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News Release

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Ameresco, CCI BioEnergy and Quantum Biopower Honored for Their Role in Advancing a Powerful Climate Strategy: the Ultra-Low Carbon Fuel Renewable Natural Gas from Organic Waste

[New York, NY -- October 16, 2017] Thursday evening, at a Manhattan gathering of business and NGO leaders helping drive the growth of renewable natural gas (RNG) made from organic waste in North America, three companies with landmark projects were honored with awards by [Energy Vision](#), a national non-profit which researches and promotes technologies and strategies for a sustainable, low-carbon energy and transportation future.

The awardees are Boston-based [Ameresco](#), which provides renewable energy, energy efficiency, and energy infrastructure solutions for facilities throughout North America and the U.K; the Connecticut firm [Quantum Biopower](#), which specializes in anaerobic digestion of food waste to produce RNG and compost, and the Ontario company [CCI Bioenergy](#), which has pioneered anaerobic digestion applications for producing RNG since 2000.

RNG is made from biogas emitted from decomposing organic wastes such as food, wastewater, agricultural manures and yard clippings. Instead of allowing these gases to escape into the atmosphere and exacerbate climate change, they are captured and refined into an ultra-low-emissions source of energy and transportation fuel. Making and using RNG emits a small fraction of the greenhouse gas emitted by diesel, gasoline or geologic natural gas fuels. When made from food waste or dairy farm waste, processed in anaerobic digesters and used to fuel vehicles, RNG is actually net carbon-*negative* over its lifecycle. That makes it a powerful decarbonization strategy -- one that is commercial and deployable on large and small scales today.

RNG production capacity is building in the New York tri-state area, including anaerobic digester projects like Brooklyn's [Newtown Creek](#) and Long Island's [American Organic Energy](#). Regionally produced RNG [could be used to fuel NYC municipal vehicles, improving air quality for millions of New Yorkers while helping meet New York's greenhouse gas reduction goals](#). In Southington, Connecticut, Quantum Biopower built the tri-state region's first food waste-to-energy facility. Each year Connecticut produces 500,000 tons of food waste. Quantum's facility consumes 40,000 tons of that and converts it via anaerobic digestion to 420,000 cubic feet of biogas, avoiding 5,000 tons CO₂ emissions annually.

Quantum Biopower's Vice President & Managing Director **Brian Paganini** accepted the Energy Vision award for Quantum's role in pioneering RNG in the region. "We had to

achieve many ‘firsts’ in order to construct and operate our facility,” he said. “We successfully lobbied for Connecticut’s first virtual net metering program and helped to create the food waste segregation industry with our hauling partners in the state. We were the first anaerobic digester to receive monies from the Connecticut Green Bank, and the first facility of this kind to achieve full permit status. Now we are proudly operating the region’s first commercial, merchant-scale anaerobic digester.”

In Arizona, the sustainable energy firm Ameresco worked with the cities of Phoenix, Tempe, Mesa, Scottsdale and Glendale to develop, design, build, own and operate a wastewater treatment biogas facility to serve the region: the [91st Ave Wastewater Treatment Plant](#) (WWTP) in Phoenix. When fully operational, this new renewable energy project will be the largest wastewater treatment biogas-to-RNG facility in the United States, with a capacity to produce enough RNG to displace more than four million gallons of diesel annually.

According to Ameresco Senior Vice President **Michael T. Bakas**, who accepted the Energy Vision award for Ameresco’s role in the project, “This amazing effort is a great example of how a public private partnership can dramatically impact the environment in a positive manner while creating economic benefits and jobs for the local municipalities, with no public funds expended. Over a four year effort, Ameresco identified and vetted multiple project options for the Sub Regional Operating Group, which is comprised of the municipalities of Phoenix, Tempe, Mesa, Scottsdale and Glendale. In June 2016, the final project parameters were selected, and all of the agreements necessary to move forward with the design and permitting of this project were executed. And now we are nearing the end of construction on a truly innovative renewable energy project that is expected to reduce carbon emissions by nearly 45,000 tons per year -- the equivalent of taking over 70,000 cars off the road or planting over 87,000 acres of trees each year.”

In Ontario, CCI BioEnergy is piloting compact, innovative [bioQUBE microdigesters](#) which convert organic wastes into RNG and bio-fertilizer. Small enough to fit into a shipping container, they allow on-site processing of organic waste where it is produced, as opposed to collecting and feeding a dedicated waste stream to a large plant. Practical and affordable for a wide range of operations, these systems extend the availability of anaerobic digestion to smaller, individual waste sources. CCI is currently piloting one bioQUBE unit at Ontario’s Algoma Orchards, the largest Canadian apple grower and processor east of British Columbia, and installing another at the Ontario Water Centre in 2018.

CCI BioEnergy President **Kevin Matthews** accepted the Energy Vision award for CCI’s role in pioneering anaerobic digestion for two decades and piloting this new way to extend its reach. “Canada took on some serious pledges to reduce emissions per the Paris agreement,” he said. “But what do they mean for people personally? In Canada we’re energy-intensive, and each person produces 20 tons of carbon emissions a year. To reach our Paris pledge we have to get that down to 1.6 tons. To help get there, we are focused on bringing renewable energy to organic material generators themselves, which is what these micro-systems are designed for. Today, companies are discarding these materials, and paying to do it. But what we’re doing today is not what we will be doing tomorrow. Don’t call it ‘waste;’ organics are an asset we should realize.”

“Collecting organics and capturing and using their gas is more than a good idea; it is essential if we want to successfully address the global climate change threat,” said **Joanna Underwood**, chair of Energy Vision. “Astonishingly, uncollected organic wastes that are left to decompose emit *25 times* more greenhouse gases than the entire fossil natural gas industry. RNG feedstocks are vast: we generate 63 million tons a year of food waste in the U.S. alone. Domestic RNG production could displace up to a half of all the diesel we use for transportation. We’re very proud of the fact that since Energy Vision began focusing government and business leaders’ attention on this, more than 40 plants have been built or converted to produce RNG, and more than 20,000 heavy-duty trucks are using it. It’s an amazing jump-start for a brand new industry, and these awardees are leading the way.”

NOTE TO EDITORS AND PRODUCERS: Sources quoted above and other experts are available for interviews on the growth of RNG. For more information, or to arrange an interview, contact Stephen Kent, skent@kentcom.com, [914-589-5988](tel:914-589-5988)