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### **Phipps Center for Sustainable Landscapes Achieves WELL Platinum Pilot Certification**

*Pittsburgh public garden becomes first to receive highest distinction as part of the International WELL Building Institute's WELL Rating Pilot Program*

**Pittsburgh, Pa.** — [Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens](#) has become the first institution worldwide to achieve WELL Platinum Pilot Certification — the highest rating awarded by the [International WELL Building Institute](#) (IWBI) — for the [Center for Sustainable Landscapes](#) (CSL), one of Earth's greenest buildings. Designed and built by Pittsburghers and Pennsylvanians, this landmark facility is also expected to be the first project anywhere to meet the Living Building Challenge™ — for which Net Zero Energy Certification was attained from the International Living Future Institute™ in May 2014 — in tandem with LEED® Platinum and Four-Stars Sustainable Sites Initiative™ (SITES™) certification for landscapes, both of which were earned in 2013.

The WELL Building Standard® is the world's first building standard to focus on enhancing health and wellbeing through the built environment. Created through seven years of collaboration with leading physicians, scientists and industry professionals, it is a performance-based certification system that marries best practices in design and construction with evidence-based medical and scientific research. The CSL earned the distinction based on seven performance categories — air, water, light, nourishment, fitness, comfort and mind— and achieved a Platinum Pilot level rating, becoming the first project to meet IWBI's highest standard.

“The CSL was created to demonstrate important connections between human and ecological health, and to highlight the ways in which the built environment intersects with nature,” says Phipps Executive Director Richard V. Piacentini. “We are honored to be among the first institutions to achieve the Well Building Standard, leading by example as we promote design and operation methods that improve quality of life.”

Project features that helped Phipps achieve its WELL Platinum Pilot rating for the CSL include:

- **Air Quality Standards:** Indoor air quality testing was conducted, confirming that the building is providing occupants with high quality air. The design met stringent thresholds for low levels of volatile substances, particulate matter and inorganic gases.
- **Water Quality Standards:** IWBI verified that the project is delivering healthy and safe drinking water. Source water was tested for harmful impurities and contaminants and to ensure compliance with the Environmental Protection Agency's Drinking Water Standards.
- **Humidity Control:** Relative humidity levels are being monitored and devices are in place to maintain healthy humidity levels, which facilitates increased occupant comfort and higher indoor air quality, as well as prevents harmful biological growth.
- **Sun and Glare Control:** Internal and external solar shading has been installed to reduce heat penetration by sunlight and to control visual acuity, protecting occupants from uncomfortable thermal fluctuations and glare.
- **Activity Based Lighting:** To reduce eyestrain, lighting has been designed to reach balanced and proper illumination levels while task lights have been implemented to allow adequate levels of light.
- **Wellness Literacy:** To encourage the behaviors necessary for a healthy lifestyle, occupants have access to the latest health and wellness literature, as well as comprehensive guides that describe the various wellness features throughout the building.

- **Healthy Ingredients:** Drinks and foods distributed do not contain trans fats or high levels of refined ingredients as increased access to healthy foods encourages occupants to develop wholesome eating habits and maintain a healthy weight.
- **Ergonomics:** Comprehensive ergonomic solutions, such as sit/stand desks and ergonomically designed workstation chairs, have been introduced to help prevent stress and bodily injury.
- **Circadian Lighting:** Occupants have exposure to daylight in their workspaces, as well as access to indoor and outdoor gardens that provide natural light throughout the year. These spaces supply light intensity to reinforce the natural patterns of the human circadian rhythm — the biological system that controls sleep and wake cycles — which enhances occupant productivity and energy.
- **Non-Toxic Materials:** In accordance with WELL and the Living Building Challenge, Phipps banned the use of more than a dozen chemicals and materials in furniture and finishes that have been proven to be harmful to human health.
- **Cleaning Protocol:** A specialized, chemical-free cleaning plan has been put into effect to reduce bioloads, pests, allergens and odors that affect both indoor air quality and occupant comfort.

A home-base for environmental education and research, as well as a space for visitors to explore, the CSL also incorporates many features of biophilia that improve occupant mood through patterns of nature. This is achieved through visual and auditory biophilic art and a restorative landscape with native plants. In addition, the CSL achieves enhanced ventilation for occupant comfort while aiming to achieve net-zero energy with geothermal wells, a vertical axis wind turbine and solar photovoltaics. Operable high performance low-e windows provide fresh air, natural light and views of nature, and Phipps offers employees free nutrition workshops and counseling, yoga classes and other fitness incentives, daily access to organic fruit and more.

“The CSL’s WELL Platinum Pilot Certification demonstrates outstanding healthy building leadership,” says IWBI Founder Paul Scialla. “IWBI’s mission is to bring human health to the forefront of building practices globally, and it is leaders in the building industry like Phipps that are helping to advance this movement and show the world how we can push building projects to new heights of sustainability.”

Administered by IWBI, the WELL Building Standard is third-party certified through IWBI’s collaboration with the Green Building Certification Institute (GBCI). Following a two-year pilot program and a formal peer review process, Version 1.0 of the WELL Building Standard was publicly released on October 20, 2014 at the inaugural WELL Building Symposium in New Orleans. For inquiries and information, or to register a project for WELL Certification, please visit [wellcertified.com](http://wellcertified.com). Additional details can be found at [phipps.conservatory.org](http://phipps.conservatory.org) and [WELLBuildingInstitute.com](http://WELLBuildingInstitute.com).

**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](http://phipps.conservatory.org).

### **About the International WELL Building Institute**

The International WELL Building Institute (IWBI) is a public benefit corporation (B-Corp) whose mission is to improve human health and wellbeing through the built environment. B-Corps like IWBI are an emerging US corporate structure for corporations committed to balancing public benefits with profitability – harnessing the power of private capital for greater good. IWBI currently offers WELL Building Certification, and in early 2015 will launch professional education, supporting publications, and the WELL Accredited Professional program. Fulfilling the vision of IWBI founder Paul Scialla, IWBI has a pioneering altruistic capitalism model that will address social responsibility and demonstrate a sustainable model for philanthropy. The IWBI has committed to direct 51% of net profits received from WELL Building certification project fees toward charitable contributions and impact investment focused on health, wellness, and the built environment. IWBI was founded by Delos pursuant to a Clinton Global Initiative commitment by Delos founder Paul Scialla to improve

the way people live by developing spaces that enhance occupant health and quality of life by sharing the WELL Building Standard globally.

**About the WELL Building Standard®**

The WELL Building Standard® is a performance-based system for measuring, certifying, and monitoring features of the built environment that impact the health and wellbeing of the people who live, work, and learn in them. WELL focuses on seven categories of building performance: air, water, nourishment, light, fitness, comfort, and mind. Pioneered by Delos, the WELL Building Standard is grounded in evidence-based medical research that demonstrates the connection between the buildings where we spend more than 90 percent of our time and health and wellness impacts on us as occupants. The WELL Building Standard is administered by the International WELL Building Institute and committed to third-party certification through IWBI's collaboration with the Green Building Certification Institute (GBCI).

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