(Madison, WI, September 15, 2009) – The National Geographic Society Headquarters, located in Washington, D.C., has officially received Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Existing Buildings (LEED-EB) Gold Recertification from the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC). The 2009 recertification makes the National Geographic Headquarters one of only a handful of buildings to recertify under the LEED-EB program. The 835,000 square foot building was the first to receive LEED-EB certification under the USGBC’s Pilot Program, earning Silver certification in 2003. Over the six years since the building’s initial certification, National Geographic Society has implemented continuous sustainability improvement measures guided by the LEED-EB rating system. Leonardo Academy was the LEED consultant for the recertification project, supporting the successful achievement of Gold certification.

The National Geographic Society implemented many green actions to achieve Gold Recertification, including: (1) an extensive recycling program that has reduced waste disposal costs by $40,000; (2) a comprehensive alternative transportation and commuting program, including flexible schedules, telecommuting, bicycle racks, and preferred parking for carpool and hybrid vehicles; (3) fixture water use reduction 36% greater than LEED requirements; and (4) an overhaul of the major mechanical systems that led to a 20% decrease in energy use.

Leonardo Academy is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded in 1997 and dedicated to advancing sustainability and putting the competitive market to work on improving the environment. Leonardo Academy helps companies, organizations, buildings, events, families, and individuals achieve sustainability throughout the country and the world. For greening buildings, Leonardo Academy supports implementation and certification under the LEED Green Building Rating System™. For additional information about Leonardo Academy, visit www.leonardoacademy.org.

The National Geographic Society is one of the world's largest nonprofit scientific and educational organizations. Founded in 1888 to “increase and diffuse geographic knowledge,” the Society works to inspire people to care about the planet. It reaches more than 370 million people worldwide each month through its official journal, National Geographic, and other magazines, National Geographic Channel, television documentaries, music, radio, films, books, DVDs, maps, exhibitions, live events, school publishing programs, interactive media, and merchandise. National Geographic has funded more than 9,000 scientific
research, conservation and exploration projects and supports an education program promoting geographic literacy. For more information, visit www.nationalgeographic.com.

The LEED Green Building Rating System™ is a voluntary, consensus-based national standard for developing high-performance, sustainable buildings. LEED-EB is a USGBC-sponsored program for owners who address sustainable operations and maintenance for existing buildings. The USGBC is the nation’s leading coalition of corporations, builders, universities, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations working together to promote buildings that are environmentally responsible, profitable and healthy places to live and work. For additional information about the USGBC, visit www.usgbc.org.

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