

BUILDINGENERGY NYC

Developing Energy Programs with a Community First Approach

Yangchen Dolma, Kinetic Communities Consulting

Tal Henig-Hadar, Willdan

Derick Kowalczyk, Willdan

Laura Nicaise, NYC Energy Efficiency Corporation

Curated by Christopher Bland & Camille Prével-Dumas

Northeast Sustainable Energy Association (NESEA) | October 15, 2026

Developing Energy Programs with a Community First Approach

Lessons and experiences from designing energy projects with communities in mind

BUILDINGENERGY
NYC

OCTOBER 15, 2026 • CONVENE PARK AVENUE • NESEA.ORG/BENYC26
Conference + Trade Show of the Northeast Sustainable Energy Association

About



Laura Nicaise

Associate Director

- Leads communication strategy and impact measurement
- Experience in loan servicing and portfolio management
- Background in Civil Engineering

NYCEEC

NYCEEC is an independent, mission-driven nonprofit lender that supports energy efficiency, renewable energy, battery storage, EV-charging infrastructure, and high-performance buildings projects. Founded in 2010 by NYC Mayor's Office of Sustainability



NYC C-PACE Program Administrator



NYC AHRF Offset Program Administrator

\$919 M

of capital mobilized

83%

of financed
projects in LMI
communities

20,800+

affordable
housing units
improved

NYCEEC's **mission** is to deliver financing solutions and advance markets for energy efficiency and clean energy in communities.

NYCEEC's **vision** is energy efficiency and clean energy financing for communities to achieve scale and be accessible to all.

How NYCEEC Works with Communities

Listen & Build

Understand community priorities + building capacity

- Understand who will benefit and how project/financing decisions impact residents, affordability, and comfort
- Share knowledge and lessons learned with other CBOs to strengthen capacity
- Make technical and financing information more accessible
- **Examples:** Going Solar Workshops with Solar One, Financing Seminar for Developers with Trufund, educational site visits, Cutting Carbon in Condos and Co-ops

Bring the Right Partners Together

Connect the expertise and resources needed

- Connect owners and developers with technical experts, community organizations, lenders, and other partners
- Leverage mission-aligned relationships to bring additional resources and perspectives to the table
- **Examples:** GB50 Membership, OFN Membership, ongoing partnerships

Finance the Gap

Structure capital around project needs and desired outcomes

- Address financing gaps in structure, stage, and size
- Shape financing around needs and realities of project
- Help make upfront and early-stage investments needed to advance projects
- **Examples:** Predevelopment financing, flexible financing structures, leveraging other public/private capital

Case Studies



Predevelopment Financing for Passive House Affordable Multifamily Housing in East Harlem

- 340 affordable housing units
- 97 units reserved for individuals with serious mental illness or substance use disorders
- Mental health and social services provided by Lantern Community Services
- Casa Belongo – performing arts and cultural center with Afro Latin Jazz Alliance



Predevelopment Financing for Mixed-Use Community Facility and Affordable Housing in Queens

- 235 affordable housing units
- 71 units set aside for youth aging out of foster care
- Variety Boys & Girls Club of Queens
- Clubhouse, charter school, gymnasium, teaching kitchen, business incubator space, black box theater, indoor aquatic center, and planetarium
- On-site social service provided by Institute for Community Living

About

Willdan

National Energy Services and Professional Engineering Firm

- Founded in **1964**
- Publicly Traded
- 1,850+** Employees Nationwide
- Registered Energy Service Company (ESCO)
- Promotes energy and infrastructure solutions through energy planning and analytics, consulting, software, public finance, engineering, and program implementation



Tal Henig-Hadar

Business Strategy Manager @ Willdan
Works to understand business trends, policy developments, and strategic growth opportunities
thenig-hadar@willdan.com



How Do We Work With Communities?



School Districts

Working with the administration and student body to find solutions together



Municipalities

Taking active part in local meetings and gatherings to understand residents' priorities



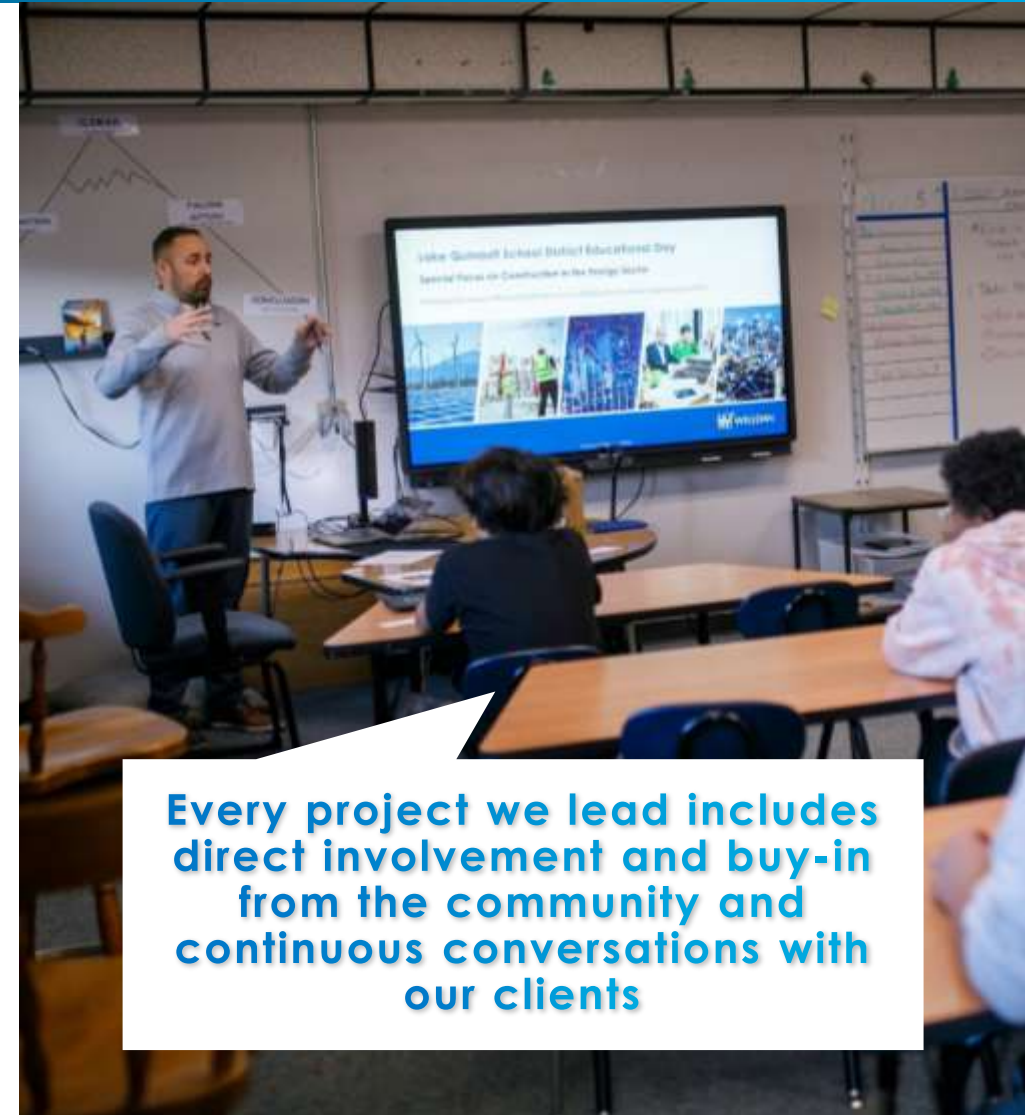
Education

Implementing education programs for various age groups on-site or through the Clean Energy Academy

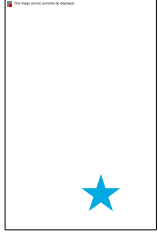


Community Hiring

Prioritizing local utilization through all stages of the project – pay back into the community



Main Case Study and Discussion



**Clark
County, NV**

- Fifth-largest school district in the country
- ESPC consisting of 204 schools
- Community engagement included:
 - Educational workshops with students, teachers, and staff
 - Engagement of local subcontractors



Discussion

1. Balancing community engagement with direct operational commitments
2. Being the odd man out – how to gain trust (and knowledge) over time
3. Pushing education into action



About Me and KC3



Emily Baumbach, Program Manager

Over five years leading outreach for affordable multifamily energy efficiency, helping owners navigate incentive programs and capital projects.

Leads community engagement for green infrastructure and stormwater resilience projects for resident feedback to shape design.

Learn more about KC3 at <https://kc3.nyc/>

Our Change Vision and Values

Kinetic Communities Consulting (KC3), an M/WBE B Corp certified firm, connects disinvested communities to clean, affordable energy.

We partner with government, private, and nonprofit institutions to:



Expand energy efficiency in communities with the largest need.



Educate owners on efficiency as a tool to preserve housing.



Elevate energy sector opportunities for local New Yorkers.



PEOPLE-CENTERED APPROACH

We know our clients, their needs, and build trust.

How We Help Communities Access Energy Efficiency Opportunities

A comprehensive model that moves affordable housing from engagement to completed energy upgrades



01 TRUSTED PARTNERS

Start with CBOs

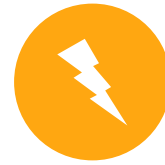
Community-based organizations (CBO) already hold the trust and local relationships that energy programs need.



02 CAPACITY

Build the network

Training, tools, and paid partnerships make CBO participation sustainable and scalable.



03 PROGRAM ENTRY

Connect to affordable housing programs

Incentives, technical support, and flexible pathways help buildings overcome cost barriers.



04 OUTREACH

Reach the buildings

Direct phone calls/e-mails, e-blasts, webinars, meetings, and tabling events turn awareness into leads and real projects.

WHY IT MATTERS

Lower energy burden

Upgrades cut bills and operating costs for low-income households.

Healthier, comfier homes

Better building performance improves tenant comfort and quality of life.

Equitable climate progress

Decarbonizing affordable housing advances New York's emissions goals.

CBO Engagement and Project Coordination Highlights



AMEEP CBO Engagement Network

Expanding community access Formalizes and incentivizes CBO participation in NY Downstate AMEEP outreach, lead generation, and early-stage project support.

Trusted partner model Flexible participation pathways based on CBO capacity, using trusted local relationships to connect affordable housing buildings with AMEEP.

KC3 coordination KC3 leads CBO onboarding, training, outreach support, tracking, and coordination of referred buildings through next steps.

PROGRESS TO DATE

- 10+ outreach activities
- 30+ leads generated
- 15+ active energy efficiency projects

NYCEEC + KC3: Residencia Esperanza

Layering funding and incentives 25-unit affordable cooperative in Hamilton Heights advancing multiple clean energy improvements.

Resident and energy benefits Solar is expected to fully offset common-area electricity use while helping reduce resident electricity costs.

Continued AMEEP coordination KC3 is also supporting an elevator modernization project through AMEEP, connecting financing, incentives, and ongoing upgrades.

\$506K CLEAN ENERGY PROJECT

- Rooftop solar, roof replacement, heat pump domestic hot water
- \$236K NYCEEC loan
- ~\$244K NYSERDA + Con Edison incentives



Derick Kowalczyk

*Program Manager, Multifamily
Decarbonization & Energy
Efficiency*

Willdan



Emily Baumbach

Program Manager

Kinetic Communities
Consulting Corporation



Tal Henig-Hadar

Business Strategy Manager

Willdan



Laura Nicaise

Associate Director

New York City Energy
Efficiency Corporation



BUILDINGENERGY
NYC

OCTOBER 15, 2026 • CONVENE PARK AVENUE • [NESEA.ORG/BENYC26](https://necsa.org/benyc26)
Conference + Trade Show of the Northeast Sustainable Energy Association

BUILDINGENERGY NYC

Please fill out an evaluation for this session



or: nesea.org/eval

Northeast Sustainable Energy Association (NESEA)