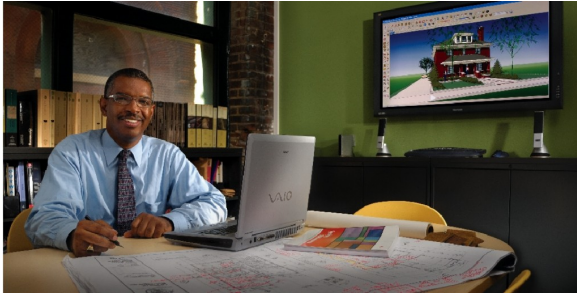


Black History Month Energy Champions: Jimmie Tucker Knows the Importance of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

February 10th, 2015 > [Clean Energy](#), [Energy Efficiency](#), [Energy Policy](#) > [Angela Garrone, Esq.](#) >



In honor of [Black History Month](#) - SACE is publishing a blog series highlighting the efforts of African American leaders working to ensure that clean energy opportunities are available for all people and communities in the Southeast. This post is the second in a series; find additional posts [here](#).

As one of the founding principals of a successful architectural firm in Memphis, Tennessee, Jimmie Tucker has made it his mission to improve the buildings and lives of Memphians. [Self + Tucker Architects](#) (STA) is celebrating twenty years in business this year and STA has created many well designed and energy efficient buildings throughout the Mid-South since 1995.

After spending his childhood in Memphis, Mr. Tucker left the city to pursue his architectural career, receiving a Bachelor's degree in Architecture and Urban Planning from Princeton University and his Masters degree in Architecture from Washington University in St. Louis. After working for several years in St. Louis and New York, Mr. Tucker returned to Memphis in order to help revitalize the city, which until recently had the unfortunate habit of abandoning historical buildings and not engaging in smart building design planning. Over the years, his firm has completed numerous projects that have brought new life into old buildings – and cut energy costs at the same time!

Many have taken notice of STA's innovative work and, in 2011, Self + Tucker Architects was featured in [Shades of Green Tennessee](#). This publication spotlighted progressive companies that have gone above and beyond to discover new and fascinating ways to protect the environment and create aesthetically pleasing design solutions. Shades of Green Tennessee also explored sustainable practices utilized and perfected by top professionals who desire to make their state, and the world, cleaner and more energy efficient.

When asked why he's chosen to focus on green building, Tucker explains “*we believe each building we design should enhance the quality of life for its occupants and enrich the architectural fabric in the community in which it's located. Our focus on sustainable design is essential to achieving those aspirations.*”

Since 2006, Mr. Tucker has been an Adjunct Instructor of Architecture at the University of Memphis. In his Design Studios he has used LEED, Enterprise Green Communities Criteria, EcoBUILD and other “real world” sustainable design planning criteria as the framework for his students to develop Master Plans and design specific new buildings and building renovations.

In 2007, Mr. Tucker and his wife, Cleora, completed their own home, which they designed to meet EcoBUILD requirements, Memphis Light, Gas and Water's voluntary “green building” program. Tucker played a lead role in the Shelby County Green Building Task Force to develop a set of recommendations to improve local building codes. Mr. Tucker has long been an advocate for reducing energy costs for his projects as well as designing some of the first [LEED certified](#) projects in the city.



STA Design Plan's for Universal Life Building - The installation of a 50 kW solar PV system will include a local work force training program offering “green collar” job training for local residents, training that will pay dividends in the local economy as interest in solar installations and clean energy continues to increase.

Currently, Mr. Tucker is working diligently on the revitalization of the historic [Universal Life Building](#), which has been vacant for some time. For this project, he is serving as both architect and developer as he has owned the building since 2005 with his business partner, Juan Self. The new Universal Life Building will feature a green roof and solar power, which will increase the credits toward LEED Gold certification.

By including a solar parking canopy, STA will show by example that embracing sustainable building practices is of the utmost importance. Our current heavy reliance on non-renewable energy resources is proving to be more and more detrimental to the environment and our health and is also becoming more difficult to maintain economically making investment in renewable resources critical. The project will serve as a shining example that solar is a technology that is taking hold in Memphis

2/12/2015 CleanEnergy Footprints » Archive » Black History Month Energy Champions: Jimmie Tucker Knows the Importance of Energy Efficiency and Renewabl... economically, making investment in renewable resources critical. The project will serve as a shining example that solar is a technology that is taking hold in Memphis and can be economically feasible.



Green Leaf Learning Farm Design Plans

Mr. Tucker is also committed to giving back to his community in other ways. In 2013, Self +Tucker Architects, in partnership with the Memphis based [Knowledge Quest](#), received a [Mid-South Regional Greenprint](#) sub-planning award for the expansion of the [Green Leaf Learning Farm](#). Already successful in its efforts around youth development, the Green Leaf Learning Farm will soon be expanding to offer a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program that will allow it to be a more financially sustainable operation through coordinated purchasing by the community. This program will also help expand awareness of the importance of healthy eating in South Memphis, which is an economically disadvantaged community.



The Residences at Green Leaf, an existing ten-unit apartment building, is being designed for energy conservation and to incorporate an 8kW solar power system that will produce approximately 11kWh. Once completed, the project will accommodate “Agri-tourists”, who will live on the farm during short stays to participate in the hands-on learning projects related to urban agriculture, water conservation and family skills. The new solar panels will offset the energy costs associated with these operations.

Memphis is fortunate to have a leader like Mr. Tucker who is working hard to implement sustainable design and grow a clean energy economy in Memphis. We are [proud to have his support as a member of SACE](#) and look forward to watching his firm continue to work to help change the Mid-South for the better! #blackhistorymonth

Tags: [#blackhistorymonth](#), [black history month](#), [EcoBuild](#), [Energy Efficiency](#), [Green Leaf Learning Farm](#), [LEED](#), [Memphis](#), [Memphis Light Gas and Water](#), [Mid-South Regional Greenprint](#), [MLGW](#), [Renewable Energy](#), [Self + Tucker Architects](#), [Shades of Green Tennessee](#), [solar](#)