With the run-up to the convention in Puerto Rico in high gear, the time to implement our largest strategic initiatives is drawing nigh.

**Point 1:**

At our meetings at the El Conquistador next month, we will continue the development of our “curriculum” in our sessions, panel discussions, and Contractor College classes that form the backbone of the TCAA Trowel of Excellence certification program.

Our program consists of Contractor College courses in time management, and verbal and written communication. There will be a continuation of the sound control session given at the convention in Olympic Valley last year, a very technical aspect of our trade that must be understood well to do properly. Given the changes in grout technology of late, the causes, prevention, and repairs of grout discoloration will be discussed at yet another session.

And, very importantly, there will be sessions detailing the changes in the new Tile Council of North America Handbook, the installation methods resource for the architectural, specifying, and contractor communities. You need to be very familiar with this manual.

All of these “classes” are for credit towards certification by TCAA. This certification program is being heavily supported and promoted by Scott Conwell and IMI to the industry and the architectural community. We will also seek to promote the skills and integrity of our certified members to AIA. We want to be their best resource for highly qualified firms and craft workers.

**Point 2:**

Strategically speaking, the changes in organized labor and the conditions of unionized construction market share are of great significance to our members. This, our most common concern, will be the...
FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen:

I hope everyone is as excited as I am about our historical event "happening" convention at El Conquistador. Why do you ask is this particular convention historical? It is, because we are introducing "The Trowel of Excellence" and we are making history baby!

Break your plans if you not planning to come. At least make sure you jump aboard something that is sure to make you rich and famous. I believe this convention will be the best ever and I am not just saying that because I am President.

Fun and games and lots of knowledge to make your company better. When you're there say hello and make sure you wear your thinking cap, which will also prevent you from getting sunburned, Hmm.

Buen Viaje... y nos vemos en Puerto Rico!!

Vincent P. DeLazzero, II
Second Generation President

PROJECT OF THE YEAR WINNERS TO BE HONORED

Each year TCAA honors outstanding commercial and residential tile projects. Entries are reviewed by an independent panel of judges and scored on technical quality, artistic merit and installation challenges overcome.

This year's winners will be honored at the upcoming convention in Puerto Rico. They are:

First Place - Commercial Project
Mexican Consulate - Chicago, Illinois
G.M. Sloan Mosaic & Tile Co.
Elk Grove Village, IL
Dan Kotel, President

First Place - Residential Project
Vicara Model Complex - Irvine, California
Selectile of California, Inc.
Ron Schwartz, President

Second Place - Commercial Project
The Cheesecake Factory - White Plains, New York
Port Morris Tile & Marble Corp.
Vincent P. DeLazzero, II, President

Second Place - Residential Project
The Metropolitan - New York, New York
G. M. Crocetti, Inc.
Arthur Cavazzi, President
Jim Anastasi, Vice President

In Memory

It is with great sorrow that we announce the death of Louis A. Conti, who passed away on September 7 at the age of 78. Louis retired last year from Venice Terrazzo & Tile in Rockford, IL after 55 years of service. He is survived by his wife Mary, sons Steve, Charles and Michael, daughters Linda, Cathy, Margaret and Joanne, and stepson Steven Brader.

NEWS FROM BAC AND IMI
(Continued from page 1)

permitted to use the logo on their business cards and stationery, and wear it on their lapels.

Our marketing campaign will ask architects, owners, and general contractors to look for the logo, to look for the certification when they select a tile contractor.

Trowel of Excellence will make a huge impact on the industry. The program will be successful when it causes certified contractors to be specified and sought after. Our associations have much to gain, as the demand for certified contractors will increase our membership rolls and further empower our influence on the industry. In the end everyone wins, because the focus will be on quality tile jobs done by TCAA-certified BAC tile contractors.

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. TCA 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.

Tile Contractors' Association of America, Inc.
4 E. 113th Terrace * Kansas City, MO 64114
Toll free: (800) 655-8433 * Fax: (816) 767-0194
Email: info@tcaainc.org * Website: www.tcaainc.org
focus of a special meeting of the membership. This is a
time for all of us to clear the air as to our experiences
and problems, share the stories of difficulties and suc-
cesses, and come out of the meeting with a better un-
derstanding of where we fit in and what we can do to
stabilize our markets. The TCAA Board of Directors,
our representative on the ICE Board of Directors (me),
and our other members in a variety of capacities that
place them in proximity to the union are your mouth-
pieces. Your input on these topics is crucial to our abil-
ity to follow through on the job you have elected us to
do – to be your advocates to the various organizations
that affect our industry.

Whether you are at the meetings in Puerto Rico or not,
we need to hear from as to your experiences, market
conditions, and challenges at home. We strongly en-
courage you to drop us a line via email at the Associa-
tion address (info@tcaainc.org) at your earliest possi-
bility. There are meetings coming up with the
TCAA Board of Directors, the ICE Board of Direc-
tors, the Trowel of Excellence Committee & BAC/IMI,
and TCAA strategic planning. To do our best work on
your behalf, we need to know what you need us to con-
centrate on.

Point 3:

Finally, the TCAA Scholarship Fund will be formally
launched at the convention. This is our great legacy to
the industry as we sow the seeds for excellence in the
architectural community with two more architectural
students, and in our TCAA “family” with one more
TCAA member winner. Both architectural students will
be in Puerto Rico to accept their awards, display their
portfolios, and tell us about their future plans.

So far, TCAA has given 14 scholarships to exceptional
students. In order for this to continue, TCAA has estab-
lished a dedicated scholarship fund through the Tru-
man Heartland Foundation in Kansas City, Missouri. In
the near future, the TCAA Scholarship Committee will
be undertaking a fund raising initiative soliciting tax de-
ductible donations. We hope this investment in the fu-
ture of our industry is well and widely supported.

Point 4:

Never before has the TCAA had so much to offer, our
industry had so much at stake, or have our own firms
so great an opportunity to benefit from the solidarity
and expertise represented by this organization. We
need your active involvement.

Best regards, as always.

Les Lippert
Immediate Past President

TCAA welcomes the following new members

CONTRACTORS
Art Mosaic & Tile Co., Inc.
Gary V. Lovisa
844 Rush Street • P.O. Box 569
South Bend, IN 46624-0569
(574) 287-8131 • Fax: (574) 287-4863
E-Mail: ARTGVL@aol.com

Lowery Tile Company
Joseph Lowery, President
12335 S. Keeler Ave.
Alsip, IL  60803
(708) 389-9200 • Fax: (708) 389-9209
E-Mail: info@lowerytile.com

Northern Illinois Terrazzo & Tile Co.
Louis D’Agnolo
1125 North Second Street
Rockford, IL  61107
(815) 964-8541 • Fax: (815) 965-5515

SUPPLIERS
Amorim Industrial Solutions - AccoustiCORK
Larry Lyons
26112  110th Street
Trevor, WI 53179
(800) 255 2675
E-Mail: llyons@AmorimSolutions.com
Website: www.acousticorkusa.com

EGS Easy Heat
Kathleen Scranton
2 Connecticut South Drive
East Granby, CT  06026
(860) 653-1609 .• Fax:  (860) 653-4938
E-Mail: kathleen.scranton@egseg.com
Website:  www.easyheat.com

Esquire - Florim USA
Mandy Schwall
395 John R. • Milford, MI 48381
(248) 505-8268 .• Fax: (248) 676-0403
E-Mail: Mandyschwall@comcast.net

Share the Good News!

Did your company recently win an award? Or did you
figure out a new way to meet a technical installation
challenge? Maybe you have a new product or service
you want to promote.

We’ll help you share the good news with our readers.
Send your news - photos, too - to info@tcaainc.org or
fax it to us at (816) 966-1027. We’ll get the word out in
this newsletter.
TCAA Briefs

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. Call TCAA at 800-655-TILE to order your copy.

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 TCAA members. 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: info@tcaainc.org.