There are no prizes for being ordinary......no glory for just going through the motions. So those who care, aspire to achieve success through the pursuit of excellence.

I know that excellence is not a skill, nor an act, nor an achievement. Excellence isn’t bestowed or bought, it’s earned – a gradual result of always striving to do better. It starts with enthusiasm and continues with trying to be the best.

Excellence means being better tomorrow than you were yesterday. It’s an attitude, a habit, and an art; it is found in the details – it means continuous improvement.

It is written that excellence can be attained if you: care more than others think is wise; risk more than others think is safe; dream more than others think is practical; expect more than others think is possible.

You strive for excellence by training, by learning; by doing ordinary things extraordinarily well; by doing common things in an uncommon way.

Confucius is quoted around 500 B.C as saying: “Excellence is the unlimited ability to improve the quality of what you have to offer.” Over the years, this has been my company’s goal. At Artisan, our Mission Statement says, “It is our objective to set ourselves apart from our competition by providing our customers with superior service and craftsmanship, maintaining a professional atmosphere, and consistently exceeding the expectations of others through a partnership with our suppliers and general contractors.”

To attain this goal my plan was simple: personal and corporate development acquired through education and experience. I wanted to set a foundation to build on by absorbing everything I could about my industry. I needed to be on the cutting edge of technology.

And what better way to be motivated by continuing education, than through the TCAA’s seminars, and the IMI’s Contractor College offered at all of the TCAA’s conventions.

How many times have I heard a fellow tile contractor say he wasn’t going to a seminar because “there’s nothing new to learn”: or boast “I’m bigger than he is, what could he teach me?” or, use as an excuse for not learning something new like - “my dad did it this way for over 30 years”............
MESSAGE
FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

I hope by now, spring is on its way, bringing much warmer - and better - weather to you.

Last week I received my Contractor College Transcript that outlines the IMI Contractors College sessions I have attended. In review of the courses I have not yet completed, I see there are many interesting sessions I want and plan to attend.

In conjunction with IMI, the TCAA has incorporated IMI Contractor College as a component of the learning and education sessions during our annual convention for the past 4 years. Although you may not intend to be a graduate of Contractor College, these sessions are geared not only to primary owners, but also to the management team you employ.

Personally, I find Contractor College sessions interesting as they relate to our day-to-day operations. I always enjoy the opportunity to listen and share in the experiences of others in attendance.

I can write myself notes if there is something our company should or should not be doing. At a minimum, questions can be raised or better yet, answered.

I want to encourage you to contact your regional IMI office and review the courses they have to offer. Perhaps for some reason you have not been able to take the opportunity to sit in on regional Contractor College session classes. If so, you also can count on IMI Contractor College being offered at our 2007 convention this fall in Las Vegas.

Sincerely,

Michael Maiuri
TCAA President

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2007 CESERY AWARD

TCAA is pleased to announce that Raymond Byrne, who has truly lived the spirit of Carl V. Cesery, is the 2007 recipient of this prestigious award. Ray has a most distinguished resume. He has served as Vice President of Grazzini Brothers & Company of Minnesota for over 20 years.

Ray has served as Trustee on the Tile Setters Health and Welfare Fund, the Tile Setters Retirement and Pension Fund for many years. He is a Past President of TCAA and Past President of the St. Paul Builders Exchange. He has also served for many years as Secretary/Treasurer of the Minnesota Ceramic Tile Contractors Association.

According to Gene Grazzini, Jr. CEO, "Grazzini Brothers would not be the healthy and vibrant company it is today without Ray’s leadership. We have worked together through thick and thin, and always Ray has been there to help, way above the call of duty”.

We salute this outstanding individual and we hope you will join us in recognizing Ray’s achievements at the Cesery Award Luncheon during TCAA’s 2007 Annual Convention November 3-7 in Las Vegas.
The embodiment of the BAC/IMI national training system will soon be open for business this spring, with completion of the National Training Center (NTC) in Bowie, Maryland. The two-building complex will showcase masonry materials including tile, terrazzo, brick, block, stone, plaster and concrete, plus the quality training behind them.

In tile, for example, IMI’s pre-job tile course covers traditional cement (mud) methods and contemporary applications, plus specialized layout and safety and health. Beyond apprentices, IMI classes will be offered for journey-level upgrade, cross-craft, specialty products and applications, instructors, foremen and supervisors.

But the new, 25-acre campus represents a lot more than craft training. It will bring together all the other distinctive programs that IMI offers the union masonry industry, such as new product testing and certifications, while allowing a richer menu of educational programs for the design and building professions, as well as union contractors.

The 60,500-square foot training center features a versatile, open bay training floor, plus offices, classrooms and design studios. The 45,500-square foot dormitory building includes a cafeteria, recreation facilities, meeting rooms and dorm rooms for 108 students. The center can accommodate over 2,000 students annually. It is midway between Washington, DC and Annapolis, and is accessible to area airports.

Opening year promises to be a busy one, in addition to regular classes. June will bring Masonry Camp, the hands-on exposure to crafts and collaboration for intern architects and apprentice craftworkers. In September, the NTC hosts the International Apprentice Contest. In October, participants in the annual Instructor Certification Program (ICP) will get an in-depth experience of the facility.

From attracting new apprentices to enlightening designers and increasing work opportunities for union contractors, the new campus “represents a lot of possibilities for us all,” says BAC President and IMI Co-Chair John J. Flynn.

Contributed by,
Hazel Bradford
Director of Communications
International Masonry Institute

THANK YOU
We would like to give a special thanks to Tim Bolby and Crossville, Inc. for supplying the new Ansi books to our contractor members. Tim can be reached at:

Tim Bolby • Director Technical Services • Crossville Incorporated • (931)-484-2110 • FAX (931)-484-8418
tbolby@crossvilleinc.com
Committee
Updates

Trowel of Excellence
Committee Report
Submitted by Vincent DeLazzero, II
Port Morris Tile & Marble

Hello Everyone:

I hope you all are enjoying good health and wealth in the Tile Industry as well as your personal lives.

The Trowel of Excellence program needs your help. Here in New York, I have presented my TOE credentials to architects, contractors and owners. They were received well and at the very least, I awakened their consciousness to compare my qualifications to that of my competitors.

The goal however is to make TCAA Members synonymous with the finest standards of our industry. In order to accomplish this, every year we must add TOE certified TCAA members.

I cannot urge you enough to complete your applications. If there is a problem call me. Here are my numbers, and feel free to give me a ring a ding at home: 914-636-5153, or the office: 718-378-6100. I guarantee that I will convince you that receiving your TOE certification will make money for your company and additionally, how impressive it will be to state to your customers that you are a part of an elite group of contractors that are the most qualified contractors in the world.

I am about to attend the BAC/IMI meeting in Bal Harbor, FL. They want to help us market this program and I am going to see to it they do. With your help I can have a more powerful voice. Keep those cards and letters coming.

Your friend, second generation past president and proud member of TCAA and TOE Certified Tile Contractor.

Vinny

Technical Committee Report
Submitted by Ron Schwartz
Selectile of California, Inc.

Just a note about Backer Boards………

As a lot of us contractors know, there are a variety of Backer Boards made for use with tile and stone out on the market these days. What you may not be aware is that there are just as many limitations and installation procedures associated with the varying types. Even the same type of backer board from the same manufacturer may come in different thicknesses and therefore may have different limitations.

It has become very important to check the literature or to check with the manufacturer as to the selected products installation procedures and limitations. There may be issues as to its location for installation as well as the limitations in both size and weight of the tile or stone being applied.

For instance, there are some backer boards that have a minimal tile size for floor installations. Some product manufacturers may recommend if using a waterproof membrane, that a membrane be placed on both sides of the backer board whereas another product manufacturer may only recommend the membrane only on one side.

Bottom line is to be safe and double check that the backer board you choose to use meets with the installation procedure and materials you use with it.

Member Information Update:

Please note the new company information for Marble Restoration, Inc.

Marble Restoration, d/b/a Decorative Flooring Services
6539 Weatherfield Court
Maumee, OH  43537
419-865-9000
Fax: 419-865-9005
E-mail:  john@dfs-flooring.com
2006 was a year not too much different from previous years as far as over-all membership. We have lost a few members and gained several new ones. Always disappointing to lose members, but very exciting to have new companies join our organization.

We would like to ask all our members, if the opportunity presents itself to put forth a special effort to reach out to these companies, both past members and especially our newest members listed below.

I also ask that each member make a sincere effort to solicit a new member, contractor or supplier. It will benefit us all and as Vinny says, and I certainly agree, TCAA represents the best in the industry!

Thanks—I look forward to seeing you all in Las Vegas in November.

TCAA website

Keep up-to-date on all current TCAA and industry news and happenings by visiting our website at www.tcaainc.org

Members, check out your company’s listing and please send us an email if new information needs to be listed.
It is our pleasure to once again offer a scholarship award available to the family members of our TCAA Contractor members. This program is designed to recognize the academic achievements of our exceptional college, or college-bound, students with a monetary scholarship based solely on merit.

One student will be chosen from our applicants, and will receive a $2,000 scholarship to be applied to the 2007 - 2008 school year.

Please find the application and other necessary information that you will need to apply for consideration in this newsletter on the next page.

Note the deadline date for this application is May 1!

Employee Eligibility Criteria

Must be a current full time employee, and considered as overhead staff, of a TCAA contractor member meeting the standards for good standing with the Association.

TMT union employees are not eligible.

Applicant Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must be employee’s siblings, children, or grandchildren only, and must provide proof of eligibility by blood, marriage, or legal dependency.

A letter from the TCAA administrators will be required to verify the status of the contractor member.

A letter from the owner of the member firm, on their company letterhead, must be submitted with each application verifying the above employment terms.

Scholarships based on merit and judged based on previous year’s grade point average, GPA, SAT, ACT, etc.

Available to high school seniors, and/or full time matriculated (enrolled as a student of a college or university) college or university students at any accredited two or four year school. Vocational or technical schools are not eligible.

Previous applicants and winners are not eligible.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

List all honors or awards received for academic excellence.

Include two teacher recommendation letters.

Provide transcripts (you may send copies).

Send completed application package postmarked no later than May 1, 2007 to:

TCAA Scholarship Program
4 East 113\textsuperscript{th} Terrace
Kansas City, MO 64114

Successful recipients will be notified by July 1, 2007.
Tile Contractors’ Association of America

Scholarship Application

IMPORTANT: This is a competition for a merit-based scholarship. Please read eligibility requirements and instructions on the previous page carefully before filling out this form.

Please print clearly or type Deadline: May 1, 2007 Postmark Date

TCAA MEMBER

Last Name:_________________________________ First ______________________________
Company Name:_________________________________________________________________
Company Address:__________________________________________________________________

STUDENT

Last Name:____________________ First Name:_________________ SS# :________________
E-Mail: _______________________________ Telephone: (     ) ______________________
Street Address:_______________________________________________________________
City:________________________________________ State:_________________________ Zip Code: __________________

CURRENT STATUS: High School:_______ College:________ Graduate School: _________

Name of School_______________________________________________________________
City:________________________________________ State:____________________________
Graduation Year:_______ School Telephone (     )___________________________________
Rank in Class:_______________ Size of Class:__________________ GPA:________________

Aptitude Test Scores (which apply to you)

ACT Composite Score _______ (or) SAT Score: Verbal:______ Math:_____ Total:_______
Please Circle: GRE  LSAT  MCAT  Scores:__________________________________________

See previous page for specific instructions. You may attach addenda and you may list any awards/honors you have received.

What are your career choices? ________________________________________________

Date:_______________  Student’s Signature:______________________________
The following guidelines apply:

- Contractors may submit only one project in each category.
- 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 or tif files only). Submit photos on CD or DVD with completed entry form.
- Projects submitted must have been completed in calendar years 2005 or 2006.
- 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 in each category receive a special engraved trophy and one complimentary TCAA convention registration. Contractors awarded Second Place in each category receive an engraved plaque.
- Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2007 TCAA Convention.

Completed applications and photos must be received in the TCAA offices no later than Monday, July 2, 2007. Entries received after the deadline (including photo submissions) will not be considered.

Mail completed application and digital photos to:

Project of the Year Competition
Tile Contractors’ Association of America
4 E. 113th Terr.
Kansas City, MO 64114

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

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OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM

ENTRY CATEGORY (check one):

- Residential Construction
- Commercial Construction

Project Name _____________________________________________

Project Location ___________________________________________

Tile Contractor Company ____________________________________

Contact Name ___________________________ Title ___________

Street Address ____________________________________________

City ___________________________ State _____ Zip _________

Phone (_____) ________________ Fax (_____) ________________

Email ____________________________________________________

Year of Project Completion (circle one): 2005 2006

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 ___________

Important Information Regarding Photos!

Project photos must be submitted in electronic format (jpeg or tif) on CD or DVD. If you are taking your own photos, be sure your digital camera is set to the largest file size available. If your photos are being furnished by an ad agency or your marketing department, instruct that they be submitted at 72 dpi at 28” x 22”. 
TCAA PROJECT OF THE YEAR 2007
Official Entry Form
Participants and Project Description

Project Category (check one): ☐ Residential Construction ☐ Commercial Construction

Project Completed In (check one): ☐ 2005 ☐ 2006

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

______________________________________________________________________________________________

Description of Project (including any technical challenges overcome) _________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________________________
Relax!

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10% of every order received goes to the TCAA Scholarship Fund!