

FACES OF ASHRAE: *Haleh Moghaddasi*

Haleh Moghaddasi, Ph.D., Assoc. AIA, Member ASHRAE, LEED GA, ENV SP, joined ASHRAE in 2018. She is currently a Senior Manager in Energy & Sustainability at EXP, FL.



► What is your current job?

At EXP, I focus on developing energy and decarbonization strategies for schools and residential projects, leading sustainability initiatives, and collaborating with municipalities and industry partners.

I also serve as a faculty member at the University of Miami, School of Architecture, teaching sustainable building practices and net zero design, integrating real-world applications to connect design, energy efficiency and environmental impact.

A key achievement has been supporting the department in earning the Zero Energy Design Designation from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), showcasing our dedication to building science education and sustainable design leadership.

► What is your level of education?

- Ph.D., Net Zero Energy, Texas A&M University, Texas.
- M.Sc., Sustainable Systems, Rochester Institute of Technology, N.Y.
- MARCH., Architecture & Design, Yerevan State University of Architecture and Construction, Yerevan, Armenia.
- B.Sc., Architectural Engineering, Qazvin, Iran.

► Years of industry experience?

I began my engineering career in 2004 as a student at a consulting firm and have since accumulated 20 years of experience across industry and academia. My professional journey in the U.S. started in 2015 with the City of Rochester (COR), N.Y.

► What technical committees or other parts of ASHRAE are you involved with?

I am a Full Member Grade of ASHRAE and have been serving in leadership roles within the Miami Chapter, including MP Chair, GA Chair, SA Chair, Secretary, and Board of Governors Member. I also participate in TC 2.5 (Global Climate Change), TC 2.8 (Building Environmental Impacts), and TC 7.6 (Building Energy Performance).

Additionally, I am an ASHRAE-DOE Pilot Member and part of the School Leadership Team for the ASHRAE Schools Partnership Program in collaboration with DOE and LBNL, supporting district outreach initiatives. I actively participate in chapter meetings and annual ASHRAE conferences, contributing to discussions on climate-responsive building design, energy performance, and sustainability.

► What got you into the industry?

Coming from an engineering family, I have always seen the industry as a practical extension of academic knowledge. To truly validate what is learned in academia, it must be applied in real-world settings. This philosophy has shaped not only my career but also my teaching approach, where I engage students with industry experts and real projects. This method encourages both creativity and functionality, helping students understand the real-world impact of their study and its significance to society.

► What is your favorite part of your job?

The opportunity to improve the quality of life for underrepresented residents and students in disadvantaged communities. Through scalable energy equity solutions, I help bring sustainable and affordable advancements to those who need them most. The direct impact of reduced energy burdens to healthier living and learning environments is truly fulfilling. I appreciate the trust and encouragement of my manager John Flint, Senior Vice President at EXP, whose support has been a key in advancing this mission.

► What advice do you have to young people starting out in ASHRAE?

I joined ASHRAE as a student, taking on active leadership roles which helped me build a strong network of industry leaders—many of whom became valued mentors and friends. Through ASHRAE, I gained access to invaluable resources, speaking opportunities, and professional development, all while becoming part of a supportive community.

My advice to students: Don't overlook opportunities that can shape your future—joining ASHRAE is one of them! It's a gateway to learning, networking, and career growth in the industry.

► What are your career goals?

When I moved to the U.S., my goal was to "change the world." Over time, through further education and experience, that vision evolved into "making the world a better place for all." I have dedicated my work to developing a Net Zero Energy (NZ) model—a scalable, practical, and globally adaptable solution. My aim is to expand its application across different project scales, helping to accelerate global climate targets and drive meaningful progress in sustainability.

► What are the biggest challenges you see that the industry is facing?

One of the biggest challenges

is achieving global climate targets through net zero solutions. Many industries promote NZ initiatives, yet the absence of a unified definition leads to uncertainty and delays. Without clear and consistent criteria, it becomes difficult to assess whether a project truly meets net zero standards. Achieving industry-wide consensus is critical for advancing sustainability efforts effectively.

► How do you think the industry could best address those challenges?

To overcome this, the industry must adopt a standardized yet flexible net zero definition that accommodates regional variations while ensuring uniform measurement and reporting. Establishing clear, trackable, and transparent NZ frameworks will improve accountability and implementation, ultimately driving faster and more effective climate action.

► What has been your favorite part of being an ASHRAE member?

The opportunity to collaborate with engineers, government agencies and students has been incredibly rewarding. As Chair of Government Affairs (GA), Student Activities (SA), and Sustainability, I have worked with Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to help secure federal funding for improving energy efficiency and indoor air quality in schools within disadvantaged communities. At the same time, engaging with college students has allowed me to support their professional growth through scholarships, mentorships, networking, and technical courses, ensuring they get the most out of ASHRAE.

► What do you enjoy doing when you are away from work?

Outside of work, I dedicate time to my ASHRAE responsibilities and enjoy quality time with my puppy, Piccolo, as well as family and friends. I also focus on continuing education to stay current with certifications and am actively writing my first book, which explores clarifying the net zero definition. ●