



October 17, 2011

Small Business Council of America
c/o Leanne Redstone
1523 Concord Pike Suite 300
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I am writing in strong support of Anthony Sblendorio to receive the Small Business Council of America Person of the Year Award.

I have known Anthony for approximately 10 years, and have been impressed constantly by his energy, enthusiasm, knowledge, and drive to design, promote, finance, and lead regenerative development. The first work of his that I saw was at the Willow School in Bedminster, where he was instrumental in helping to obtain gold and platinum LEED certification for buildings on the site and to design the surrounding landscape in a way that would serve the necessary functions as well as the teaching needs of the faculty and students. Perhaps more important was his ability through this project to get the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) to re-shape its regulations regarding the use of constructed wetlands in wastewater treatment.

He then took over a stalled and controversial church project in Bernards Township, turning it into a first class regenerative residential project, with housing clustered on a small portion of the property and remaining open space used for organic farming. As with the Willow School project, he had broader success by securing an overlay zone from the Township, not only for his site, but for the entire community in order to promote similar regenerative planning in the future. He won approvals in record time, defying the odds and precedent – largely due to the quality of his proposal, but also due to his powers of persuasion and his collaborative approach in dealing with elected and regulatory officials.

Finally, he has worked hard over the past two years to put together Ecological Group, a fund to turn around failed development projects, while at the same time turning them into models of regenerative planning. Working with top finance people on Wall Street and two former New York governors (Pataki and Paterson), Anthony is on the verge of realizing his goal of having the resources to implement his vision beyond New Jersey.

While doing all of this, he has not forgotten his roots, working with his wife, Maria, to manage their landscape design firm, Back to Nature, and even to start their own garden center. All in all, I believe that Anthony represents the best of what Small Business Council of America supports and promotes.

Anthony is a most worthy candidate for the 2012 Person of the Year Award. I hope you agree.

Sincerely,

Christopher J. Daggett
President and CEO

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