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City Announces Project Skyline Challenge Award Winners

SALT LAKE CITY – Yesterday, Salt Lake City Mayor Ralph Becker, Kathleen Hogan, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Energy Efficiency for the U.S. Department of Energy and Matthew Dalbey, Director of the Office of Sustainable Communities for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, joined city leaders and building owners in honoring the winners of the Project Skyline Mayor's Challenge 2015 Awards.

Launched in May 2014, the multi-year competition challenges building owners across Salt Lake City to proactively meet—and exceed—the air quality and energy-saving targets of the Mayor's Sustainable Salt Lake – Plan 2015 and reduce citywide building energy use by 15 percent by 2020.

“Salt Lake City is committed to ensuring that our community is a vibrant, healthy and prosperous municipality,” said Mayor Becker. “To do this, we must address unhealthy air pollutants, and our buildings can play a significant role in doing so by reducing energy waste. I applaud the leading organizations being recognized—as well as the 20 participants in this first year of competition—for helping to lead the city in reducing energy use and pollution while working to save local taxpayers money and create quality local jobs.”

Mayor Becker and Salt Lake City continue to carve out a leadership position in addressing climate change and resource efficiency to improve local quality of life. In 2014, the City was selected as one of 10 U.S. cities to participate in the City Energy Project, a multi-year initiative from the Natural Resources Defense Council and the Institute for Market Transformation that seeks to enable cities to create healthier and more prosperous cities by improving the energy efficiency of their buildings. In addition, Mayor Becker's reputation as a national leader on energy efficiency continues to bolster the City's efforts to address climate change, and a number of initiatives undertaken by the administration has helped garner roughly \$800,000 in funding to expand Salt Lake City's energy efficiency efforts.

Mayor Becker has challenged Salt Lake City building owners to collectively reduce citywide building energy use by 5 percent by 2015 and 15 percent by 2020. By participating in the Project Skyline Challenge, local business owners are eligible to attend educational and networking workshops and receive guidance on best practices and resources for evaluating their building's energy use, setting energy-saving goals, and undertaking energy-saving projects. The 2015 winners are being recognized for their leadership in Challenge efforts over the past year.

The 2015 Award Winners are:

Energy Innovator Award: Basic Research

A distributor of cosmetic, fitness, and weight-loss products, Basic Research is turning an eye on improving its 230,000-square-foot facility's health. By undertaking energy efficiency improvements for major building components such as the lighting and HVAC systems and installing a 1.4MW solar project—the largest privately owned solar photovoltaic project in the state of Utah—the company raised its 2014 ENERGY STAR score 10 points to 99 (on a scale of 100). In addition, due to such efforts, Basic Research is now approaching net zero energy in its operations, meaning that the total amount of energy used by its building on an annual basis is roughly equal to the amount of energy generated on site.

Sustained Excellence Award: Fidelity Investments

Across the country, Fidelity is pursuing LEED certification for 65 percent of its North American corporate real estate portfolio, and the company's Salt Lake City office at 49 N 400 W is no exception. The building has achieved both LEED Silver certification under the existing buildings operation and management system and ISO 14001 certification for environmental management. Projects such as the addition of LED lighting and lighting controls, along with rooftop photovoltaic panels, have helped to drive down energy use and boost the building's ENERGY STAR score, raising it to 96 in 2014.

Most-Improved Energy Star Score Award: The McGillis School

A private co-ed day school for grades K–8 in the Northeast bench of the Salt Lake Valley, the McGillis School made great strides in improving building energy performance in 2014. In 2014, the school reported an ENERGY STAR score of 97 (meaning its facility performs better than 97 percent of similar buildings), up 17 points from 2013. The increase in efficiency is largely attributed to a successful retro-commissioning project, which is now leading to second improvement project.

Energy Efficiency Leadership Award: Newmark Grubb ACRES

With four offices in the Salt Lake City region, Newmark Grubb ACRES profiles a suite of services focuses on tenant and landlord representation, property management, corporate services, and land and investment sales for office, industrial, and multifamily properties. The company has been highly involved in Project Skyline, participating in all of the program's workshops and presenting at several of them, as well. Company leadership also participates on BOMA Utah's Energy and Sustainability Committee and helped launched the BOMA Utah Kilowatt Crackdown. In addition, the company has completed a large of number of energy efficiency projects in several of its properties, and most of the portfolio's ENERGY STAR scores are better than average and continuing to improve.

Benchmarking Champion Award: Salt Lake School District

Representing over 40 buildings, the Salt Lake City School District has been an ENERGY STAR partner since 2009 and has a consistent track record of taking full advantage of benchmarking to monitor energy consumption across its portfolio. Not only are 72 percent of the district's schools benchmarked, but they are also certified ENERGY STAR buildings. In addition, the district's portfolio shows an overall trend toward improvement, with ENERGY STAR scores improving 18 percent across the all buildings.

It is estimated that buildings contribute nearly 40 percent of air pollutants on typical winter day in Salt Lake City, and research estimates that improving their energy efficiency could help remove more than 1 million pounds of pollutants annually—the equivalent of taking more than 32,000 vehicles off the road for one year. In addition, a new infographic released from the city on Wednesday asserts that if the largest buildings in Salt Lake City were to adopt energy-saving best practices, it would conserve enough resource to power 37,000 homes.

Project Skyline is a cornerstone of Sustainable Salt Lake—Plan 2015, Mayor Becker's blueprint to improve air quality, economic development, and livability in the region. The Mayor's Skyline Challenge was created through a partnership between Salt Lake City, Rocky Mountain Power, Questar Gas, BOMA Utah, USGBC Utah and Utah Clean Energy. A second round of the competition will open for applications later this summer.

For more details, visit <http://www.slcgov.com/projectskyline>. Additional photos from the award luncheon, as well as high-resolution version of the air quality infographic are available upon request.