



9300 CONTRACTOR

STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATE

It has been an active and busy **TCAA** winter! We have quite a bit to report to you on two key strategic initiatives.

Trowel of Excellence

As promised in the previous newsletter, representatives of TCAA (*including President DeLazzerro, Treasurer Leva, Past President Lippert, and Labor Committee Chair Trendel*) met with the executive leadership of IUBAC and IMI to discuss the Contractor College contribution to the TCAA certification program. This was a very constructive and exciting conversation, and has resulted in a partnership between TCAA and Contractors College for training, education, marketing and promotion. Both IUBAC and IMI shared our group's enthusiasm for combining our resources to create an opportunity to strengthen our authority and influence in our industry. This partnership is truly the backbone of the Trowel of Excellence program and, in conjunction with the sessions created and presented by the Suppliers Council, provides real value to the attendees of our annual meeting. In early May, the TCAA Board of Directors and Strategic Planning Committee meet at Coverings in Orlando to iron out the remaining details of the Trowel of Excellence program, which will *begin* at our convention in Puerto Rico! Full coverage of this momentous initiative will follow.

Scholarship Committee

To date TCAA has awarded six architectural scholarships and five TCAA member scholarships with a total value of **\$22,000.00!** We have been contacting past winners to get an update on their progress. Here are a few vignettes of our most recent winners.

2003 Architectural Winner, Tiffany Lin: Graduated from Harvard Design School with a Masters in Architecture in the spring of 2004. Joined the firm of Machado & Silvetti Associates in Boston, and is incubating a new firm entitled LinOldhamOffice with her new fiancé'. She won the Young Architects Award from the Architecture League of NY and a Progressive Architecture Citation from Architecture Magazine for her design of a single family home on a shrimp farm in Puerto Rico. She views stone and tile very favorably

as design materials, and is grateful for our award.

2003 TCAA Winner, Christa Marx: Attending the University of Missouri – Columbia as a sophomore pursuing her degree in Business Marketing. Christa's long range plan is to continue beyond undergraduate work and obtain a Masters degree. She will be interning this summer for DIACOM, a St. Louis advertising agency. She has joined a sorority, Kappa Kappa Gamma, and is very involved in community service and philanthropy through it. She is also a member of the MIZZOU Golden Girls, the school's competition dance team. She is appreciative of the award and our interest in her progress.

2004 Architectural Winner, Alejandro Arango: He is currently at the University of Illinois working on his Masters in Architecture AND his Masters of Science & Civil Engineering, expecting to graduate in December of this year. Last summer he interned at BLDD Architects in Decatur, IL where he designed his first building which will begin construction this summer. It is a 15,000 square foot building of classrooms and labs for an area Community College. He is interviewing for internships for the summer in Illinois and Sacramento, with his oft stated preference being for California. (We'll try to hook him up with our own wine connoisseur, Jay Fischer, if he ends up in Sacramento!)

2004 TCAA Winner, Shane Sovia: A family member of a Michielutti Brothers employee, Shane is attending Western Michigan University as a freshman. His declared major is Engineering Graphics and Design Technology, and he is continuing the level of achievement that made him eligible for our award. He has enjoyed acclimating to college life, and is involved in many campus activities. He says, "I learned that school must always come first, 8:00AM classes are not a good choice, the social scene at college is the greatest way to meet all types of new people, and that in order to do well you must find the study methods that work best for you." He also states that time management is a critical skill to master. (Let me know how when you have it down!)

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From the President

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am sure you are looking forward to spring almost as much as I am. Or, should I say, myself and the TCAA golfers. I hope you have had a healthy and prosperous winter.

Speaking of prosperity, the Board and I are working hard to give you a better opportunity to become prosperous. The "Trowel of Excellence" certification program is close to being ready to go and will be unveiled at the TCCA Puerto Rico Convention.

The following is our "mission statement." Please read this carefully and I believe you will understand and the possible significance this could be for our members.

The "Trowel of Excellence" certification is for companies who are members of the TCAA and are signatory contractors of BAC and contributors to IMI; companies who have met a certain criteria of high standards and qualifications that allow the consumer to have confidence of making educated choices. This certification will have substance and requires continuing education and review. These companies must be fiscally sound and in good union standing, as well as fulfilling the qualifications set forth. These companies must have a resume of qualified, completed projects, and a body of work that will withstand the scrutiny of their peers. They must have trained, qualified union craft workers and supervisors. Finally, these companies will have demonstrated a history of integrity.

It is the Board's intention to work out the final details at our meeting at the "Coverings" show in Orlando. At our Puerto Rico meeting, we will explain the qualifications for certification to the members and give out application forms at that time. IMI and BAC are solidly behind us. Scott Conwell of IMI will implement a marketing plan which will get this very important program to the consumer, as well as potentially qualified new TCAA members.

The first qualification of the "Trowel of Excellence" certification is being a member of TCAA. Therefore, it stands to reason, good contractors will want to be a part of our great organization, which has the most qualified tile contractors on the planet.

I only ask that our members support this plan by participating. You do not have to be certified to enjoy membership of TCAA, but you sure should want to. If your company is short on some of these qualifications, this is an opportunity to make your company better and more attractive to your customers. This is an opportunity for young members to get prepared for their futures.

Thank you, God bless, and keep those cards and letters coming!

Vincent DeLazzero
President

P.S. Puerto Rico, El Conquistador, is going to "knock your socks off" so make your plans early!

News from BAC and IMI

IMI TILE TRAINING

Whether a tile training program is run directly by IMI or with IMI assistance, the goal is the same: to train tile setter *mechanics*. That means craftworkers who can do all aspects of the tile trade, proficiently and with the highest quality.

As the union tile market share improves, IMI training programs are designed to grow right along with the industry's needs. IMI also tunes its training programs to meet regional demands and preferences.

Take Kansas City, MO, for example. Three years ago, IMI started a TMT training program after the contract negotiated one percent for that. Since then, the hands-on apprenticeship training "is going very well," says IMI Regional Training Director Robert Perry. "Three years ago there was no training. Now, thanks to IMI, they have 40 apprentices in training. Contractors are seeing it as a benefit to their businesses and the tile industry in the Kansas City area."

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STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATE

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2004 TCAA Winner, Jeremy Lippert: A family member of a Lippert Tile employee (and our eldest offspring), Jeremy is a freshman at Valparaiso University in Valparaiso, Indiana pursuing degrees in Business Management and Journalism. Having won Semester Honors (Dean's List) for the first semester with a 3.929 GPA, he is well on his way to the same for the second semester. He has enjoyed the challenges of college, and echoes Shane's assessment of the importance of time management. He is very grateful for his award, made more meaningful through his observations of TCAA at many of our conventions over the past 16 years. His greatest frustration, however, is that his days of attending conventions are over, and that we had the audacity to schedule our next one in **Puerto Rico**.

These winners embody a wide variety of interests and studies, and have track records of great success. It is gratifying to assist them in their endeavors to make a difference in their chosen fields.

In addition to these five, past architectural winners include **Adam Bowland** (2001), **Ryan Smith** and **Sydney Schrems** (2002), and **Allegra Parisi** (2003). Past TCAA member winners include **Justin Meyers** (2001 – Astro Tile, NY), and **Mark Famarin** (2002 – Port Morris, NY). We will pursue additional information on these folks, and let you know where they are and what they are doing.

We are preparing the applications and letters for this year's member scholarship awards, and soliciting two names from the AIA. We hope to give three scholarships again this year, and keep the TCAA traditions of adding value and giving back alive.

Most importantly, the Scholarship Fund needs your support. We are working on the final details for making contributions to this fund **tax exempt**. When the final arrangements are complete, we will contact you to ask for your help in continuing a fine and valuable tradition of propelling gifted young people towards the realization of their potential to lead, create, and improve. With 11 awardees to date, TCAA has begun a ripple effect of excellence beyond our own borders; a bit of good stewardship that is best summed up by the phrase "doing well by doing good". I hope you will seriously consider the ways in which you can help the Scholarship Committee add the names of additional deserving students to this roster of our winners.

See you soon,
Les Lippert
Immediate Past President

IMI TILE TRAINING

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In Las Vegas, where there are 310 apprentices, IMI works closely with the local Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee to provide the training. "They fund it and we take care of the rest," says Perry. The first school started in 1992 in a dirt lot. This summer, IMI will be in a new 20,000-s.f. state-of-the-art training facility.

For new tile workers, IMI's National Training Center in Maryland provides pre-job training to tile setters and terrazzo workers on a continuous enrollment basis.

Perry sees a return to traditional mortar installations and notes that IMI training centers have mockups and instructors who can teach those mortar methods for walls and floors.

Driving the trend is the benefit of mortar installations in terms of mold prevention. "Architects care about installations that are most resistant to mold," says Maria Viteri, AIA, IMI's Director of Program Development. "For floor installations, a mortar bed provides the best substrate for tile in terms of having a uniform system. We have been getting more questions related to mold and ways to design and detail to minimize the possibility of mold," she says. IMI technical marketing staff has been making more presentations on this topic because of that interest, while also covering the additional benefits of reduced life cycle costs and quality installations.

For contractors with a particular training need, whether it involves implementing a program from scratch or upgrading existing training, all it takes is one call: 800-JOBS-IMI.

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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**2005 Annual Convention
October 1–5
Wyndham El Conquistador Resort
Puerto Rico**

Pack your bags, book your flight and get ready for the 97th annual TCAA Convention. Wait until you see what we've got in store for you at the Wyndham El Conquistador Resort in Puerto Rico!

In addition to fabulous educational programs, enjoy abundant recreational activities at the luxurious Wyndham El Conquistador Resort! Pick from a wide range of activities that include golfing on a championship course, wave running, horseback riding, windsurfing, scuba diving, fishing and swimming. Visit the private Palomino Island, explore the nearby El Yunque Rain Forest or relax in the Golden Door Spa and Fitness Center.

Make plans now to join us in Puerto Rico!. We promise you will not be disappointed.

Watch your mail for registration brochures later this month.

CONGRATULATIONS

Mike and Karen Maiuri (Shores Tile) became the proud parents of a baby daughter, Mackenzie Paige Maiuri, on February 2, 2005.

Mackenzie weighed in at 6 lbs, 6 oz, and 20" long.



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.