



## **PWC holds "Movers and Shakers" networking/table-top exhibit event; Speakers included: Ward of Dragados USA, among others**

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A brighter future is anticipated in the construction and design industry said the speakers, as each voiced cautious optimism at Professional Women in Construction (PWC)'s "Movers and Shakers" networking and table-top exhibit event held at Club 101 on October 18.

Christopher Ward, executive vice president, Dragados USA, Inc., is merging his past experience in the public realm as executive director of the Port Authority of NY/NJ with his present position at a private company by working to create public/private partnerships to aid both sectors as they continue to face economic hurdles. Ward said, "The MTA and other agencies are facing enormous financial challenges. Financial partnering is the best way to face these and I urge all of you to seek such relationships. This is especially applicable to the area's infrastructure - rebuilding and repairing our aging infrastructure is the future for all of us."

Carter Strickland, Jr., commissioner of the NYC Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) said that "the future is bright in terms of the DEP," yet since the DEP is under fiscal restraints it needs to structure projects judiciously. He predicted a greater number "of smaller projects going forward" which will create a "more competitive marketplace."

Strickland commended the Wards Island Wastewater Treatment Plant on its 75th anniversary. He also noted the DEP's "strong legacy of women in key leadership positions" and said that it has "surpassed our goal of MWBE participation."

Joseph Aliotta, AIA LEED AP and president of AIA's New York chapter and a managing principal and COO-US at Swanke Hayden Connell Architects, said that "The key to Swanke weathering the continued economic challenges is the diversity of our practice and the strength of our long-term client relationships." He said that the firm is able to respond to the changing market forces and work(ing) on such projects - all LEED - as the Tavern-on-the-Green restoration; the repositioning of the landmark Banknote Building in the Bronx; and the renovation of 200,000 s/f of interiors for the City of New York for Taconic Investments. Overall, current projects range from on-call assignments for regular clients to a new ground-up \$200 million hospital in Bermuda.

Nancy Czesak, RA, first vice president, Tishman Construction Corporation, an AECOM company, spoke of some of Tishman's major current biddable projects: the expansion and renovation of the Javits Center; preconstruction for Cornell's New York Tech campus to be built over 25 years on Roosevelt Island; the rebuilding of the World Trade Center site; the International Gem Tower, a new office building in the midtown Manhattan Diamond District; the Baccarat Hotel; a new dormitory for Pace University at 180/182 Broadway (downtown campus); Fordham University's Gabelli School of Business; The New School University Center; and Carnegie Hall. She said that all bidders must be pre-qualified on-line.

Anthony Schirripa, FAIA, IIDA, chairman and CEO, Mancini\*Duffy/TSC, said that "we are optimistic for 2013 but continue to be concerned about the global economy." He spoke of the need to stimulate capital spending in the private sector and said that since the recession hit in 2008, architectural firms have seen their revenue drop by 40% though now the "Architecture Billings Index" is in positive territory.

Focusing on interior architecture, recently completed Mancini\*Duffy/TSC projects include the Dorsey & Whitney and Godiva relocations; current projects include A+E Networks; KPMG; Mattel; and NBC Universal. Branch rollouts for Starbucks, Tiffany & Co., and Van Cleef & Arpels and work with Bloomingdale's are ongoing.

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