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**For Immediate Release**

**QUEENS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRESIDENT & CEO THOMAS GRECH AND IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR HOWARD GRAF TO BE HONORED AT INAUGURAL QUEENS FOUNDATION FOR ARCHITECTURE LEGACY AWARDS GALA**

***Grech to Receive “Advancing Architecture Through Community Engagement” Award; Graf to Receive “ President’s Award – Excellence in Architectural Practice Award”***

**(QUEENS, NY)** September 4, 2025 — The Queens Chamber of Commerce is proud to announce that its President and CEO Thomas J. Grech and its Immediate Past Chair Howard Graf will be honored at the inaugural Queens Foundation for Architecture (QFA) Legacy Awards Gala on Thursday, September 18, 2025. The celebration will take place at Flushing Town Hall and will bring together architects, civic leaders, and community members to recognize visionary leadership in architecture across the borough.

Grech will receive the “Advancing Architecture Through Community Engagement” Award, one of the three major honors presented at the Gala. This award recognizes individuals and organizations whose work has contributed to the built environment and economic growth in the borough. Under Grech’s leadership, the Queens Chamber of Commerce has been a driving force behind economic growth in the borough. His efforts to promote thoughtful development, strengthen commercial corridors, and support small businesses have had a lasting influence on Queens’ architectural and economic landscape.

“I am deeply honored to receive this recognition from the Queens Foundation for Architecture,” said **Grech**. “Queens is home to some of the most vibrant, diverse, and dynamic communities in the world. At the Chamber, we believe that architecture and design are essential to building strong, inclusive neighborhoods—and that when we invest in our physical spaces, we invest in our people. I’m grateful to our partners, members, and the QFA for this incredible honor.”

Graf will receive the President’s Award for Excellence in Architectural Practice.

“I am truly humbled to receive the President’s Award for Excellence in Architectural Practice. Throughout my career, I have believed that architecture is about more than buildings—it’s about people, communities, and the shared spaces that bring us together,” said **Graf**. “Queens has long been both a source of inspiration for me and I am proud to have contributed to shaping its vibrant built environment. I thank the Queens Foundation for Architecture for this honor, and I share it with my colleagues, mentors, and the many partners who have supported this journey.”

Hosted by the Queens Foundation for Architecture and the AIA Queens Chapter, the Legacy Awards were created to celebrate visionary leadership in architecture and design. In addition to the three Legacy Awards, the Gala will also commemorate the AIA Queens Chapter’s 80th Anniversary and formally recognize the service of its Past Presidents.

New York State Senator Joseph P. Addabbo Jr. will serve as guest speaker for the evening’s program. Other honorees include Queens Borough President Donovan Richards Jr. and Queens Department of Buildings Commissioner Ira Gluckman. Proceeds from the event will support QFA’s scholarship programs and ongoing work to promote architecture as a tool for education, equity, and engagement.

To learn more about the Gala or to purchase tickets, please visit <https://www.aiaqueensny.org/events/legacy-gala-awards-fundraiser>.

**About the Queens Chamber of Commerce**
The Queens Chamber of Commerce is the oldest and largest business association in Queens, representing more than 1,400 businesses and more than 150,000 Queens-based employees. Its mission is to foster connections, educate for success, develop/implement programs and advocate for members’ interests. [www.queenschamber.org](http://www.queenschamber.org)

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