

Jury Statement on the Runner Up of the 2009 Buckminster Fuller Challenge

Dreaming New Mexico (DNM), a Bioneers project, submitted by Kenny Ausubel and Peter Warshall, has been selected as the Runner Up of the 2009 Buckminster Fuller Challenge. In the opinion of this jury, Dreaming New Mexico brings together the tools of grassroots organizing and community leadership with scientific know-how and political savvy to both create a vision for the future and lay the groundwork for getting there. This is a fundamental leverage point for creating systemic change.

The core concept of this work is the power of transformative visioning, of imagining the world we want to see and then putting the steps in place to get us there, a process which Bucky often called designing the 'preferred state.'

The solution tackles an issue often overlooked by problem-solvers – the political dynamic and the political barriers that often slow or stop large-scale change. The 'dreaming' phase of DNM brings key political decision makers to the table with the community from the beginning to work collaboratively to envision a sustainable future, in turn creating social connections and a partnership of trust that can carry the project forward. In many ways, DNM is a process for creating a new political landscape that ties together earth stewardship values with core community needs – from fresh water, to clean energy, to abundant and locally grown food.

Imagining a better future is the first step towards creating that future and DNM provides a rich community process that can be replicated across the globe to give voice to the grassroots and help us build strong local economies and sustainable, resilient communities.

Dreaming New Mexico: http://challenge.bfi.org/runnerup_2009

A Statement From the Buckminster Fuller Institute

The jury was very excited about the potential outcomes of the deep visioning process that makes up the core of Dreaming New Mexico, as well as the political savvy you have demonstrated and your keen interest in ensuring that the project does not live and die with the Richardson administration, but puts down roots to sustain itself for the long term. Creating a robust structure in which stake-holders can envision the future, as you know, was a core principle of much of Bucky's work (he termed this part of the design process as articulating the 'preferred state'), and the jurors were deeply inspired to see a team as accomplished as yours taking it on in a big way.

The Dreaming New Mexico (DNM) initiative is grappling with a fundamental question: How do citizens of New Mexico move swiftly with care and intelligence from the present unsustainable condition to a preferred state? The concept of 'preferred states' is central to Buckminster Fuller's design science approach. It takes problem solving beyond the business as usual calculation of risks into the creative realm where new possibilities can be imagined and designed.

This year's runner up understands this is a process that begins with daring to dream the future. And by daring to dream the future themselves, the Dreaming New Mexico (DNM) team has embarked on a cross-cultural, multi-stakeholder process to collaboratively map a green infrastructure and resource strategy for an entire state.