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## **Omega Center for Sustainable Living Receives LEED® Platinum Certification**

### ***Internationally Recognized Green Building Certification Process Complete***

RHINEBECK, NY – Omega Institute announced today that the [Omega Center for Sustainable Living \(OCSL\)](#), a state-of-the-art environmental education center and natural water reclamation facility, has achieved LEED® Platinum certification, the highest green building designation available from the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC). 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.

"Omega is proud to have completed the year-long certification process, and to have attained Platinum status. We hope our building will serve to inspire others and be part of a necessary evolution in how we approach development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century," said Skip Backus, chief executive officer at Omega and visionary behind the OCSL.

The OCSL was recently selected for the American Institute of Architects Committee on the Environment (AIA/COTE) Top 10 Green Projects Award for 2010. The OCSL is also in the final stage of the Living Building Challenge™ certification review process, making it possible that the OCSL will be named the world's first "Living Building" by month's end.

Developed by the [U.S. Green Building Council \(USGBC\)](#), [The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design \(LEED\) Green Building Rating System™](#) is an internationally recognized green building certification program. It provides third-party verification that a building or community was designed and built using strategies aimed at improving performance in energy savings, water efficiency, CO<sup>2</sup> emissions reduction, indoor environmental quality, and stewardship of resources and sensitivity to their impacts. LEED awards certifications based on a 100-point scale. The total number of points a project earns determines its LEED status: Certified, Silver, Gold, or Platinum.

"The strength of USGBC has always been the collective strength of our leaders in the building industry," said Rick Fedrizzi, president, CEO and founding chair of the U.S. Green Building Council. "Given the extraordinary importance of climate protection and the central role of the building industry in that effort, Omega Institute for Holistic Studies demonstrates immense leadership through their LEED Platinum certification of the Omega Center for Sustainable Living."

The OCSL supplies all of its own energy needs, and its operation is carbon neutral. The self-sustaining building is heated and cooled using geothermal systems, and utilizes photovoltaic power. It will serve as the heart of Omega's ongoing environmental initiatives and includes a greenhouse, an Eco-Machine, constructed wetland, and a classroom, which are open year-round to the public.

The core of the center is a 4,500-square-foot greenhouse containing a water filtration system called the Eco-Machine. This living system uses plants, bacteria, algae, snails, and fungi to recycle Omega's wastewater (approximately 5 million gallons per year) into clean water that is used to restore the aquifer. The Eco-Machine incorporates technology first seen in similar systems known as Living Machines. Dr. John Todd, and his son, Jonathan Todd, of John Todd Ecological Design, Inc. were the ecological architects for Omega's Eco-Machine.

To schedule a tour, contact us at [OCSL@eOmega.org](mailto:OCSL@eOmega.org). For further information about the Omega Center for Sustainable Living, please visit [eOmega.org/ocsl](http://eOmega.org/ocsl).

For more details about Omega's Design by Nature conference 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).

#### **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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