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## **Omega Center for Sustainable Living Hopes to Receive Most Advanced Green Building Rating in the World**

### *Nation's Sustainable Design Thought Leaders to Converge at Pathbreaking Conference*

RHINEBECK, NY – Omega Institute announced today that the Living Building Challenge™ certification review process will be complete by month's end, making it possible that the [Omega Center for Sustainable Living \(OCSL\)](#) will be named the world's first "Living Building". Leading green building practitioners and thinkers will explore the OCSL's performance and the next era in sustainability at [Design by Nature: Creative Solutions with Biomimicry, Permaculture & Sustainable Design](#), taking place October 15–17 on Omega's Rhinebeck campus. The Living Building Challenge defines the most advanced level of sustainability in a built environment, and is currently the most advanced green building rating system in the world.

"After five years of intensive effort, Omega is proud to have made a significant commitment to environmental stewardship by taking on the Living Building Challenge. We are hopeful that we will receive the highest level of certification," said Skip Backus, chief executive officer at Omega and visionary behind the OCSL.

The OCSL, a water reclamation facility and environmental education center, was recently selected for the American Institute of Architects Committee on the Environment (AIA/COTE) Top 10 Green Projects Award for 2010, and is also on track to receive LEED® Platinum certification.

The nation's leading experts and innovators in the field of sustainable design will convene at Omega to promote nature-based solutions to the most pressing environmental crises of the day. The Design by Nature conference includes presenters from the OCSL's award winning design team, including Bob Berkebile and Laura Lesniewski, lead architects from BNIM, and John Todd, biologist, developer of the Eco Machine™ and founder of John Todd Ecological Design. They are joined by Jason F. McLennan, chief executive officer of the International Living Building Institute; John Perkins, a *New York Times* best-selling author; Dayna Baumeister, a biomimicry expert; Penny Livingston-Stark, a permaculture expert; and Dana Levy, a program manager for the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA).

The Living Building Challenge, a transformative program of the International Living Building Institute, "allows us to envision a future that is socially just, culturally rich, and ecologically restorative." It is a call to action for the building industry to implement truly innovative responses to design, construction, and operation in seven key performance areas: site, water, energy, health, materials, equity, and beauty. The Living Building Challenge is comprised of a set of stringent prerequisites that include generating all energy with renewable resources; capturing and treating all water used on site; and eliminating building materials that contain hazardous chemicals.

To achieve “Living Building” status, projects must prove to meet all of the program requirements throughout 12 months of continued operation. The OCSL is in the final stages of Living Building Challenge evaluation.

Green builders, architects, biologists, educators, activists, policy makers, press, and anyone interested in building a sustainable future is welcome to attend the Design by Nature conference. Tuition for the Design by Nature weekend conference is only \$175, or \$75 for full-time students.

For more details or to register, visit [eOmega.org](http://eOmega.org) or call 800.944.1001. Media passes are available. To apply for a media pass, visit [eOmega.org/press](http://eOmega.org/press).

For further information about the Omega Center for Sustainable Living, please visit [eOmega.org/ocsl](http://eOmega.org/ocsl).

#### **About Omega Institute for Holistic Studies**

*Founded in 1977, Omega Institute for Holistic Studies is the nation’s most trusted source for wellness and personal growth. As a nonprofit organization, Omega offers diverse and innovative educational experiences that inspire an integrated approach to personal and social change. Located on 195 acres in the beautiful Hudson Valley, Omega welcomes more than 23,000 people to its workshops, conferences, and retreats in Rhinebeck, New York and at exceptional locations around the world. [eOmega.org](http://eOmega.org)*

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