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Cape building a bright 'green' future



NICOLE GOLDMAN
Plans to franchise her company, 'g' Green Design Center in Mashpee

Business owners and builders embrace revolutionary ideas at Boston conference.

By **SARAH SHEMKUS**
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BOSTON - Representatives of Cape and Islands building firms, technology companies and community groups were among more than 25,000 people who attended Greenbuild 2008 yesterday to participate in a green revolution.

"I would like you to recognize that you are part of a revolution that has turned

around the moral climate," said Archbishop Desmond Tutu, kicking off the green building conference with a keynote address to thousands of attendees at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center.

In years past, "anybody who cared about how we treated our Earth home was considered a part of an eccentric, lunatic fringe," said the Nobel Peace Prize winner. Now, he said, "not to care about the environment is like not caring about egregious human rights violations - that is what you have accomplished, that is what you have done."

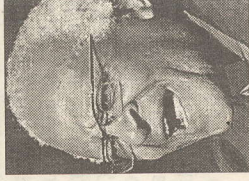
Among the Cape Codders embracing this message was Nicole Goldman, owner of 'g' Green Design Center in Mashpee.

Goldman used the venue to announce that she will be franchising her business throughout the Northeast.

The plan, she said, is for as many as 12 new locations to be up and running within a year. Some of the first franchises will be in Greater Boston and on the South Shore, Goldman said.

In five to seven years, there could be as many as 100 'g' Green Design Centers,

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DESMOND TUTU
Archbishop kicks off conference with keynote address

she said.
"There really is a lot of opportunity," she said.

Onset Computer Corp., a Pocasset-based technology company, is also exhibiting at the conference, which runs through tomorrow.

The company designs and manufactures data-logging systems that collect information about temperature, humidity, carbon dioxide levels and just about anything else that can be measured.

Increasingly, builders who are trying to achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, or LEED, certification - a widely recognized standard for green construction - for their projects are looking for ways to measure energy efficiency and the performance of alternative energy systems.

"That's kind of where we come in," said Onset applications specialist Scott Ellis, adding that the company's display already has attracted a lot of interest. "It's only continuing to grow."

Eco-focused builders also are seeing increased interest in green construction, said John Abrams, president of South Mountain Co., a building and renewable energy company in West Tisbury.

"For 25 years, we have been pushing our clients to go further and further," said Abrams, who will be speaking about affordable green housing at a Greenbuild seminar today. "And now they're pushing us. It's a wonderful change and a big challenge."

Joan Valle, director of design for the Valle Group, an East Falmouth construction and design company, attended the conference to expand her knowledge of green building.

Her company already does construction that meets Energy Star standards, and she is in the process of becoming a LEED-accredited builder.

"A lot of people are into the green technology now," Valle said. "We're just trying to keep up."

The show also attracted a contingent from Housing Assistance Corp. in Hyannis.

"We are trying to make all the housing development we do more energy-efficient, more green," said Virginia Ryan, spokeswoman for the housing agency. "Energy-efficient living is absolutely key to affordability."