

Member Spotlight



In the Spotlight with SEEA Member Pearl Certification

Products	Utility services for Utility, Government/NGO, Other
HQ	Charlottesville, VA
Areas Served	North America
# Employees	11



Meet Robin LeBaron

- Co-Founder, President and COO, Pearl Certification
- SEEA Member Representative

When asked why Pearl Certification wanted to become a member of SEEA, Robin asserted, “I think SEEA is a natural fit for Pearl because it has unparalleled experience in promoting energy efficiency in the Southeast, and it understands the value of partnerships. I worked with members of SEEA’s policy team on utility cost-effectiveness testing reform during my tenure at the National Home Performance Council and really enjoyed the experience: all the SEEA staff members I worked with were extremely talented and dedicated.”

He also speaks highly of SEEA’s staff by saying, “The SEEA staff have already been very helpful by suggesting high-quality contractors in some of our target markets that we should reach out to. We anticipate there are half a dozen other ways we could work with SEEA over the next few years.”

Pearl Certification works with several partners including;

1. Residential contractors that are doing high-quality work to improve a home’s efficiency and/or to install renewables and want to set themselves apart from the competition.
2. Utilities that want to drive energy savings by helping homeowners make energy efficiency improvements, helping their customers capture the value of the energy efficiency investments they’ve made with utility-sponsored rebates, and/or catalyzing market transformation by jump-starting a demand for energy efficiency, high-performing homes in the local real estate market.
3. Municipalities that are interested in helping their residents save energy, reduce their carbon footprint, and increase their home’s value.

Currently, Pearl is focused on building brand awareness and a critical mass of certified homes in several target regions across the U.S. “We want to demonstrate the value that high-performing features can command in the marketplace by quantifying the impact of Pearl Certification on sales price,” says Robin. “Our first study showed Pearl Certification adding 5% to the value of a home!”

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Robin explains, “Buyers increasingly want high-performing homes, and Pearl’s experience to date indicates that they will pay more for them– if they have information about the home and its features in a form that they can understand and appreciate.” Pearl also sponsors the Pearl Contractor Advantage Network: a group of high-performing contractors who are the only contractors with the right to certify their work through Pearl. Network Contractors can use Pearl’s certification system to give their clients a Home Investment Plan, a customized roadmap to improving their home’s performance over time.

Robin, having 15 years of experience building and managing multifamily housing in New York City, took a job working on energy efficiency policy to support the Obama-era stimulus at the urge of friend. “After the crash in 2008 the financing for affordable multifamily housing dried up. I ended up co-managing the National Home Performance Council and working on a number of interesting projects designed to bring residential energy efficiency to scale.” His brilliant and talented wife has also been working to protect affordable housing in northern Manhattan for over a decade.

Robin is an avid read who also enjoys hiking, long-distance running, karate, and playing the piano. Born in St. Catherine’s, in Ontario, Canada, Robin grew up in rural Vancouver Island in a village so small that even Facebook doesn’t know it exists. His favorite quote is, “Good judgment comes from experience; experience comes from bad judgement.” Robin states, “I say this all the time, mostly because it’s a reminder that mistakes are inevitable, so you might as well make them as fast and learn from them as hard as you can.”