

December 2009

## VISION OF EFFICIENCY

The Visionaire Combines Energy-Efficient Solutions with Dazzling, Innovative Design

By now, we're all familiar with the carbon costs associated with planes, trains and automobiles. But as it turns out, you may be generating almost as many CO<sub>2</sub> emissions just staying home. Buildings in the United States account for approximately 39 percent of the country's energy use and 68 percent of all electricity. And though there are lots of ways to cut down on the amount of energy your home eats up, such as switching from incandescent to compact fluorescent light bulbs, turning down the air conditioner or the thermostat and unplugging appliances when they're not in use, increasing numbers of eco-warriors are looking for homes that have built-in efficiency.

Jesse Cameron-Glickenhaas (profiled on p.20) is one such eco-warrior. Cameron-Glickenhaas recently took up residence at The Visionaire, a high-rise in Manhattan's Battery Park City that boasts a dazzling array of green innovations. To wit: Solar panels on the building's roof take care of approximately five percent of its electric load, purchased wind power generates an additional 35 percent and numerous measures have been taken to reduce residents' electricity demands. Water is conserved just as carefully: The Visionaire features a water treatment system that recycles water into its cooling tower and a rainwater catchment that irrigates the building's rooftop garden. (The rooftop landscaping also provides an extra layer of insulation for The Visionaire, helping to cool the building in the summertime.) Furthermore, flooring in the condominiums is rift-cut oak harvested according to Forest Stewardship Council standards, which promote forest re-growth; kitchen cabinets are made from renewable bamboo; and 50 percent of the materials used to construct The Visionaire were fully sourced from within a 500-mile radius of Manhattan.

No wonder, then, that the U.S. Green Building Council presented The Visionaire with its highest rating, LEED platinum.



"This was a natural progression for us," explains Russell Albanese, whose company, the Albanese Organization, developed The Visionaire. "This is our third green project in Battery Park City, and each time, we've built on past experience to make our residences even more eco-friendly."

Albanese notes that his company embarked on green development because Battery Park City mandated in 2000 that all new buildings in its precincts be constructed to green standards. But the success of the developments the Albanese Organization has completed since then—The Solaire, The Verdesian and The Visionaire—has convinced Albanese to make sustainability a full-time focus for his company.

"There are good, solid, capitalist reasons for transitioning to a sustainable development model," Albanese explains. "If you look at the marketplace, there's been a sea-change in the past ten years, in terms of people's interest in green living. Look at hybrid cars. Look at Whole Foods. It's only natural that people would begin to extend the same considerations about their impact on the planet to the place they call home."

To learn more, visit [www.thevisionaire.com](http://www.thevisionaire.com)



# JESSE CAMERON-GLICKENHAUS

## Working Today for a Better Tomorrow

Chances are, you've never heard of Jesse Cameron-Glickenhaas, but the 27-year-old New Yorker may have already affected your future, and the future of everyone around you.

Almost two years ago, when Jesse Cameron-Glickenhaas was working as an advisor to the U.N. Mission of Palau, he helped the tiny island nation present a resolution addressing the potential international security implications of climate change. That may sound like a lot of bureaucratese, but when the resolution finally passed this summer, it marked the first time the United Nations' General Assembly had ever acknowledged that climate change posed a concrete threat to the peace and well-being of all its member states, and kicked the issue upstairs to the U.N. Security Council.

"On the one hand, it was a tremendous accomplishment," says Cameron-Glickenhaas, who got his job working with Palau while he was in graduate school for global affairs at New York University. "On the other hand," he adds, "It took a year and a half to get there. And things need to happen *now*."

Since graduating from NYU, Cameron-Glickenhaas has resumed his first passion—teaching. The kids at Lyon Community School in Brooklyn know him as a science teacher; he's also teaching a class on climate change at NYU. Speaking truth on sustainability to the next generation of power is a natural fit, given that it was a teaching experience that got Cameron-Glickenhaas interested in climate change to begin with. As a newly minted college grad, he moved to the Marshall Islands to teach English, health and science, and while he was there, he got to see the effects of water shortage and waste pile-up firsthand.

"There was a problem with our rainwater catchments, and we ran out of drinking water," he recalls. "And then, you know, you're seeing where all your garbage goes, because you either burn it, or you throw it in the lagoon, or you put it in the dump, which is right next to your house. Energy was a constant problem, too," Cameron-Glickenhaas

goes on to explain. "We ran out of electricity all the time, and we'd have to close the schools. I saw all these things close-up, and at a certain point, it struck me that this island was a microcosm of what was about to happen on a global scale."

Cameron-Glickenhaas notes, as well, that many of his students in the Marshall Islands were the descendants of the people on the Bikini Atoll who were forced to relocate in the 1940s, after the United States began using its main island as a testing site for atom bombs.

"These people still have a desire to move back to their homeland," Cameron-Glickenhaas says. "But what's more likely, given the way sea levels are rising, is that we're going to have to relocate them again. And that just didn't seem fair to me. I had to work against that."

Cameron-Glickenhaas returned to the States to pursue the cause of abating climate change—through public policy and through education, and by making his own lifestyle as sustainable as he could. Among other things, Cameron-Glickenhaas was one of the first residents at The Visionaire, Manhattan's first LEED-certified condominium development, and he recently launched a green book club. One of the first titles the group read, he says, was William McDonough and Michael Braungart's seminal *Cradle-to-Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things*.

"The more educated we all are, the better," Cameron-Glickenhaas points out. "The only drawback is that the more you know, the harder it becomes to do the right thing, because you realize that the infrastructure doesn't exist to support you in that. Not yet, anyway. I mean, you do what you can," he adds. "You carry a reusable water bottle and a shopping bag, you shop at the farmers' market and you buy as much as you can secondhand."

But, he goes on to note, when would-be eco-shoppers do need to buy something new, they have to make time for research.

"It's a real challenge, trying to figure out what is greenwashing and what's not," he says, referring to marketing that puts a green gloss on undeserving products. "It's like, just recently I had to buy a pair of shoes, and trying to figure out where different brands were produced, and how they were made, it was a big task. A lot of companies keep their supply chains secret, precisely because they don't want you to know that stuff. We need there to be more transparency," he says, "in order to start rationalizing the marketplace for consumers."

"Looking further ahead," Cameron-Glickenhaas continues, "consumers themselves need to rethink how they consume."

"I don't just mean buy less," he explains. "What I mean is, ok, there are things we consume, literally—like food and water—but then there's all this other stuff that we're only consuming in a figurative sense. If you buy a TV, what you're really buying is a delivery platform for entertainment; your purchase of the TV is a kind of rent you pay for that service. "So," he continues, "why not just rent the television from the company that produces it? And then, when you're ready to get rid of that TV, you give it back to the company, so they can rent it to someone else, or make something new out of its parts."

Getting away from an ownership model would require a paradigm shift not only from consumers, but from corporations as well, Cameron-Glickenhaas says.

"Personally, I'd be very happy to be able to give my television back to Sony, or whoever, when I'm done with it," he says. "I'd rather they be responsible for figuring out what to do with it. But I also think I'd probably use my TV, or my cell phone, or my iPod longer if we went to that model, because the products would be made to last. Corporations would get out of the business of planned obsolescence if they knew the products they made would be coming back to them at some point."

A man in a green t-shirt and blue jeans is performing a handstand on a rooftop garden. He is upside down, with his head on the ground and his legs spread wide in the air. The background is a large, modern glass skyscraper with a grid of windows. The rooftop garden has grey stone tiles and patches of green grass.

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Such shifts in buying and selling behavior can't wait for a new generation of consumers, Cameron-Glickenhaas asserts. Working with high schoolers, he says, has made him realize that the consequences of climate change seem too far-off to the young and most of them can't yet vote with their wallets.

"This is our project," he says. "Adults need to care more about this issue, and do something about it, because we're the ones in charge. If we put it off any longer, it's going to be too late."