

Barbara Hernesman

Director of Strategic Initiatives

Western HVAC Performance Alliance Inc.



Since May 2018, Barbara has served as Director of Strategic Initiatives for the Western HVAC Performance Alliance Inc. (WHPA). Since 2013, she served the WHPA as Co-Chair for the Existing Buildings Energy Efficiency Action Plan (AB-758) Committee and Exploratory Working Group (EBEE), Co-Chair for Workforce Education and Training Committee (WE&T), and an active member of the Compliance Committee.

Prior to that Barbara was principal and owner of SynergyNexGen. She is a workforce development architect/designer and business relations visionary. Ms. Hernesman is a leading advocate for construction workforce development in “performance-driven” Building Energy Efficiency Standards, a coalition builder using her relationship experiences to generate creative and innovative partnerships, a strategic thinker and analytical planner who excels at synthesizing complex and diverse information, and a program designer presenting ideas and information that gets the attention of others and meets challenges with resourcefulness and intuition to generate creative solutions. She provides vision, inspiration, and trust that fosters private and public engagement between industry community-based organizations and educational institutions like community colleges, occupational trade schools, Workforce Investments Boards (WIBs), Employment Development Department, investor-owned utilities (IOUs), publicly owned utilities (POUs), and government agencies.

Ms. Hernesman’s community engagements include Berkeley Lawrence Livermore Lab Building Energy Data Exchange Specification (BEDES) Subject Matter Expert Strategic and Technical Committee; National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) Scheme Committee member for Home Energy Professional Certification; and California Economic Summit 21st Century Workforce Development Action Team Committee member; and National Energy Work Association (NEWA) Executive Committee member.

She seeks to share expertise with others to develop feasible and workable solutions with designs that display passion, optimism, and flexibility, mobilizing CBO partnerships towards pathways to implementation and business acumen that aligns work with commitments, strategic goals, and objectives for Building Energy Efficiency Standards and Building Performance professional development and credentialing.

Ms. Hernesman is a speaker at industry conferences and coalition building events. She combines her enthusiasm for “performance-driven” Building Energy Efficiency Standards with thirty years as a California Licensed General B Contractor to support and encourage the emergence of California’s 21st Century construction “next generation” workforce development.

Ms. Hernesman holds a Bachelor of Science in Social Work specializing in social policy and procedures, community leadership, and organization from Minnesota State University, Mankato; she holds Master level education in Behavioral Science; and she is a graduate of the Sierra Leadership Institute, Truckee, California.