

For Immediate Release

Green Building Announces Five Recipients of 2020 Groundbreaker Awards, Including Community Choice Award

The Annual Groundbreaker Awards Celebrates Green Building Leadership, Innovation, and Impact in the region

Philadelphia, PA, December 18, 2020 – [Green Building United](#), a green building education and advocacy organization, announced the recipients of the annual [2020 Groundbreaker Awards](#) at a virtual award ceremony on Thursday, December 17. Green Building United's annual Groundbreaker Awards recognizes and celebrates green building leadership, innovation, and impact in the greater Philadelphia, the Lehigh Valley, and Delaware.

"This year's community leadership and project awardees include from net-zero construction, to affordable housing, best practice tools and training, and to programs that engage our youth and build the next generation of green building advocates." said Alex Dews, Executive Director of Green Building United. "The breadth of the work that this year's awardees are being recognized for is testament to the growing emphasis on sustainability in our region and is indicative of the role that it will play in our future. We're pleased to recognize their hard work and dedication to innovation and green building and commend the impact they are making on our communities."

The 2020 Groundbreaker Awards recipients include, for the first time, a Community Choice Award, which was selected by attendees of the virtual award ceremony on Thursday, December 17. Attendees cast votes through an online platform and Park in A Truck was recognized as the 2020 Community Choice Award.

About This Year's Awards Recipients:

Community Choice Awardee: Park in a Truck

653 North 38th Street, Philadelphia, PA, 19104

Park in a Truck harnesses the hidden asset of many low-income neighborhoods - vacant lots and other unused land. This program creates a community operated green network, established through low-cost, fast-turnaround renovations of vacant lots that not only improves environmental, social, and physical health in under-resourced neighborhoods, but also unites efforts to keep them intact and helps residents lead revitalization and reinvestment efforts. This open space initiative builds upon the ongoing community development work of many great organizations by repurposing underutilized spaces to fill in the gaps. No one should ever be far from a safe, high-quality green space.

Community Leadership Awardee: Melody Phillips

Wilmington, Delaware

Melody is the dynamic leader of the The Teen Warehouse located in Northeast Wilmington, DE. The Warehouse gives teens access to a range of services and challenges their creativity. It helps them explore their passions, find support, and develop the skills they need to enhance their academic achievement and employment opportunities. At The Warehouse, all the teens need is opportunity, support, and a community that believes in them. Melody believes in the teens and shows them every day through the "For Teens, By Teens" philosophy. Through her leadership, The Warehouse is working

with Delmarva Power to help The Warehouse become a place where teens can learn about clean energy, electric transportation, and sustainable farming and agriculture. These educational opportunities start them on a path to becoming the next generation of sustainability leaders.

Community Leadership Awardee: Paula Kline

West Chester, Pennsylvania

Paula's Clean Energy Planning Series, Ready For 100 Communities initiative, provided best practice tools, training and ongoing support for 30 local municipalities, their Environmental Advisory Councils, and RF100 volunteers to develop individualized clean energy transition plans and understand energy use analysis. Over 80 participants learned how to improve building energy efficiency as a stepping stone to financing the tougher aspects of transitioning community energy sources to 100 percent renewable sources with equitable stakeholder engagement. Paula pulled together regional and national clean energy experts to present through 15 well-attended, highly interactive seminars. Despite the pandemic, the initiative trained community environmental and municipal leaders how to specifically plan in a cost effective manner saving taxpayer dollars through world class online technical energy concepts and community outreach best practices to engage their communities.

Project Awardee: Casa Indiana

2935-65 North 2nd St, Philadelphia, PA, 19140

Casa Indiana rises from the site of a former yarn mill in the Fairhill neighborhood of Philadelphia. Standing among old Philadelphia rowhomes and a new art walk, the 50 senior apartments in Casa Indiana provides much needed affordable housing for the aging Puerto Rican community. It is the continuation of decades of work by the Hispanic Association of Contractors and Enterprises (HACE) to build an equitable future for Fairhill and uplift the cultural identity of the neighborhood. Sited along the busy thoroughfare of North 2nd Street, Casa Indiana peels back at the corner to reveal a plaza and a sculpture by a local artist. In the back, the building embraces a Secret Garden that provides areas for senior activities of all kinds; a paved plaza for larger gatherings, a lawn for smaller gatherings and recreation and raised planters for ease of access for the seniors.

Project Awardee: Sustainable Energy Fund Net Zero Building

4250 Independence Drive, Schnecksville, PA, 18078

The Sustainable Energy Fund (SEF) Net Zero Energy Building (NZEB) was the result of SEF's desire to expand upon our mission and commitment to sustainability. In building the region's first NZEB, SEF aimed to prove that net-zero construction can be done at market rate and incentivize the community to follow our lead in implementing net-zero construction. An innovative assortment of energy efficiency and on-site renewables resulted in a net positive energy building. Additionally, the building has several environmentally conscious features that increase the building's impact, including the use of reclaimed wood and unique native plants on the property that enhance the local ecology. Lastly, the building strongly impacts the community by acting as a resource. Tours will be given to groups looking to learn about net zero construction, and the education center will be used for trainings and sessions about the importance of seeking a sustainable future.

###

About Green Building United

Green Building United, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, is committed to promoting sustainable building in Greater Philadelphia, the Lehigh Valley and Delaware. Through education and advocacy, Green Building United aims to create a sustainable, healthy, and resilient built environment for all.

Green Building United offers its members and partners a wide variety of resources, tools, and events to help them stay informed of the latest green building news and trends. For more information, visit www.greenbuildingunited.org and connect with us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

Press Contacts:

Deepika Cicoria on behalf of Green Building United

Mobile: 862.812.3131

dcicoria@brownsteingroup.com