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## **2017 Women in Building Services: Bonnie Hagen, Bright Energy Services**

October 17, 2017 - Spotlights

Name: Bonnie Hagen

Title: Chief Operating Officer

Company Name: Bright Energy Services

Years in real estate: 10

What real estate associations or organizations are you a member of? Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors, Inc., Urban Land Institute, USGBC, Association of Energy Engineers, Northeast Sustainable Energy Association, Westchester Green Business, Westchester Business Council

How have you navigated obstacles to achieve success in your career?

Obstacles can always be navigated easily when they are viewed from the proper perspective. From co-founding Bright Energy Services (an environmental engineering company that helps owners and managers of commercial, industrial, institutional, and multi-family properties save money by saving energy), to leading the day to day operations of the company, obstacles to our goals pop up every day for myself and my staff. I train my staff to view an obstacle as an exciting event . . . a chance to compete better and strengthen our chances at accomplishing global sustainability and resiliency. My staff has learned to assess an obstacle and then say to themselves “How can I get around this obstacle?” rather than “I can’t get to where I’m going with this obstacle in my way!” The positioning of the initial thought opens us up to being creative in addressing the difficulty, rather than shutting down and not achieving our goals.

How do you play your strengths to your advantage in your career?

Many people think that addressing climate change initiatives should be left to the scientists and environmental engineers. I am not a scientist nor an engineer. I am a business person. While my weaknesses may be in the details of climate change (biology, Earth Science, chemistry, meteorology, etc.), my strengths are in financial analysis, team building, and project management. My strengths allow me to understand the challenge that is posed, the costs and benefits in overcoming the challenge, and the social, political and environmental impacts. Because I understand these things, I am able to develop fiscally responsible project plans to act upon the

challenge, and then build consensus and inspire collaboration to make it happen. With each completed energy efficiency project we do, playing my strengths to my advantage in my career is completely aligned with playing my strengths to the advantage of remediating climate change and helping the Earth become more sustainable and resilient.

What trends are you seeing so far this year?

Given the new administration in Washington D.C. is full of climate change skeptics, slashing funding for the Environmental Protection Agency and other critical climate change initiatives, I am seeing a trend in the states, local municipalities and businesses moving forward with their sustainability and resiliency efforts despite what the federal government is doing. This gives me great hope that we may be able to save the world after all!

What do you do for fun?

I love spending time with my family on the town – at a show or a restaurant – exploring and enjoying new things.

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