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Richard V. Piacentini Appointed as Board Chair for International Living Future Institute

Phipps executive director shares expertise as sustainability pioneer with top green building organization.

Pittsburgh, Pa. — [Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens](#) is pleased to announce that Executive Director Richard V. Piacentini has been appointed as the board of directors chair for the [International Living Future Institute™](#) (ILFI), a nonprofit comprised of green building experts and thought leaders dedicated to creating socially just, culturally rich and ecologically restorative communities. As the operator of the Living Building Challenge™, currently the globe's most progressive standard for green architecture, ILFI inspires change in the way that buildings are designed, built and operated, and Piacentini, who has served as board secretary since May 2014, will continue to lend his expertise as an influential sustainability pioneer to further support its mission in his new role.

Before joining the ILFI board, Piacentini was celebrated by the organization as a Living Building Challenge Hero in 2012, becoming one of only a few individuals worldwide to receive this prestigious honor. As the visionary behind the [Center for Sustainable Landscapes](#) (CSL), Piacentini is also responsible for planting the seeds for and overseeing construction of this groundbreaking Living Building Challenge project at Phipps that has already garnered international acclaim and won multiple awards as one of Earth's greenest buildings. Prior to this achievement, his leadership at Phipps was recognized globally in 2009, when President Obama chose the Conservatory to host the G-20 Summit dinner for world leaders.

"We are thrilled Richard is taking on this role," says ILFI CEO Jason F. McLennan. "His commitment to our mission and work is evident in his active role in the Living Building Challenge at Phipps. We are excited to have someone with his passion and experience help lead us forward."

"When I first learned about the Living Building Challenge and met its creator, Jason McLennan, in 2006, I was inspired by the revolutionary principles behind it and eager to be among the first to pursue it with construction of the CSL," says Piacentini, who travels extensively to share his innovative spirit and ideas to inspire professionals around the globe to build and operate more sustainably. "It is an honor to serve the ILFI board. I look forward to continuing to share what Phipps has learned through this position and joining them in helping to make the world a better place for us all to live."

Since becoming executive director of Phipps in 1994, Piacentini has been instrumental in guiding the Conservatory from public to private management and improving its collections, educational programs, and guest services. Additionally, during his tenure, Phipps launched the most ambitious expansion project in its 120-year history, which included the creation of the first LEED®-certified visitor center in a public garden, the first LEED-certified greenhouses, and the Tropical Forest Conservatory, the most energy-efficient structure of its kind when it opened in 2006. Phipps' latest accomplishment resulting from his leadership is the CSL, a net-zero energy and net-zero water facility that has been designed to meet the Living Building Challenge™. Already a recipient of Net Zero Energy Building Certification under the Challenge, LEED Platinum and Four Stars Sustainable Sites Initiative™ certification, it has also become the first institution worldwide to achieve WELL Platinum Pilot Certification — the highest rating awarded by the International WELL Building Institute. To learn more, visit phipps.conservatory.org.

About Phipps: Founded in 1893, Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens in Pittsburgh, Pa. is a green leader among public gardens with a mission to inspire and educate all with the beauty and importance of plants; to advance sustainability and promote human and environmental well-being through action and research; and to celebrate its historic glasshouse. Learn more: phipps.conservatory.org.

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