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The 16th Annual Municipal Green Building Conference & Expo: Keynote Speakers Antwi Akom, Eric Corey Freed to Address Economic, Environmental & Equity Solutions for Cities

Hosted Annually by USGBC-LA & SoCalGas

Registration is Open

LOS ANGELES (February 15, 2017) The [Municipal Green Building Conference and Expo](#) (MGBCE) returns for its 16th year on April 20, 2017, as Southern California's longest running and largest sustainability and green building event focused on the needs and concerns of municipalities. The no-cost event takes place from 8:00am to 6:00pm (Event ends at 4:30, Mixer follows) at the Southern California Gas Company's (SoCalGas) Energy Resource Center (ERC) located at 9240 Firestone Blvd. in Downey. Hosted annually by SoCalGas and the [USGBC-LA](#), this year's theme is "Connected Cities: Economic, Environmental and Equity Solutions" and the selected keynote presenters—both nationally-recognized authors and speakers—will address this theme pointedly.

"This year's keynotes who will bookend the day represent the future solutions and community-oriented thinking that we at USGBC-LA strive for and hope to inspire in municipal representatives who attend MGBCE, and I could not be more excited for their talks," states USGBC-LA Executive Director Dominique Hargreaves.

The morning keynote speaker is Antwi Akom Ph.D., whose talk, "Race, Space, Place, and Waste: How Community Driven Technology Powers Smart and Healthy Cities of the Future," will launch the day. He is the Founding Director of the Social Innovation and Urban Opportunity Lab (SOUL), which is dedicated to prototyping new ways that vulnerable populations can collaborate with universities, cities, and schools to build power and self-determination, reduce disparities, and create healthier neighborhoods so people don't have to leave their communities to live, learn, work, and thrive. SOUL is the first joint research lab between U. of California, San Francisco's Medical School and SFSU's College of Ethnic Studies.

Dr. Akom is also Co-Founder of the Institute for Sustainable Economic, Educational, and Environmental Design (I-SEED), which builds revolutionary technology platforms that connect everyday people to urban design and planning processes based in Oakland, CA.

Returning for his 10th year as the afternoon keynote, Eric Corey Freed, Chief Community Officer of EcoDistricts, Founding Principal of organicARCHITECT, and XPRIZE Bold Visioneer, ends the day with his new talk, "The Power of Exponential Thinking: Creating the XPRIZE for Healthy Buildings."



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MGBCE's programming will address solutions at the building, city and regional scale for city administrators as they seek ways to forge an inclusive path forward, especially at the local level, and across topics that include Health, Technology & Data, Diversity & Inclusion, Energy & Environment, Housing, Education, Infrastructure, Budgets, Public Safety and Economic Development. MGBCE draws attendees from 75 Southern California-area municipalities, all of which are striving to integrate sustainability into municipal action.

An award-winning urban technologist, Dr. Akom has stated, "The two greatest challenges of our lifetime are climate change and income inequality. So most cities are grappling with this disconnect between this official knowledge of what the cities want to do as they grow and develop, and what everyday people want to do with things, public space and land use and transportation," he said. (GreenBiz.com, 3/31/16)

Freed, an award winning architect, LEED Fellow and national author and speaker, reminds us that the way buildings are built has remained relatively unchanged for nearly two hundred years, missing out on massive opportunities to be healthy, eliminate waste and produce their own energy. Freed advocates for an approach that avoids buildings simply being "less bad" and instead focuses on buildings being truly healthy and regenerative. "The \$9 trillion a year global construction industry is responsible for nearly 60% of climate change emissions, a third of landfill waste and a shocking array of negative health effects," he states.

With an opportunity presented by XPRIZE to reach for the stars, Freed and his team have designed what the 'XPRIZE for Healthy Buildings' will be. Unveiled in October at the XPRIZE Visioneers Summit in Los Angeles, this XPRIZE will launch later this year and be open to global teams to compete for the \$10 million prize. Freed will explain how his XPRIZE team approached this unique opportunity to develop a way to (literally) grow buildings by fusing synthetic biology, genomics, parametric modeling and 3D printing to create a disruption and paradigm shift.

The conference attracts a wide variety of building industry disciplines, including municipalities, utilities, public agencies, architects, engineers, building owners, contractors, non-profits, and manufacturers. All of these groups are working together to create connected cities that succeed in the three E's: Economic, Environmental, and Equity solutions.

For MGBCE **schedule** and **general information**, please visit <http://usgbc-la.org/mgbce/> or contact Event Chair Drew Shula at drew.shula@verdicalgroup.com. For **Sponsorship & Exhibitor** information, please contact Dominique Hargreaves at dominique@usgbc-la.org.

About U.S. Green Building Council-Los Angeles

USGBC-LA is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization committed to creating a prosperous and sustainable future within one generation. Our mission promotes sustainability in LA County's built environment by delivering access to knowledge, resources, recognition and networking. (www.usgbc-la.org)

About Municipal Green Building Conference and Expo (MGBCE)

Since its inception in 2000, MGBCE has become an important gathering of leading sustainability and green building advocates within both the public and private sectors in southern California. Hosted by the SoCalGas at the ERC building in Downey, this annual Spring conference and trade show provides training, education and outreach to



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inform local government agencies, building industry professionals and the general public about the principles, practices and products associated with green building. (<http://usgbc-la.org/mgbce/>)

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