

## **J. ROBERT FOLCHETTI & ASSOCIATES, L.L.C**

Engineering | Planning | Surveying | Architectural Landscaping

### **MEDIA CONTACTS:**

Catherine Gonick or Marshall Mermell

MarketingWorks • Telephone: (845) 222 – 5048 • Fax: (845) 265 – 2779 • Email: gm@highlands.com

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## **J. ROBERT FOLCHETTI & ASSOCIATES PARTICIPATES IN CONSERVATION BIOLOGY PROGRAM AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY**

### “Citizen Science” for Adult Students Interested in Conservation Either Professionally or Civically

SOMERS, New York—November 16, 2004—John Folchetti, CEO of J. Robert Folchetti & Associates, a full-service, civil/ environmental consulting engineering firm based in Somers, NY, has joined the faculty of the CERC (Center for Environmental Research and Conservation) evening certificate program in conservation biology at Columbia University in New York. As part of the program, which consists of twelve five-week modules, Folchetti teaches a course on the basics of water resources management.

A consortium of world-class scientific institutions, including Columbia University, the American Museum of Natural History, the New York Botanical Garden, the Wildlife Conservation Society, and Wildlife Trust, CERC was founded in 1994 with a mission of preparing the next generation of environmental leaders. The CERC evening certificate program in conservation biology provides a foundation in conservation science and policy, teaches how to critically evaluate scientific findings and media reports, and offers practical techniques that will allow graduates to participate in what CERC calls “citizen science.”

According to Dr. Nancy Degnan, CERC’s associate director, “The conservation biology program is unique in many ways, particularly in the type of student it attracts. Our program is comprised of adults from a variety of different professions – lawyers, accountants, financiers, teachers – who seek a broader insight into the issues of conservation and environmental stewardship. Needless to say, the student body looks for faculty who are intellectually engaging. They also look for a colleague who can bring to the classroom that unique and important blend of teaching and practice necessary to understand the complex issues imbedded in environmental problem solving. John Folchetti more than fulfills these roles.”

Dr. Degnan invited Folchetti to join the CERC faculty after gaining firsthand experience of his abilities, which include expertise in water, storm water, topography, land use, planning,, and meeting complex SEQRA (State Environmental Quality Review Act) requirements. Assisted by her students from Columbia’s master degree program in urban planning, Dr. Degnan worked with Folchetti last spring on the rewriting of a master plan for the Village of Brewster in New York, for which J. Robert Folchetti & Associates serves as Village Engineer.

More...

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“As a practitioner,” Dr. Degnan says, “John conveys to our students the real-world opportunities and constraints in water management and relates these to economic development and redevelopment, land and green space conservation, and the role of the public and private sectors in conservation. As a teacher, he engages them to think more objectively about controversial issues, encouraging them to use the disciplines of science and engineering as they assess problems. Students take the knowledge they have as professionals and combine this with new information and insight, thus forming new and more effective solutions within the conservation arena. We are fortunate to have John Folchetti as part of our faculty.”

According to Folchetti, the CERC evening certificate program in conservation biology is designed for students who have an interest in conservation either professionally or civically. He says, “It offers an ideal background for anyone wishing to serve in a municipality.”

He notes that as part of their work for the Village of Brewster, J. Robert Folchetti & Associates will construct a DEP (Department of Environmental Protection) laboratory for water analysis that will support curriculum development. Folchetti says, “Brewster is part of the New York City watershed, which is environmentally unique as the largest unfiltered water source in North America.”

Folchetti joined J. Robert Folchetti & Associates after 11 years of active duty in the Marine Corps, which culminated with serving as commander of an infantry company in the Persian Gulf during Desert Storm. He earned his civil engineering program at night at Bridgeport Engineering Institute and retired from the Marine Corps as a lieutenant colonel in 2001. Recalling that his years of military service offered many opportunities to teach, Folchetti says, “In any educational forum, the teacher needs to be wide open and willing to go beyond the subject at hand. People always ask new questions, and there are always new opportunities for learning. In the CERC program, it is rewarding to see students who are already professionals in their fields encounter a new subject and begin to grasp its basic tenets very quickly.”

*Serving municipal and private clients with a wide range of professional engineering, planning and surveying services, J. Robert Folchetti & Associates has more than 20 years' experience with the relation of water and the environment. The firm's water-related services include stormwater systems and watershed analysis; wastewater treatment operations and facilities; wastewater collection and transmission facilities; and potable water systems. Other services include municipal engineering; air quality services; construction inspection/management; surveying, mapping and GIS; agricultural engineering and consulting; geotechnical services and landscape architecture.*

*The firm is located in Somers at 247 Route 100, tel. 914-232-2500. Other locations are in Walden, NY, and on the Web at [www.jrfa.com](http://www.jrfa.com).*

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