



SESSION 2: ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS
PANEL 2 at 4p.m.

Presenter: April Mendez
CEO
Greenprint Partners

Bio: April Mendez is the CEO for Greenprint Partners (WBE, B-Corp), a green infrastructure project development and advisory firm that helps cities implement equitable, community-driven, multi-benefit stormwater solutions. She leads a national team of urban planners, engineers, community organizers and finance professionals on a mission to get the most good out of green infrastructure. Driven by an inherent respect for the human spirit, April approaches Greenprint's work with a vision for fostering environments in which everyone can thrive and make their mark on our collective future. April co-founded and spent 13 years building Interfaith Youth Core (IFYC), a \$4.5 million nonprofit that is transforming the way higher education engages religious diversity. She has also worked for the Steans Family Foundation and founded an organization dedicated to developing social entrepreneurship among minority youth in some of Chicago's toughest neighborhoods. April holds a B.A. from Carleton College and completed MBA coursework at the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University focusing on social innovation.

Presentation: Designing Equitable Rainscapes with Mission-based Communities in St. Louis

Community centering is key to successfully developing equitable green stormwater infrastructure (GSI). By thoughtfully engaging with the community from the beginning, Greenprint Partners builds capacity for local, representative community members to take a leadership role in their green infrastructure projects. This ensures that projects are built to meet landowner and community goals while also fostering a sense of personal ownership and value for those who live, work, and play nearby. When impacted community members understand the value of green infrastructure and are empowered in the decision-making process, projects are more likely to positively benefit the community and be protected in the long-run. Through a portfolio of projects designed in collaboration with 12 mission-driven organizations across St. Louis, MO, this presentation will showcase the Greenprint Partners model and process for designing equitable, community-centered green infrastructure. Supported by grant funding from the Kresge Foundation and St. Louis Metropolitan Sewer District's (MSD) Large Rainscaping Grants program, the portfolio demonstrates how equitable siting and collaborative design help to address economic, community, and environmental goals while also managing stormwater and reducing runoff pollution in the Mississippi watershed. Topics discussed will include engaging the St. Louis Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD) and Kresge Foundation as stakeholders in this work, Greenprint's approach to reducing barriers to participation in MSD's Large Rainscaping Grants program for low income and communities of color, and Greenprint's five pillars for community activation: trust building, knowledge sharing, authorship, celebrations, and storytelling. We will explore how this approach works to empower project stakeholders in the decision-making process and create equitable, long-lasting green infrastructure projects that directly benefit the communities in which they are located.