



Daylighting has become the hottest topic in lighting today, as LEED and sustainable design make its use critically important to successful projects. Traditionally, daylighting design has been performed by a small group of specialists with a strong environmental architectural or research/educational background. The sustainable design movement has brought the importance of “good” daylighting to the forefront of responsible “mainstream” construction. As such, architects and lighting practitioners need to fully appreciate the integration of “good” daylighting into their designs. No longer is daylighting reserved for a small group of “green” projects. It should be considered as the “best” lighting source for as many building types as possible.

The challenge is to provide the general design practitioner with appropriate resources and tools to correctly apply daylighting to designs. It has been well published that human occupants benefit from quality daylighting, but it is not yet common practice to evaluate daylighting potential in building designs. Good daylighting is more than just windows or skylights. To further good daylighting practices, a means to transfer knowledge of the resources and tools available was needed.

In 2004, LIGHTFAIR INTERNATIONAL became home to the **Daylighting Institute**, the first international program for information exchange of its type in more than 17 years. The **Daylighting Institute** was developed by a stellar group of individuals and organizations in the field, with James Benya of Benya Lighting Design and Jeff Johnson of New Buildings Institute as the co-chairs, and leaders from Southern California Edison, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, New Buildings Institute, the Daylighting Collaborative/Energy Center of Wisconsin, Heschong Mahone Group, University of Michigan/Ann Arbor, Lawrence Berkley National Laboratory, and Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance.

Held along with the LIGHTFAIR Institute and seminars, the Daylighting Institute consisted of six 2-day intensive courses of Basic and Masters Tracks. The Basic Track was designed to be application oriented, giving lighting practitioners the tools needed to integrate effective daylighting into their building designs. Topics included “Initiating a Daylighting Design,” “Climatology Meets Illumination Science,” “Daylighting Design: Best Practices and Useful Patterns,” “Principals of Modeling,” and “Successful Projects and Lessons Learned.”

The Masters Track focused on the latest in daylighting research and technologies. Topics covered were “Advanced Toplighting,” “Advanced Sidelighting,” “Controls Panel,” “Advanced Integrated Designs,” and “Advanced Systems for Daylighting.”

Each day began with a joint session, “The Human Benefits of Daylighting” on Monday and “The Economics of Daylighting” on Tuesday. The Institute concluded with a “Daylighting Manufacturers’ Showcase,” where participants had an opportunity to spend time with the manufacturers in a “cracker barrel” type session, moving from one table to another table for short, 10-minute presentations. This allowed for a more intimate conversation with the manufacturers as an alternative to the large groups typical on the trade show floor.

Another inaugural event, the first Daylighting Forum, was held to take advantage of all the industry leaders in daylighting being in one place at the same time. The community of daylighting professionals present at LightFair and the Daylighting Institute gathered to discuss how to further the field of daylighting.

New Buildings Institute and Benya Lighting Design initiated the forum as part of their work in developing the Daylighting Institute at LightFair 2004. These organizations have been in communication with many of the daylighting experts and efforts across the country for many years and have had many conversations that led to the creation of a daylighting “experts” forum.

An overarching goal was to bring those individuals, organizations, programs and projects together to develop the common goal of promoting daylighting in building illumination. It is understood that an assortment of research and practice fields exist, but the shared objective is the use of natural light to

reduce energy use and increase the quality of the indoor environment for the many other non-energy benefits.

Some of the highlights from the Forum included:

- The premise that most owners don't know whether or not they have daylighting. A definition of what is or is not daylighting would be very valuable and should be conveyed in a way that is practical and easy to understand.
- Resources for teaching daylighting in architectural schools can be improved.
- The discussion turned to what kind of a "home" might be created. A first step was to develop a web presence to provide links to resources, case studies, and examples. The Daylighting Collaborative (www.daylighting.org) was suggested as an interim home. This site receives the most inquires and also shows up first in Google searches. Currently managed by Abby Vogen, Energy Center of Wisconsin, it is funded by the Wisconsin utilities at a low level
- Outreach activities such as policy outreach, funding and links to practitioners (USGBC/AIA/IESNA/ASHRAE/IALD) were discussed. As a renewable resource, daylighting should be considered among the mix of renewable technologies promoted at state and federal levels.

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- Jim Benya, Benya Lighting Design
- Hunt Dimming
- MechoShade
- Solatube
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- Sunoptics
- The Watt Stopper

With over 140 participants, the Daylighting Institute was a huge success. LIGHTFAIR has already committed to hosting the second annual Daylighting Institute in 2005 in New York city.

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