



## **Message from 2013 chairman of Long Island USGBC**

January 14, 2013 - Long Island

As we enter 2013, we find our region facing unprecedented challenges. While still recovering from the worst recession since the Great Depression, we also now find ourselves faced with having to recover from Superstorm Sandy. Although we have been saddled with the challenges of both rebuilding our communities and our economy, we have also been presented with a critical opportunity.

In too many instances, failure to recognize the importance of sustainability has cost us greatly. To rebuild Long Island using methods and materials that would continue to leave our communities vulnerable to future weather and flooding events would be irresponsible. Failure to recognize that we have the tools to address the root causes of climate change, while implementing solutions to mitigate damage already done, would be negligent. Our community of green building professionals and advocates has a unique opportunity to shape decisions and investments that will impact whether or not we decide to ignore recent events or take the opportunity to build for the future.

What will leave one of the most lasting impressions from the recovery effort is the tremendous generosity that Long Islanders have demonstrated in helping their neighbors. As I begin my tenure as chairman, I would like to call upon all of you to continue this demonstration of community service. As we rebuild our schools, our businesses, and our homes, you will be needed. Many will be tempted and in some cases downright insistent upon repeating past mistakes under the banner of budget and expediency. Our future depends on all of you standing your ground and making it clear that we can no longer afford to ignore our changing climate; we can no longer afford to take how we produce, distribute, and use energy for granted; and we can no longer afford to be dismissive of the fact that how we build today will determine how we fare tomorrow.

I know that the Long Island chapter of the USGBC is equipped to do its part in addressing the short term and long term challenges of our region. I look forward to moving forward with all of you this year as we help to steer Long Island toward a brighter, greener, and more sustainable future.

Sammy Chu is the 2013 chairman of the Long Island chapter of USGBC and is the commissioner of Suffolk County Dept. of Labor.

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