



## **Leticia Colon de Mejias**

**Founder and CEO, Energy Efficiencies Solutions**

*What does your company do?*

Energy Efficiencies Solutions helps Connecticut homeowners and renters understand how homes and buildings work as a system. We perform energy assessments daily, and we perform on-the-spot energy saving upgrades like air sealing, duct sealing, and water-saving measures to lower hot water demands. We also install insulation and new windows, and help people connect to solar.

Most importantly, we help families understand why we should save energy and how we can save energy. We ensure our customers' heating systems are running safely, and if they are not, we help them connect to a proper HVAC company that can get their systems running well and safely. We also help customers know what to do when they have mold, asbestos, or any barrier to saving energy.



*What does your typical workday look like?*

One of the cool parts about my job is that there is no typical day. Every day is an adventure. I get to work around 8:00 am to see the crews off to their jobs. We employ about 25 very diverse staff. They are so much fun, and they have new questions every day.

Building science offers plenty of problems to solve. This means we are always innovating and making new plans to solve systematic issues. We may help five to seven customers in a day. Each home has a new issue to solve.

Each person offers us a new chance to engage and educate on the importance of saving energy. My teams understand that our work is critical to addressing environmental justice issues.

*Describe your career path and what led you to work in energy efficiency.*

I am definitely an odd ball in my industry. In 2008 I was teaching at a hospital working in workforce development when I saw the film Kilowatt Ours by Jeff Barrie. I was shocked when I saw mountain top removal and the harm that our energy industries were having on the health of the planet that sustains us. I was upset that no one was teaching our people about this.

I am from Puerto Rico, but I grew up in Connecticut and spent some of my youth in Miami. I began to worry about the impacts of cancer, asthma, storms, and climate change. The more I learned, the more I felt that I had to make this work to connect people to information that can save lives, protect our human health and lower energy burdens. I am thankful for my work, because it also allows me the chance to provide jobs to people in my community.



Leticia is active on legislative matters, and has provided testimony to Congress multiple times such as [in 2019 providing testimony for the Blue Collar to Green Collar Jobs Act](#) introduced by U.S. Representative/Chairman Bobby Rush (at left). Photo: Kara Saul-Rinaldi

*What are your goals for your company and your work in energy efficiency?*

Through our work we learned so much about civic engagement. Now we are really focused on ensuring policies and laws are updated to end systemic (intentional or not intentional) exclusionary practices of not engaging people who look like me and my work teams from information and supports -- like work opportunities, ways to save money, and connecting to solar power and battery storage.

We are also really working to expand access to climate and energy education.

So few of us knew about these careers until we happened into them. There is a real need to reach people all across America and the world to share the positive impacts of what our work accomplishes. Far too often we are seen as “late adopters” but in reality, we are not being equally informed or included in the planning and transition. We rarely receive any funding for example to provide education in our communities. Thus, we continue to be underrepresented in the careers and uptake of energy savings and clean energy upgrades.

*What is the most rewarding aspect of your job and/or what is your favorite part of your job?*

The best part of my job is helping people. The letters we get about how much better the person feels in the home, how they are saving thousands on heating and cooling, yet feel more comfortable than ever in the home.

The other best part is the workers. I love my staff, we have so much fun helping the communities we serve, and it is a gift to be able to connect with people meaningfully providing careers and saving energy and human life.

The other part I LOVE is connecting people to the information that leads them to be in control of their energy future. We do that through our non-profit efforts like these FREE videos, [Dinero the Frog Learns to Save Energy](#) and [Defeating the Phantom Draw](#) by connecting our comic books and educational supports to schools and communities.

*What is the most challenging aspect of your job?*

The challenging part of the work is when we see housing that is in such bad shape that we can't really fix it. The other issue we get upset by is the lack of policy focus on truly providing the support and funding needed to help our communities find energy stability and create resilient communities.

We know that these building science-based techniques truly draw down energy waste by 30%-50% in a home. Knowing this makes us passionate about expanding the work and removing barriers to the work like addressing the vermiculite, knob and tube outdated wiring, mold, or other issues which can be barriers to helping families go deeper in their energy upgrades.

*What challenges have you faced while working in energy efficiency and/or how have you overcome challenges?*

We are always looking for good employees. Finding good people that are reliable and who are trained to do this work is hard. We have gotten creative and started a training program. Finding great workers is always top of our to-do list.

*What challenges do you think the efficiency industry is facing in trying to be more welcoming to individuals of all identities and how can the industry be more inclusive?*

As a Latina-mom, entrepreneur, employer, and community member, I am always looking to expand access to people like myself, who are generally disconnected from these types of opportunities. To truly connect us to this work, we need to ensure our kids have access to Next Generation Science Standards education in schools across America. Our kids need to learn that "All things are connected," "What goes up must come down," "What goes in must come out," and "hot air rises," as critical life lessons... this is more than building science, this is Life Science.

Our work teaches us to pay attention and ask questions, and we hope to share that passion for learning and protecting both people and the planet with anyone and everyone who will listen. Frankly, our lives depend on it.

## Learn More

Connecting with underrepresented communities: [www.gewportal.org/store](http://www.gewportal.org/store) and [www.gewportal.org/articles](http://www.gewportal.org/articles)

[Workforce program](#) and [Removing barriers to deep EE retrofits](#)

## Thought leadership

TEDxHartford (2021)

[Creating a Culture of Sustainable Thinkers](#) | Leticia Colon De Mejias

[Front Porch Windsor Community Television interview](#) (2021)

