

# Pioneering Center, on the Front Lines of Climate Action, Celebrates More than a Decade of Impact.

*innovative nonprofit Building Energy Exchange (BE-Ex), established in 2009 by the NYC Mayor's Office and the Natural Resources Defense Council, has been at the forefront of driving the global transition to healthy, high-performing buildings through its unique 21st-century learning hub and robust online platform.*

*Celebrating this major milestone in the journey towards decarbonizing buildings, BE-Ex is recognizing early supporters of its mission, including NYC's Chief Climate Officer, NYSERDA's President & CEO, NRDC's Chief Program Officer, and USGBC's Principal Climate Advisor.*

New York, NY - January 31, 2024 - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Today, Building Energy Exchange (BE-Ex), a pioneering nonprofit dedicated to advancing energy efficiency in the built environment, commemorates more than a decade of transformative initiatives, impactful programs, and unwavering dedication to shaping a more sustainable future.

BE-Ex has been at the forefront of accelerating the transition to healthy, high-performing buildings through its unique 21st-century learning hub and robust online platform. The organization has played a vital role in supporting New York City and State climate action plans, connecting the industry to cost-saving systems, education, and financing. Globally, BE-Ex shares resources globally through partnerships with the United Nations' 'International Centers of Excellence' network and the 'Global Alliance for Building & Construction,' and nationally by supporting the creation of building resource hubs across the country.

The event, held at the Exchange located at 31 Chambers Street in the historic Surrogate's Courthouse, will be attended by industry leaders, public officials, and community members.

## **Honorees Recognized for their Trailblazing Support:**

- **Doreen Harris and NYSERDA**, President & CEO, New York State Energy Research and Development Authority;
- **Rohit T. "Rit" Aggarwala**, NYC Chief Climate Officer, Commissioner of NYC Department of Environmental Protection;
- **Ashok Gupta**, Chief Program Officer, National Resources Defense Council (NRDC); and
- **Laurie Kerr**, Principal Climate Advisor, U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC).

Special guests **Rory Christian**, Chair & CEO, NYS Public Service Commission and **Elijah Hutchinson**, Executive Director, NYC Mayor's Office of Climate and Environmental Justice, will

deliver remarks during the awards ceremony. Purslane, New York's first zero-waste, carbon-neutral catering company, will provide sustainable food and refreshments.

*"I'm honored to have led BE-Ex since its inception, privileged to have collaborated with an incredible team dedicated to advancing a sustainable future in New York and beyond," stated **Richard C. Yancey, FAIA, founding Executive Director, Building Energy Exchange.** "Tonight, we celebrate our entire community and the dedicated group of visionaries who embraced challenges and innovation, demonstrating what can be achieved when we collectively tackle one of the most significant challenges of our time. Our shared success is testament to the change that's possible and points to a promising future bringing high-performing, healthy buildings to everyone, everywhere."*

*"On behalf of the entire Building Energy Exchange board of directors (past and present), we are thrilled to celebrate this milestone with the many partners around New York that have a stake in the performance of buildings," said **Jonathan P. Flaherty, Global Head of Sustainability and Building Technology Innovation at Tishman Speyer and Chair of the Building Energy Exchange Board of Directors.** "BE-Ex is the only organization of its kind, dedicated entirely to advancing energy efficient buildings and playing a central role in the climate action plans of the City and State, while catering to the needs of the private sector. We look forward to continuing our leading role as educators, conveners and advisors on some of the most critical issues facing our region."*

**Donna De Costanzo, Regional Director, Northeast, Climate & Energy Program, Natural Resources Defense Council and Vice-Chair of the BE-Ex Board of Directors, noted,** *"Building Energy Exchange has reached an impressive milestone. NRDC is looking forward to continued collaboration with BE-Ex, connecting all New Yorkers with the resources they need to improve the energy performance of their buildings. BE-Ex's efforts to support high-performance affordable housing is playing a key role in creating a more equitable transition."*

## **Founding and Early Initiatives (2009-2014)**

BE-Ex was founded in 2009 and has been instrumental in advancing New York's climate mission. Through its public energy efficiency resource center in downtown Manhattan, BE-Ex has provided critical tools, education, and exhibits, addressing the urgent mission to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from buildings.

The roots of BE-Ex trace back to the Bloomberg Administration and the publication of [PlaNYC](#), in 2007, which laid the foundation for sustainable urban development. Recognizing a knowledge gap, the administration helped launch Green Light New York (GLNY) –now known as Building Energy Exchange– to foster discussions on cutting-edge lighting technologies. Significant milestones included the release of GLNY's first research report [Let There Be Daylight](#), advocating for advanced daylighting systems in 2012, the opening of GLNY's first-ever exhibit in 2014, ["Bright Ideas for a Resilient World"](#), showcasing low-carbon lighting solutions and their ability to strengthen vulnerable communities, and the creation of the annual [Daylight Hour](#)

[campaign](#), which raises awareness about energy reduction and motivates people all around the world to turn off non-essential lighting in their offices and homes.

*“Since its founding, Building Energy Exchange has been a key ally to New York City as it advances world-leading climate policy,” said Rohit T. Aggarwala, New York City Chief Climate Officer and commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection. “Ensuring that building owners and building professionals understand the state of the art in energy efficiency is more important now than ever as we work to mobilize our city’s large buildings to fight climate change and I look forward to continuing this fruitful partnership.”*

*“I would like to congratulate the Building Energy Exchange on a remarkable decade of transformative initiatives and unwavering dedication to advancing energy efficiency,” said Council Member James F. Gennaro, Chair of the New York City Council’s Committee on Environmental Protection, Resiliency and Waterfronts.” Today, we celebrate the many achievements of BE-Ex. I extend our heartfelt congratulations to all the honorees who have played a pivotal role in shaping a more sustainable future – most especially my good friend Rit Aggarwala, NYC Chief Climate Officer and Commissioner of NYC Department of Environmental Protection.”*

*“For 15 years, Building Energy Exchange has helped building stakeholders reduce GHG emissions and create healthier air for all New Yorkers,” said Elijah Hutchinson, executive director, Mayor’s Office of Climate & Environmental Justice. “As New York City and State work to meet our ambitious climate goals and support buildings in decarbonization, BE-Ex educates, shares resources, and gets sustainability done.”*

*“I’m excited to celebrate a tremendous decade of great work by the Building Energy Exchange! They are helping New York City tackle the climate crisis by leading the way on viable decarbonization strategies and connecting New Yorkers to the resources they need to build a healthier, greener City.” - Council Member Lincoln Restler*

## **Expansion and Growing International Influence (2015-2019)**

[The launch of the new BE-Ex center](#) in 2015 marked a significant expansion, providing a dynamic hub for industry education and collaboration, and a new name –Building Energy Exchange– to better recognize its holistic approach to comprehensive building improvements. The [Women in Sustainability and Energy \(WISE\)](#) series, initiated in the same year, emphasized BE-Ex’s commitment to equity and inclusivity in the energy efficiency space.

BE-Ex’s ongoing growth was highlighted in 2016, with the celebration of its 400th program. Recognition as [a founding UNECE International Centre of Excellence on High Performance Buildings](#), in 2018, emphasized BE-Ex’s noteworthy leadership in the industry beyond New York.

After a \$1.5 million publicly and privately financed renovation, the Exchange [re-launched](#) in 2018, with greatly enhanced capabilities and increased activities.

2019 saw the passing of the Climate Mobilization Act (CMA) by New York City and the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act by New York State (Climate Act). BE-Ex played a crucial role in driving awareness, education, and compliance with these landmark legislations by developing a new exhibit, [Anatomy of an Energy Efficient Building](#); creating the [LL97 Carbon Calculator](#), an interactive tool that generates estimates of a building's carbon thresholds and potential LL97 penalties; and launching the [Climate Mobilization Act Educational Series](#).

**Doreen M. Harris, President and CEO, NYSERDA said,** *“Congratulations to BE-Ex for 10 impactful years! It is an honor to be a part of their history and to be recognized for NYSERDA’s work in support of the State’s nation-leading climate goals. NYSERDA looks forward to growing our partnership with BE-Ex and other industry change drivers to bring forward clean, resilient solutions for buildings that will ensure New York is a cleaner, healthier place to live and work for all.”*

*“For more than a decade the Building Energy Exchange has brought together the best and the brightest to help New York’s building owners reduce greenhouse gas emissions,” said Greg Elcock, vice president, Customer Clean Energy Programs. “Con Edison is proud to be a part of this important organization and applauds the work it has done. We look forward to working together to meet the challenges that the next ten years hold as we usher in the clean energy future.”*

*“The Building Energy Exchange and its dedicated staff have done an amazing job over the last 10 years growing and developing the organization and positively impacting the environment and local communities. This has been achieved through their education forums, insightful studies and podcasts, and a plethora of other resources related to the energy industry. National Grid is proud to be a long-standing sponsor and supporter of BE-Ex. We congratulate them on their 10-year anniversary and commitment to fostering a sustainable and resilient cleaner energy future.” - Louis Rizzo, National Grid Manager of Customer Energy Solutions NY and BE-Ex Board Member”*

## **The New Business as Usual (2020-2022)**

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, BE-Ex demonstrated resilience and innovation by quickly launching virtual engagement opportunities, including webinars, an online version of the [Anatomy of an Energy Efficient Building exhibit](#), and the [Radio BE-Ex podcast series](#).

In 2021, BE-Ex unveiled [BE-Ex Ed](#)— a robust, interactive e-learning platform that offers accredited on-demand courses globally. Initiatives like the [Low Carbon Multifamily Retrofit Playbooks](#), the [Beyond Zero Series](#), and the [High Rise / Low Carbon series](#) highlighted BE-Ex's commitment to empowering all stakeholders with actionable insights for building decarbonization.

As other regions across the country began to grapple with the challenges of building decarbonization, BE-Ex created the [Building Performance Partnership](#), a collaboration with the Institute for Market Transformation, that has help to create and support independent building resource hubs in Kansas City, St. Louis, Washington D.C, Chicago, and Denver, with more cities in the pipeline.

The organization's commitment to knowledge dissemination extends beyond physical programs, with its website, [be-exchange.org](#), evolving into a comprehensive solutions repository accessible to the public.

*“BE-Ex, under Richard Yancey Jr’s leadership, was a pioneer in the movement to green our city’s buildings and continues to identify and promote new solutions to help meet New York’s ambitious decarbonization goals,”* **stated Kathryn Wylde, President & CEO, Partnership for New York City**

*“Cross-sector collaboration plays a critical role in the path to decarbonizing New York’s buildings and addressing climate change,”* **said REBNY Senior Vice President of Policy Zach Steinberg.** *“REBNY applauds Building Energy Exchange for being such a committed partner in this effort and we congratulate all of today’s honorees for their tireless work to create a more sustainable future.”*

*“As a longtime supporter and collaborator, AIA New York applauds the Building Energy Exchange on reaching this tremendous milestone,”* **said Jesse Lazar, Assoc. AIA, Executive Director, American Institute of Architects New York.** *“We commend Richard Yancey and BE-Ex’s demonstrated excellence in promoting sustainable design and climate-conscious policy to effectuate energy efficient solutions in the built environment.”*

### **Recent Achievements (2023 - Present)**

In April 2023, BE-Ex and its founding Executive Director, Richard C. Yancey, FAIA, were honored with [AIANY’s 2023 Champion of Architecture award](#) for outstanding contributions to improving the built environment.

In 2023 BE-Ex also continued to source and share effective low carbon solutions globally, connecting US building practitioners with international best practices. BE-Ex led a three-day fact-finding delegation, with the Swedish Energy Agency and NYSERDA, to Stockholm, Sweden, and convened roundtable discussions, with representatives from Finland, Denmark, and Switzerland, during Climate Week.

Recent achievements include hosting over 2,000 programs attended by more than 50,000 building decision-makers, and successful programs like 2023’s Daylight Hour, which reached over 702 offices with 50,722 people from 32 countries who turned off the lights in over 120 million square feet of daylit office space.

## **Continuing the Journey Towards a Sustainable Future**

Building Energy Exchange remains dedicated to expanding the boundaries of building energy efficiency. With a depth of actionable resources and international influence, BE-Ex will continue driving the creation of low carbon, healthy buildings for everyone, everywhere.

END

*BE-Ex is an independent non-profit organization dedicated to reducing the effects of climate change by improving the built environment. BE-Ex accelerates the transition to healthy, comfortable, and energy efficient buildings by serving as a resource and trusted expert to the building industry.*

Contact:

Richard Yancey

[rcy@be-exchange.org](mailto:rcy@be-exchange.org)

212-349-3900

[www.be-exchange.org](http://www.be-exchange.org)