



Green School Conquering Autism Earns EPA's Rare DEES Designation & Saves \$170,000

Momentum Bay Associates LP, August 08, 2009

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The EPA's ENERGY STAR® program last week recognized The Monarch School's new green building as exemplary with the EPA's rare and coveted "Designed to Earn the ENERGY STAR" (DEES) designation. The school's Chrysalis building achieved a score of 86 out of 100, meaning it ranks among the top 14 percent of buildings in the United States. This building is designed to use 33 percent less energy and carbon than an average, comparable building, saving more than \$170,000, nine million kilowatt-hours in energy, and 6,500 metric tons of CO2 equivalent over the next 25 years.

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In the coming weeks, the Chrysalis building will become the new campus for The Monarch School, a national leader in therapeutic education for hundreds of children with neurological differences, many of which are related to autism.

"We're excited about our students' future, and about promoting a healthy, sustainable Texas," said Head of School and Founder Dr. Marty Webb. "As we began planning the future of the thousands of people who will use this building in the next century, we were delighted to find that energy-efficient design could be another affordable, practical way for The Monarch School to serve more families, better."

The Chrysalis building will use 33 percent less energy and carbon than an average, comparable building, and save more than \$170,000 in energy bills over 25 years. The 9,000,000 kilowatt-hours or nearly 6,500 metric tons of carbon dioxide saved over 25 years equate to the annual greenhouse gas emissions of nearly 1,200 passenger vehicles, or the annual electrical usage of more than 900 homes.

Dr. Webb said, "This DEES designation confirmed that our early decisions to assemble an adept 'green team' have helped our donors' contributions go farther today and over the coming century." The sustainable design team included:

- Architects: Jackson & Ryan Architects
- Green Building Consultants: Green Building Services, Inc
- MEP Engineers: Wylie & Associates
- Energy Modeling: BVM Engineering
- Civil Engineers: Brewer & Escalante
- Structural Engineers: Matrix Structural Engineers
- Acoustical Engineers: HFP Acoustical Consultants
- Landscape Architects: TBG Partners; Home & Habitat
- Green Electricity Broker and Sustainability Consultant: GREEN POWER 4 TEXAS / Momentum Bay

The efficient design complements the school's ongoing sustainable operations strategies of conservation, energy efficiency, hybrid transportation and green power. For example, The Monarch School's two existing campuses approached a zero carbon footprint over the past three years, largely by purchasing 100 percent green power. The new campus has also contracted for 100% green power, continuing The Monarch School's commitment to the EPA's Green Power Partnership and 100% Purchasers group.

"With electricity and green power prices at six to 10-year lows, our little nonprofit has found it quite economical and practical to approach carbon neutrality and strive with others for clean air and a healthy, sustainable Texas," said Dr. Webb. "While market research, case studies and anecdotes have confirmed a zero to three percent premium for the design of green schools and green buildings over the past decade, this DEES designation confirms that our building's energy savings alone may yield the equivalent of nearly a 14 percent-off coupon on our design professionals' fees. That's a healthy value.

"When other school administrators ask 'How was The Monarch School able to secure cash rebates, energy savings and avoided emissions?' I answer two factors: a great team and great tools," shared Dr. Webb. "First, our design team members pursued exemplary design throughout the project. For example, we committed to pursuing LEED® for New Construction certification for not only the Chrysalis Building, but also the entire campus' future buildings.

"Second, we wanted to articulate these benefits for our students, families and donors and set ongoing operating budget goals," continued Dr. Webb. "The EPA's Target Finder tool and DEES designation helped us quantify and communicate much of the LEED-NC benefits long before we could receive LEED certification for the campus. In fact, the energy modeling required by DEES may have propelled the project into a higher level of LEED certification."

Dr. Webb concluded, "Achieving the DEES designation is still quite rare nationwide and in Texas, with just over twenty DEES buildings in Texas. What that fact means, though, is that our team merely followed the lead of other rational, forward-thinking Texas neighbors. And, that decision really paid off. 'Designed to Earn the ENERGY STAR' clearly makes business sense for commercial offices and even schools."

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About The Monarch School

Founded in 1997 by Dr. Marty Webb, The Monarch School is now one of the nation's leading schools that provides an innovative, therapeutic education for children ages 3 to 25 years old. It serves the needs of children with neurological differences, such as Autism Spectrum Disorders (Autistic Disorder, Asperger's Disorder, PDD-NOS), Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder, Learning Disabilities, Tourette's Syndrome, Mood Disorders (Bipolar Disorder, Depression), Anxiety Disorders, and other neurological differences. With a ratio of 2.5 students for each teacher/mental health professional, the school develops individualized plans to help each student make progress in the school's four core goals: executive functions, relationship development, self-regulation/self-awareness and academic competence.

About Momentum Bay Associates LP

Momentum Bay, established in 2002, is a Texas-based comprehensive "green" management consulting firm. Momentum Bay equips leaders with green business, green building, and green power strategy grounded in science, research and solid business principles, followed by creative, disciplined implementation (i.e., training and marketing). The firm's sustainability and business experts helps organizations go green profitably and practically by:

- developing strategic plans,
- executing specific projects,
- helping others to discern green facts from fads and fiction, as well as
- equipping and inspiring teams to do these same functions in-house.

One of the firm's services is GREEN POWER 4 TEXAS, the state's most economical electricity aggregator, broker and consultant focused exclusively on renewable electricity. GREEN POWER 4 TEXAS is also one of Texas' few brokers of Renewable Energy Credits (RECs).

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