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Phipps Executive Director Richard V. Piacentini Receives Green Building Alliance Legacy Award

Sustainability leader honored for innovations in creating healthy, highly performing green buildings.

Pittsburgh, Pa. — As the visionary behind [Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens](#)' innovative [Center for Sustainable Landscapes](#) (CSL), Executive Director Richard V. Piacentini has been named as the recipient of the 2014 [Green Building Alliance](#) (GBA) Legacy Award. He was chosen for this honor due to his progressive vision, as well as the inspiration he has provided, in making the Pittsburgh region a leader in the movement to create healthy, high-performing buildings for a better future.

Since his tenure began in 1994, Piacentini has not only made great strides to revitalize Phipps but he has also taken the lead on its transformation into a global model of sustainability with the building 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 in the world when it opened in 2006. Phipps' latest accomplishment under his leadership is the CSL, a net-zero energy and net-zero water facility that has been designed to meet the progressive Living Building Challenge™. Already a recipient of Net Zero Energy Building Certification under the Living Building Challenge, LEED Platinum and Four Stars SITES™ certification from the Sustainable Sites Initiative™, it is also expected to be the first building anywhere to achieve all three of these rigorous standards.

"In a time when many of the environmental problems we face can be attributed to the fact that we are not only disconnected from nature but also live in a society that values the importance of 'me' over 'we,' it is not enough to simply build greener," says Piacentini. "With the CSL, we hope to push the envelope even further, inspiring transformative experiences in the space as we celebrate our innate bonds to nature, and illuminate the many possibilities of sustainable building and landscaping. I am truly honored to have received the Legacy Award in recognition of this work, which will benefit generations to come."

Piacentini accepted the Legacy Award at GBA's annual Emerald Evening, a gala held on Sept. 25, 2014 at Carnegie Music Hall in Oakland. Also honored on this special evening was Doreen Petri, who received the Luminary Award for her work in the Erie School District. Three hundred guests were in attendance to celebrate, along with County Executive Rich Fitzgerald, the City of Pittsburgh's Ray Gastil, GBA Board Chair Michael Kuhn, GBA CEO Mike Schiller, and honorary event chairs Dom Dozzi of Jendoco Construction and Scott Pollock of Oxford Development Company.

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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