



2024 Ones to Watch Industry Leaders: Robert Grunert-Loud, Rochester's Cornerstone Group, Ltd.

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Robert Grunert-Loud
Senior Development Project Manager

Rochester's Cornerstone Group, Ltd.

"Robert Grunert-Loud is an industry leader in sustainable construction, focusing on affordable housing. At Rochester's Cornerstone Group Ltd., he's led multimillion-dollar projects, integrating advanced sustainability, and achieving significant energy savings, setting industry standards in both environmental stewardship and accessible housing." - Roger Brandt Jr., President and CEO at Rochester's Cornerstone Group Ltd.

In the last 12 months what accomplishment are you most proud of? In the past year, I'm most proud of leading the Silver Lake Meadows Rehabilitation project to completion in a typically underserved rural community. This initiative achieved a 21.9% reduction in energy usage and secured a NYSEDA Multifamily Performance certification, demonstrating our commitment to sustainability. The project not only improved housing quality affordably but also set a new standard for integrating environmental sustainability in rural areas often overlooked by state resources.

Best books, podcasts, or apps for aspiring leaders: For aspiring leaders, I recommend the book "How the World Really Works" by Vaclav Smil. It provides an insightful exploration into the fundamental processes that drive global industries and environmental systems, equipping leaders with the knowledge necessary to make informed, impactful decisions in complex scenarios.

In the last 12 months what was one of the biggest challenges you faced as a leader and how did you overcome it? One of the biggest challenges I faced this past year was adapting to market volatility, including fluctuations in interest rates and shortages of construction materials. Despite these hurdles, my strategic planning and proactive management enabled us to not only navigate these challenges effectively but also complete the Silver Lake Meadows project on budget and ahead of schedule. This success underlines our team's resilience and adaptability in a rapidly changing economic landscape.

Best advice for new leaders: The best advice for new leaders is to remember that leadership is just one aspect of your life. It's crucial to maintain a balance and ensure that your identity isn't solely defined by your job. Make time to pursue your passions and engage with the world beyond work. This approach not only enriches your personal life but also enhances your capacity to lead with empathy and perspective. Ultimately, embracing the full spectrum of your interests prevents future regrets and leads to a more fulfilled life.

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