



9300 CONTRACTOR

STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATE

Wherever you are in the whole world, it has undoubtedly been a remarkable winter so far! Thoughts and prayers go out from this corner of the world to all those suffering and struggling through so many unusual circumstances.

Strategic Planning as of January 2005!

It has been a very busy, active, and successful TCAA winter. We had our annual Board meeting in Delray Beach and a Suppliers Council meeting in Las Vegas in January. In February, a number of past and present TCAA Board members, and TCAA contractor members, will be heading to Bal Harbor for the IUBAC Craft Committee meetings. In early May, the Strategic Planning Committee and the Suppliers Council will be meeting again in Orlando. All this to continue the refinement and improvement of the Association, and to prepare to present to you our next great convention in Puerto Rico at the extraordinary Wyndham El Conquistador – check out the web site at www.wyndham.com/hotels/SJUEC/main.wnt

Let me touch on the highlights of these meetings, and the work going on in between them.

At the Board meeting, the schedule for the launch of the *Trowel of Excellence*, TCAA's contractor certification program, was catalyzed with the desire to add this to the TCAA value package. The pace of the program development has picked up to the point where we are planning to have it ready in time for the 2005 convention; a full two years ahead of the goal! With the educational sessions and IMI Contractor College sections available, the process of acquiring certification credit will begin. This certification is worth achieving as it will be presented to influential industry decision makers as a differentiating characteristic of the best tile

contractors. Add this to the list of reasons to come to Puerto Rico in early October!

Two weeks after the Board meeting, the Suppliers Council met at Surfaces in Las Vegas. This was the group's first working meeting, having met to organize and elect a committee at the convention in September. One of the major discussion points was in regards to the educational sessions. We are looking to their ranks to provide speakers, presentations, and knowledge that form a portion of our certification curriculum. The group had many excellent ideas for topics that you will see at the next couple of conventions. In addition, many of our supplier members have excellent programs they have developed for presentations to other industry stakeholders and interested parties that will be applicable to our certification curriculum. Our future convention educational sessions will be comprised of these presentations plus current or new industry hot topics, problems, and innovations. All of it designed to make us better contractors and more successful business people.

The Suppliers Council also spent a lot of time discussing the convention and their ability to interact with you, the contractor member. This is of great importance to them, as they realize as well as anyone that the relationships built and maintained through TCAA are a large part of their business. (And, it hardly hurts at all that we have all made so many friends and friendly acquaintances through our TCAA involvement. There certainly are a large number of very gracious and personable suppliers at our meetings.) The members of the Suppliers Council are committed to the success of TCAA. They feel strongly that the Association adds value to the industry, and they see the opportunity to help us exceed our goals.

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From the President

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen of the TCAA,

This is our first newsletter of 2005. So, let me begin by wishing you health, happiness and prosperity in the months ahead.

2005 promises to be an exciting year for TCAA! There continues to be lots of buzz over the "Trowel of Excellence" certification program. The TCAA Board is very enthused and involved with a commitment to get this much-needed program launched sooner rather than later. The "Trowel of Excellence" will have substance and muscle, separating TCAA contractors from their "wannabe" competition. This is the goal we are committed to achieve.

Along with creating a better business environment for our contractors, the "Trowel of Excellence" certification will make our organization stronger by attracting wonderful new members! We will continue moving ahead and I will keep you apprised of our progress.

Finally, as I have said many times before, I am enjoying the experience of being President of this organization and working with such an outstanding Board. As TCAA continues to grow and prosper, I encourage companies to get their up-and-coming young people involved with our committees and conventions. Our future depends on it.

Until next time,

Vincent P. DeLazzerio, II
Second Generation
TCAA President

News from BAC and IMI

by Scott Conwell, International Masonry Institute

IMI and TCAA Collaborate on Technical Services

In an ongoing effort to raise the quality of architectural design, specification, and installation of ceramic tile, TCAA and IMI are pleased to announce a newly forged partnership for technical services. Designers will specify greater amounts of tile if they have a reliable technical support network for addressing design and installation issues. IMI has been delivering technical services to architects in the areas of masonry and tile for decades, but the synergy between TCAA and IMI will grow the market for those services, formalize their delivery, and result in increased work opportunities for TCAA member contractors.

Here is how the system works. Any TCAA member contractor, or any architect or designer working with a TCAA member contractor contacts IMI's technical team via IMI's technical hotline or web site. TCAA and IMI will post the hotline number and web address on their respective web sites and literature, so their members will be aware of and make use of this valuable benefit. Please note that IMI denies technical services to non-union contractors.

A central source at IMI will route each request to the appropriate qualified IMI technical representative. IMI's technical team comprises architects, engineers, and marketing professionals who represent every state. IMI's response may take the form of reviewing plans or specs, faxing literature such as ANSI standards, or even visiting the job site. The level of response will depend on whether an IMI representative is local to the area, and more importantly, the potential to influence current and future jobs. Since the ultimate goal of technical services is to increase jobs for BAC members and contractors, all technical services are delivered in such a way that highlights the unique training, skills, and qualifications of union tile installers and contractors.

We are hopeful that this collaboration between TCAA and IMI will benefit the entire industry; architects will expand their knowledge base, TCAA contractors will have a support network, and each successful, BAC-installed tile job will lead to another. TCAA members and designers working with them should direct technical inquiries to IMI at our website (www.imiweb.org) or by calling 1-800-IMI-0988.

9300 Contractor is a bi-monthly publication of the Tile Contractors' Association of America, Inc. To submit an article or story idea, contact us by phone, fax or e-mail. TCAA is a membership-based organization serving the needs of the Ceramic Tile industry since 1903. Annual membership dues for active contractors and suppliers are \$800 (payable in quarterly installments of \$200), \$75 for retired suppliers, and \$25 for retired contractors.

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Email: info@tcaainc.org * Website: www.tcaainc.org*

STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATE

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There may be some changes at the convention in the ways that we exhibit, the style of the interaction with our suppliers, and the way in which you receive their valuable information. Look forward to working with them in new ways; partnering in increasing our technical knowledge and skill. Remember to make your staff available to them at home when they call to share their expertise with your other decision makers.

To further the planning of these innovations for the convention, the Suppliers Council will meet again this year at Coverings in Orlando in early May.

Our upcoming February rendezvous in Bal Harbor with the IUBAC for the Craft Committee meetings will give the labor committee chair, officers, and other members of TCAA quality face time with Union representatives. Ongoing discussions regarding our mutual interests and challenges will bring about a deeper understanding about where we are in our relationship with each other, our position in the market, and the threats and opportunities that exist out there in your real world. Prior to these meetings, we would like to hear from you. What do you feel is important in your relationship with your local union? The International? What threats, opportunities, weaknesses, or strengths do you see? How is your local market changing? How can we, your elected TCAA leaders, help you help yourself?

Finally, in early May the Board and Strategic Planning Committee will also be meeting at Coverings to update the strategic plan, assess the current strategic initiatives, and put the finishing touches on the **Trowel of Excellence** program. This is a day of intensive work, analysis, and planning. We measure our accomplishments against last year's plan, adjust current initiatives as required, and add new initiatives that serve to advance our overall goals and mission. This annual effort to amend and adopt an updated plan for the current year, for the next President and Board, and for the future of the organization is our best way to assure you the TCAA will continue to strengthen its representation of, and benefit for, you and your successors.

Feel free to contact staff or me. Go to the TCAA web site for the email addresses. The web site address is www.tcaainc.org.

Best regards, and see you soon!
Les Lippert/Immediate Past President

TCAA News

MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW! TCAA 2005 Convention - October 1-5

Plan now to attend this year's convention at the spectacular Wyndham El Conquistador Resort, located about one hour's drive from San Juan, Puerto Rico. Sun, sand, surf, information, education and, of course, the companionship of fellow TCAA members. Watch for registration materials coming soon!

Coming in 2006 - San Francisco!

GIVE US A HAND . . . TAKE OUR ONLINE SURVEY

Attention **CONTRACTOR** members! Help us improve your membership (and convention) experience by completing our online survey. It's just 10 quick questions and all responses are anonymous. **Go to the TCAA website (www.tcaainc.org) and click on the link to the member survey.** This survey will be open for response through March 30 and responses will be published in an upcoming newsletter.

SUPPLIER members will soon receive an e-mail with a link to a separate online survey we've created to solicit your input. Responses from that survey will be shared with the Suppliers Council and used to help us plan the 2005 convention.

2005 Project of the Year

You and your employees work hard to produce outstanding projects. Isn't it time you "got some glory" by showcasing your excellent work?

Entries are now being accepted for TCAA's 2005 Project of the Year competition. Prizes are awarded for outstanding projects in the categories of Commercial and Residential. See the enclosed entry form and guidelines for details.

Entries are not limited to tile contractors. If you're a manufacturer or distributor, we welcome your nomination of a project you participated in with a TCAA contractor.

And, don't forget. The contractors receiving top honors in each category receive FREE registration to the 2005 convention in Puerto Rico.

Ceramic Tile in 20th Century America

This stunning picture-packed book celebrates the heritage of ceramic tile as it traces 100 years of growth, accomplishments and individuals spanning a broad range of tiles, topics and traditions. An excellent gift for your customers or incentive for your employees. **Order forms are available online at: www.tcaainc.org or call TCAA at 800-655-TILE.**

Need Additional Newsletters?

If you would like to receive additional copies of 9300 Contractor for your company, call the TCAA offices at (800) 655-8453. We'll add your extra company representatives to our mailing list.

Share the Benefits

Do you know a contractor or supplier who could benefit from TCAA membership? If so, forward contact information for your prospective member to our staff. They'll follow up with your referral to "seal the deal".

Ceramic Tile Care Maintenance Instruction Sheets

Ceramic Tile Care Maintenance instruction sheets are available, **free of charge, for all members of TCAA.** If you would like to receive instruction sheets to pass on to your customers, please contact the TCAA office at 800-655-TILE (8453) or email your request to TCAA at: info@tcaainc.org.

Keep in Touch!

If you would like to share new product information, company news or have a website you would like to promote, send us the information and we will include it in future newsletters. E-mail your information to info@tcaainc.org or fax it to (816) 966-1027.

Project of the Year Award GUIDELINES

The following guidelines apply:

- Limit of one project submission in each category from any member contractor.
- Contractor's TCAA membership must be current to be eligible for consideration.
- Application must be completed in full (front and back) and accompanied by a minimum of six (6) digital photos (jpeg, tif or bmp files only). Submit photos on CD with completed entry form. Photos may also be emailed to tcaaprogram@aol.com. Include Project Name and Entrant's Name in the subject line of the email.
- Projects submitted must have been completed in calendar years 2003 or 2004.
- The TCAA Executive Committee will review all applications and select the top 3-5 projects in each category for submission to the jury.
- The jury, consisting of three outstanding industry representatives, will review the top 3-5 submissions and determine the winner in each category.
- Contractors awarded First Place will receive a special engraved trophy and one complimentary TCAA convention registration. Contractors awarded Second Place will receive an engraved plaque. Technical Merit will receive a framed certificate of recognition.
- Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2005 TCAA Convention.

Deadline for receipt of completed applications and accompanying materials is 5:00 pm on Friday, May 6, 2005. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

TCAA reserves the right to refuse consideration of any applications not submitted in accordance with the above-described guidelines.



TCAA PROJECT OF THE YEAR AWARD

OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM

ENTRY CATEGORY (check one):

- Residential Construction Commercial Construction

Project Name _____

Project Location _____

Entrant's Name _____ Title _____

Company _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (____) _____ Fax (____) _____

Email _____

Year of Project Completion (circle one): **2003** **2004**

Project Participants and Written Description of Project (complete information on back side of application)

On behalf of all participants involved in this project, I hereby agree to conform and abide by all the competition guidelines described herein. I understand and agree that the decision of the jury is final.

Signature _____ Date _____

Application may be submitted in two ways:

By Mail

Send this form **plus a CD** containing digital photos to:

Tile Contractors' Association of America, Inc.
4 E. 113th Terr.
Kansas City, MO 64114

Electronically

Applications and supporting documentation may be submitted online at the TCAA website. Visit www.tcaainc.org and click on Project of the Year. Follow the instructions carefully to submit your application.



TCAA PROJECT OF THE YEAR AWARD 2005
Official Entry Form
Participants and Project Description

Project Name _____

Architect Name _____ Firm Name _____

Address (City, State, Zip) _____

Phone (_____) _____ Fax (_____) _____ Email _____

General Contractor _____

Address (City, State, Zip) _____

Phone (_____) _____ Fax (_____) _____ Email _____

Tile Manufacturer _____

Address (City, State, Zip) _____

Phone (_____) _____ Fax (_____) _____ Email _____

Total Square Footage of Project: _____

Timeframe of Installation (hours, days, weeks) _____

Materials Used in Project _____

Method of Installation _____

Was tile contractor involved in the design or installation methods used? If so, how?

Description of Project (including any technical challenges overcome) _____
