Welcome to Our New Board Members

Claudia Bitran, PP, AICP  
Associate, Kitchen & Associates

Claudia is an Associate at K&A and leads the firm’s planning studio. A native of Brazil, she started her career as an architect and urban planner developing neighborhood revitalization plans for underserved communities in her hometown of Sao Paulo. Her experience has since evolved to include a wide range of planning initiatives, including site and building design, neighborhood and community master planning, and comprehensive revitalization plans. A thoughtful and talented urban planner with a strong background in architectural design, Claudia is able to navigate through the multiple facets of K&A’s work, lending her expertise to the planning and design of multi-family housing, infill redevelopment, mixed-use projects, and large-scale planning efforts. She guides clients through the early stages of design development, providing assistance with conceptual design, community outreach, and land use approvals. Claudia has a proven track record of successful work with local community groups, governmental agencies and a variety of stakeholders to ensure an open, collaborative and inclusive planning process. Claudia has extensive experience with land development and redevelopment projects, including downtown revitalization and transit-oriented development. She has worked under multiple federal and state programs including HOPE VI, Choice Neighborhoods Initiative, New Market and Low Income Tax Credits. Her recent work includes redevelopment efforts in the states of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York and Georgia. Claudia holds a Master of Community Planning from the University of Pennsylvania and a Bachelor of Architecture and Urbanism from the University of Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Steven Gardner  
Director, New Jersey Laborers’-Employers’ Cooperation and Education Trust (NJ LECET)

For more than two decades, Steven Gardner has worked to bridge the gap between the public and private sector and help create economic opportunities that benefit all New Jerseyans. Presently, Gardner serves as director of the New Jersey Laborers’-Employers’ Cooperation and Education Trust (NJ LECET), a labor-management partnership of the Laborers’ International Union of North America (LIUNA). Previously, he served as the organization’s director of government relations where he monitored legislative and regulatory issues affecting the union and its industry partners. His primary focus was on transportation/infrastructure initiatives, public private partnerships, and economic development. Before his appointment as NJ LECET’s director, Gardner worked for Bristol-Myers Squibb as associate director of state government affairs and alliance development. In this capacity, he advanced legislative and regulatory initiatives promoting patient access to innovative bio-pharmaceuticals in a five state region. He also served as executive director of the New Jersey State Assembly Majority Office. There, he oversaw approximately 30 policy, communications, and administrative staff that serve the 48 elected members of the Assembly Democratic Caucus. Before that, Gardner, served as the senior advisor to the Assembly Majority Leader. In that role he oversaw the Majority Leader’s relationships within the caucus and with outside interest groups. Gardner has served on numerous public and private boards. He chaired The New Jersey Society for Environmental, Economic Development’s (NJ SEED) transportation committee and served on the transportation committee of the NJ Alliance for Action. Steven has also served on the New Jersey Environment Infrastructure Trust, the Mercer County Workforce Investment Board, and his local zoning board. Steven Gardner earned his Juris Doctorate from Rutgers Camden Law School and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and History from Syracuse University. He lives with his wife and son in Hamilton, New Jersey.

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Thank you to all PlanSmart NJ Supporters!

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**Grand Opening!**

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony, Thursday, December 8th, 3 - 6pm

The Walters Group is pleased to introduce Cornerstone at Barnegat, an age and income-restricted community. Cornerstone at Barnegat offers 70, one and two-bedroom apartment homes.

Cornerstone at Barnegat is registered with the U.S. Green Building Council and will pursue certification under USGBC’s LEED® program (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design).

Affordable Housing provides more than just a roof over a family’s head - it provides hope.

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