



BioBAT



## PRESS RELEASE

October 24, 2022

### CONTACT:

SUNY DOWNSTATE/BIOBAT: Dawn Walker | 917.439.966 | [dawn.walker@downstate.edu](mailto:dawn.walker@downstate.edu)

IEC: Evelyn Powers | 347-803-0422 | [epowers@iec-nynjct.org](mailto:epowers@iec-nynjct.org)

## **INTERSTATE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION OPENS NEW LABORATORY HEADQUARTERS AND OFFICE AT BIOBAT**

*New space allows for expanded assessment of regional climate change impacts*

Brooklyn, NY—The Interstate Environmental Commission (IEC) announced the opening of its new laboratory headquarters and office with a ribbon-cutting event held at BioBAT, located in the Brooklyn Army Terminal.

The newly built facility 2800 square-foot space will allow IEC to expand and advance its laboratory capabilities, technology, and analytical parameters, house all of IEC's operational activities, including its environmental laboratory, which analyzes water samples collected throughout the tri-state area to assess the ecological and recreational quality of the region's waterbodies.

"This facility will expand both the Commission's administrative and laboratory operations, which will be housed in one space for the first time in the Commission's history, with the potential for future expansion as needed" said **IEC Chair John Atkin**. "Especially coming on the heels of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Clean Water Act last week, this new facility will enable the Commission to continue and expand its important work to ensure and protect clean water for all."

"The larger laboratory space has allowed us to procure equipment to expand and modernize our nutrient analyses, which will now include the ability to analyze parameters such as carbon, important in assessing coastal acidification impacts due to climate change," said **IEC Executive Director Evelyn Powers**.

The space also allows an expansion of IEC analyses to include cyanotoxins, which are produced by a proliferation of cyanobacteria, commonly referred to as 'algal blooms.'

These harmful blooms, which can cause illness in people and animals, occur when excess nutrients—mainly nitrogen—are in the water. IEC coordinates various regional water quality monitoring projects, including a long-term monitoring program in western Long Island Sound, supported by the Long Island Sound office of the US EPA.

The location will increase the accessibility of the IEC laboratory to IEC's member states and regional partners and enable IEC's monitoring programs to have a broader, more inclusive reach to waterfront communities.

The new space was designed by Linearscape Architecture, LLC, and constructed by General Contractor H.M. Hughes. BioBAT, Inc., Interstate Environmental Commission, and the United States Environmental Protection Agency provided funding.

"The waters of our tri-state area are the lifeblood of our environment," **said EPA Region 2 Administrator Lisa F. Garcia.** "This new and vastly improved Interstate Environmental Commission laboratory on the Brooklyn waterfront will further enhance our understanding of the conditions of the waters on which we all depend. As we address environmental injustices and the reality of climate change, the Commission and its state-of-the-art scientific capacity for sampling and analysis will be invaluable in environmental decision-making and partnership building."

"The sustained collaboration between the Interstate Environmental Commission, U.S. EPA, New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut is creating significant environmental, economic, and public health benefits throughout the tri-state area" **said New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Basil Seggos.** "The new BioBAT facility will further advance this science-driven collaboration and New York looks forward to continuing this productive partnership to further restore and enhance our waterways and combat climate change."

Adjacent to New York Harbor on the Brooklyn waterfront, the new IEC space will facilitate IEC's water quality monitoring programs, including its newly established New York-New Jersey Harbor Monitoring network.

"The Murphy Administration is proud to support the new facilities and laboratory capacity at the Brooklyn Army Terminal that will aid the Interstate Environmental Commission in its important work to improve water quality within the harbor estuary that New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut share," **said New Jersey Commissioner of Environmental Protection Shawn M. LaTourette.** "My NJDEP colleagues and I are excited to continue our partnership with IEC in implementing the NY/NJ Harbor Monitoring Network on this initiative. The scientific data produced to evaluate current water quality conditions, coupled with NJDEP's many water quality improvement initiatives, will go a long way toward protecting public health and enhancing quality of life throughout the estuary and beyond."

"Solving water quality challenges, especially in a shared resource such as the Long Island Sound, requires coordination and partnership," **said Connecticut Department of Energy**

**and Environmental Protection Commissioner Katie Dykes.** “IEC has long assisted Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey in meeting our shared challenges and we congratulate IEC on the opening of its lab headquarters and office. We look forward to continuing to invest in our partnership with IEC in assessing water quality impacts to the Long Island Sound from climate change, emerging contaminants, and other challenges.”

“The Interstate Environmental Commission’s laboratory work is critical to the monitoring of water quality in the Tri-State area,” **said New York City Economic Development Corporation President and CEO Andrew Kimball.** “We are thrilled that IEC’s state-of-the-art lab space is opening at BioBAT, joining the rapidly growing ecosystem of health tech and biotech companies and agencies located at the Brooklyn Army Terminal, EDC’s flagship industrial and manufacturing campus.”

“We expect that IEC will attract other companies and students whose goals are also to improve the quality of water in the tri-state area,” **said BioBAT President and Downstate Health Sciences University Distinguished Service Professor Eva Cramer, Ph.D.**

In 2020, BioBAT received a \$500K capital fund grant from **then-Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams** to construct state-of-the-art biotechnology research and manufacturing space at BioBAT to accommodate new companies expanding from regional incubators or those planning to move to New York. The EPA provided \$175K in funding to IEC to enable the procurement of new equipment, casework and fume hoods.

### **About Interstate Environmental Commission (IEC)**

IEC is a tri-state environmental agency committed to assisting New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut in protecting, conserving, and restoring the environment, with a focus on water quality. Created in 1936 by an act of Congress, IEC is primarily supported through annual funding provided by Clean Water Act funding provided through EPA Region 2, and other EPA programs and state appropriations.

IEC’s most valuable and unique resource is its independent, accredited environmental laboratory, which analyzes non-potable water samples collected throughout the tri-state area.

The laboratory holds National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program certification through the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP). The laboratory also holds environmental laboratory certification through the Connecticut Department of Public Health (CDPH). IEC monitoring initiatives include a Coordinated Volunteer Pathogen Monitoring Program and compliance inspections of facilities discharging to regional waterways.

### **About BioBAT**

BioBAT, Inc. is a partnership created by the Research Foundation for SUNY (RF) on behalf of Downstate Health Sciences University (Downstate) and the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC). Its mission includes fostering the life

sciences industry's growth in New York City by offering research and manufacturing space to life science, biotechnology, and related companies.

**About New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC)**

NYCEDC works to make New York City's neighborhoods and the economy more robust and inclusive by investing in people, jobs, industries, and communities that drive New York City's economic future to make the city stronger, safer, and more equitable.

**About the Brooklyn Army Terminal**

Since 1984, the Brooklyn Army Terminal has been renovated, transforming the once-vacant landmark into a manufacturing and commercial center. BioBAT has been a part of this revitalization since 2006. The Brooklyn Army Terminal is managed by NYCEDC, which strives to make New York City's neighborhoods and the economy more vital and inclusive and to build a more sustainable city to meet the challenges of climate change.

###