Keynote: Innovating for Impact: Scaling Sustainability for Impact on Climate and Community Health by Nathan Franklin, CEO at Envision, VP of External Affairs and Sustainability, Emplify Health
1:15 – 1:30 PM	Green Masters Program® Update SBC Associate Director, Christa Kananen

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BREAKOUT SESSION TWO	
1:45 – 2:45 PM	Room A: Track A Operationalizing Sustainability: Systems, Strategy & Storytelling Standing up a Sustainability Program Launching a sustainability program within an organization can be both inspiring and daunting. This session brings together sustainability leaders to explore foundational steps, common challenges, and strategic approaches to embedding sustainability into core business operations. Drawing from real-world experiences, the panel will address: • Equipping the Next Generation: Supporting sustainability students and early-career professionals with essential business, finance, and communication skills • Measuring What Matters: Quantifying environmental and financial impacts—and the challenge of finding meaningful metrics • Making the Business Case: Connecting sustainability to ROI, risk management, and strategic value to gain leadership buy-in • Organizational Integration: Navigating “homegrown” sustainability roles across departments • Supply Chain Engagement: Managing sustainability across the value chain through supplier collaboration and local sourcing Whether you're just beginning your sustainability journey or looking to strengthen an existing program, this session offers practical insights, candid stories, and actionable takeaways. Speakers: • Christa Kananen, Associate Director, SBC • Leah Walder, Marketing & Sustainability Manager, Badger Color • Brandon Kerl, Procurement Manager, Sartori
1:45 – 2:45 PM	Room B: Track B Environmental Impact & Innovation Innovative Waste Strategies: From Diversion to Culture Change Waste reduction is a critical component of sustainability and it looks different across industries. This session features leaders from manufacturing and materials reuse who are tackling waste with creativity, persistence, and long-term vision. Panelists will share: • Innovative reuse strategies for wood waste, including reclaimed lumber and green building applications • Real-world challenges of plastic waste diversion in manufacturing • Certified waste diversion journeys, including setting realistic goals and tracking progress • Food waste reduction and employee engagement in a growing food production company Whether you're just starting your waste strategy or refining an existing program, this session offers practical insights, creative solutions, and inspiration to move your efforts forward Speakers: • Moderator: Lindsay Motl, Director ESG & Sustainability Impact, WM • Jess Jenkins, Environmental and Technical Support, Inpro Corporation • Karleen Kordas, Sustainability Manager, Palermos Villa, Inc. • Doug Ware, Reneraco

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**1:45 – 2:45
PM**

Room C: Track C | The Human Element: Culture, Leadership & Engagement for Sustainability | Behavior Change at Work: Strategies for Sustainability Engagement

Creating a sustainable workplace starts with changing daily habits, decisions, and mindsets. This session dives into practical strategies for inspiring employees to actively participate in sustainability efforts and make lasting behavioral shifts. Through real-world examples and interactive discussion, participants will learn methods to connect sustainability initiatives to employee values and priorities, how to design engagement initiatives that go beyond awareness, and approaches for tracking and celebrating progress to sustain engagement over time. Attendees will leave equipped with actionable ideas to spark enthusiasm, foster accountability, and build a workplace culture where sustainability is second nature.

Speakers:

- Moderator:
- [Michelle Miller](#), Sustainability Manager NA, Symrise
- [Matt Balestrieri](#), ESG Director, MyPath

Room D: Track D: Driving Towards Net Zero | Electrification, a Step Towards Decarbonization

The industry is moving towards net zero goals for carbon, energy, water, and waste. This session will focus on the “How – Where – When?” of electrification and how it fits into the glide path to net zero carbon. Existing building information will be used to demonstrate how all-electric compares to typical design practices. Both current and future grid emissions information will be presented. Finally, the session will provide a Case Study of an all-electric office building located in a cold climate.

Attendees will gain practical knowledge on:

- Electrification strategies for both existing and new buildings.
- Grid emissions and their impact on sustainability goals.
- Real-world performance and lessons learned from a cold-climate case study.

Ideal for sustainability professionals, facilities managers, and anyone working toward net zero targets.

Speakers:

- Moderator: [Korinne Haeffel](#), Director, Market Transformation, USGBC
- [Dave Hubka](#), Sustainability Practice Leader, EUA
- [Jason Richard Hunn](#), Vice President, Glow Solar

**Room E: Track E | Navigating the Green Masters Program®
Open Q&A about Green Masters Program for Small Business**

Curious about the Green Masters Program® or looking for guidance on how to get started—or go deeper? Interested in other certifications like B Corp Certification? This open Q&A session is designed to help participants learn the ins and outs of the program, understand its value, and hear directly from peers who’ve navigated the process. This session will also help you understand how the program can support your other certification goals.

Whether you're exploring self-certification for the first time or seeking tips to improve your score, this session is for small businesses to join us to:

- Ask questions about the application, scoring, and recognition process
- Learn how others have used the program to drive internal engagement and external credibility
- Share challenges and successes with fellow sustainability professionals
- Alignment with other certifications and frameworks, including B Corp Certification

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	This is a supportive space to connect, learn, and leave with practical insights to move your sustainability efforts forward. Conversation hosts: • Lisa Geason-Bauer, President, Evolution Marketing • Leah Steinberg, Marketing Associate & Sustainability Consultant, Evolution Marketing
2:45 – 3:00 PM	<i>Passing Time, Short Break</i>
BREAKOUT SESSION THREE	
3:00 – 4:00 PM	Room A: Track A Operationalizing Sustainability: Systems, Strategy & Storytelling Communicating Sustainability and the Role of Storytelling As sustainability becomes more complex and politically sensitive, how we communicate about it is more important than ever. This session explores the evolving landscape of sustainability messaging, from shifts in corporate communication to the growing influence of storytelling, data visualization, and even audio. Discover how organizations can craft authentic narratives, tailor messages for diverse audiences, and use subtle design cues to encourage sustainable behavior. Whether you're shaping strategy or sharing impact, this session offers practical insights to make your sustainability communication more effective and meaningful. Speakers: • Moderator: Tom Eggert, Founder, WSBC • Nathan Castillo, Building Technology Consultant, Branch Pattern • Michelle Marks, Founder, Director of Strategy, Ideas on Purpose Room B: Track B Environmental Impact & Innovation Transition Planning for a Low Carbon Future This session explores how organizations can effectively plan and implement decarbonization strategies. We'll start with a high-level framework from Green Loop covering key elements like data, documentation, internal operations, and external opportunities such as PPAs and offsets. We'll also share best practices for stakeholder engagement. Next, Orbis will share a real-world example, highlighting drivers like customer demand, regulation, and resilience. We'll walk through practical tactics for addressing Scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions, improving data quality, boosting energy efficiency, and aligning internal teams and leadership. The session concludes up with an interactive Q&A to deepen your understanding and spark actionable insights. Speakers: • Moderator: Christa Kananen, Associate Director, Sustainable Business Council • Thomas Estock, Director of Sustainability, Orbis • Rachana Malviya, Founder, Green Loop Room C: Track C The Human Element: Culture, Leadership & Engagement for Sustainability Future-Proofing Your Workforce: Inclusive Strategies for Social Sustainability In today's rapidly evolving world of work, building a sustainable workforce means more than just adapting
3:00 – 4:00 PM	

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to change—it means leading it with intention and inclusion. This session explores how organizations can future-proof their workforce through human-centered, socially sustainable strategies that prioritize equity, opportunity, and engagement.

We’ll dive into real-world examples of:

- Youth apprenticeship programs that build early career pipelines
- DEI-driven practices that foster belonging and innovation
- Employee experience strategies that enhance retention and purpose
- The role that living wage policies play in creating a sustainable workforce.

Join us to learn how embedding these inclusive approaches into your sustainability strategy can drive long-term impact—for your people, your culture, and your business.

Speakers:

- [David Friend](#), Program Director, Rocket Academy Dual Credit Advanced Technology Center
- [Lisa Geason-Bauer](#), President, Evolution Marketing
- [Lina Godinez](#), HR Generalists, Pentair
- [Julia Steffes Herlache](#), Sustainability Manager, Masters Gallery Foods, Inc.

Room D: Track D | Driving Towards Net Zero | Driving Change: Sustainable Transportation Strategies

Transportation is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions—and a key area for innovation and impact. This session explores how organizations are rethinking their transportation strategies to reduce emissions, improve efficiency, and transform their industries. Whether you're managing a fleet, sourcing goods and transport services, or reporting on Scope 3, this session will help you think strategically about transportation and its role in your sustainability journey.

Speakers:

- Moderator: [Brett Wetzel](#), VP Sustainability & Innovation, US Venture
- [Anne Shudy Palmer](#), Director of Sustainability, Green Worldwide Shipping
- [Adam Schwartz](#), EV Program Manager, Kwik Trip

Room E: Track E | Navigating the Green Masters Program® | Open Q&A about Green Masters Program for Large Businesses

Curious about the Green Masters Program® or looking for guidance on how to get started—or go deeper? This open Q&A session is designed to help participants learn the ins and outs of the program, understand its value, and hear directly from peers who’ve navigated the process.

Whether you're exploring certification for the first time or seeking tips to improve your score, this session is for larger businesses to join us to:

- Ask questions about the application, scoring, and recognition process
- Learn how others have used the program to drive internal engagement and external credibility
- Share challenges and successes with fellow sustainability professionals
- Alignment with other certifications and frameworks

This is a supportive space to connect, learn, and leave with practical insights to move your sustainability efforts forward.

Conversation host:

- [Erin Bauer](#), Founder & Principal, Tack & Clew LLC, Instructor - University of WI-Green Bay

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4:15 – 4:30 PM	Conference Wrap up + Roadmap Giveaway
4:30 – 5:00 PM	Reception