



USGBC-LI holds "Building Green Long Island" Gala

July 15, 2013 - Long Island

By Vince Capogna

It was with great pleasure that we celebrated our sixth annual USGBC-LI "Building Green Long Island" Gala on June 10th. The annual gala is always an exciting evening where we are able to honor those whose leadership is consistent with our mission as well as an opportunity to thank all those whose support helps make it all possible.

The motto of the USGBC-LI has been, "it's not about buildings...it's about people." It sums up our belief that buildings have a profound effect on the lives of those that live, work and play in them as well as on the community at large. Over this past decade our 2013 honoree's work on energy policy, environmental issues, climate change and the upholding of clean air and water standards has always been about protecting and enhancing the lives of the people of Long Island - our families, friends and co-workers, as well as our brothers and sisters across this great nation. It was with great pride that we recognized congressman Steve Israel for leadership consistent with the mission of the USGBC.

As a member of the USGBC, I have learned that our built environment is much more than the collection of physical structures around us. It is the place where we build the story of our lives—where we raise our families, educate our children, labor, create, gather our communities, exalt our spirituality, and care for our elders. Our intuition and our experience tell us that the design and composition of these spaces matter. They can inhibit or inspire, stifle or allow us to breathe, disrupt or harmonize with our natural surroundings, shut us out or welcome us home.

The vision and mission of the USGBC is to improve the quality of life by transforming the design, composition, and operation of the places where we live, learn, work, and play within the short space of a generation. The Town of North Hempstead's, LEED Platinum, "Yes We Can" Community Center is helping to transform our built environment by being a prime example of a building that conserves resources, offers a healthy indoor environment to its occupants and will support the many generations of families living within the community for many generations yet to come. We hope that in recognizing this stellar project, others will be inspired to rethink the design, construction and operation of buildings for the benefit of their occupants, the local community, and our shared environment.

This year we were also very pleased to recognize the Long Island Power Authority (LIPA). LIPA has been a valuable partner in the USGBC-LI chapter's ongoing effort to educate the consumer regarding energy efficient, environmentally responsible building operation, which has resulted in significant reductions in usage and in a cleaner, healthier built environment. No single organization on Long Island has done as much to help achieve the USGBC's mission. The combination of LIPA's vast technical knowledge, engineering assistance, and incentive programs is unparalleled and

worthy of recognition not only for such a unique collaborative effort, but for the measure of the results they have shown to date.

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