

Record-breaking number enter industry awards contest

Sold-out crowd gathers to celebrate "excellence in construction"

The construction industry's 2006 annual awards ceremony to honour its members reflected the buoyant nature of construction in British Columbia.

The Awards of Excellence Program has been sponsored annually by the Vancouver Regional Construction Association (VRCA) for 18 years.

Around 600 people gathered at Vancouver's Hyatt Regency Hotel in November to discover which firms of the more than 100 that entered had been singled out for special honours.

"I think," said Keith Sashaw, president of the VRCA, "the growth of the awards program is very exciting. It is a testament to the skill and ability of our contractors in the Vancouver area."

"They are building absolutely incredible structures not only in Vancouver but in all areas of B.C. and the world."

There was a particular stand-out construction job at this year's awards ceremony: the River Rock Casino Resort in Richmond. It won not once but five times. Colter Developments, a family construction company from Richmond was given the association's gold award for a general contractor on a project worth more than \$40 million for its work on the resort.

The development started as a \$30 million renovation to an abandoned mall. It then grew piece by piece to a \$210 million project as construction continued. When it was finally finished after approximately two years the "mall

renovation" had morphed into a world-class resort that includes not just a 70,000 square foot casino but also 220 luxury suites, nine restaurants and bars and conference and meeting facilities.

Winning silver awards in the same category was Leducor Construction Ltd. for the University of British Columbia's life sciences building, as well as for additions and renovations to Metropolis at Metrotown.

Winners in other categories were:

General contractor on a project valued between \$10 million and \$40 million

- Gold award winner Stuart Olson Constructors Inc. for the UBC chemical & biological engineering building;
- Silver award winners Scott Construction for the renovation of the Vancouver School of Theology at UBC and Double V Construction for the Township of Langley civic facility and township offices.

General contractor on a project valued under \$10 million

- Gold award winner PCL Constructors Westcoast Inc. for renovation work on St. George's Senior School in Vancouver;
- Silver award winners The Haebler Group for construction of the new King David High School in Vancouver and to Stuart Olson Constructors Inc. for the new Watermark Restaurant at Kits Beach in Vancouver.



The River Rock Casino Resort was the big winner when the Vancouver Regional Construction Association held its 18th annual Awards of Excellence celebration

Trade contractor – president's award

- Gold award winner George Third & Son for their work at the Metropolis at Metrotown in Burnaby;
- Silver award winners Vision West Aluminium Products Ltd. for their work at the River Rock Casino Resort and to Spectrum Painting Ltd. for work performed at the Electronic Arts facility in Burnaby.

Trade contractor – chairman's award

- Gold award winner Matcon Excavation & Shoring for work at The Pier, a development at the foot of Lonsdale in North Vancouver;
- Silver award winners Interform Constructors Ltd. for work at the IJ Bayshore Gardens, an apartment development in the Coal Harbour area, and to C&S Ceramic Tile Contractors for exterior stone cladding on One Harbour Green, a condominium at Coal Harbour.

Electrical contractor award

- Gold award winner Keystone Electric Ltd. for work on the River Rock Casino Resort;
- Silver award winners Bridge Electric for the UBC Chemical and Biological Engineering Building and clean energy research centre, and to Energy Electric Ltd. for Surrey's Elim Housing Society (Emerald Building).

Mechanical contractor on a project valued over \$1 million

Gold award winner was Alpha Mechanical Contracting for upgrading the Killarney Community Swimming Pool in Vancouver. Silver awards went to PML Professional Mechanical Ltd. for the River Rock Casino Resort and to Imec Mechanical Ltd. for the UBC Chemical & Biological Engineering Building.

Mechanical contractor on a project valued under \$1 million

- Gold award winner Broadway Refrigeration & Air Conditioning Ltd. for the Vancouver School of Theology Iona building renovation;
- Silver winner Sentrax Mechanical Contracting for work on Phase 1 of the UBC Life Sciences Building.

A new category in 2006 was one aimed at recognizing the creation of construction workplace health and safety innovations. It is sponsored by Work Safe BC (formerly known as the Workers' Compensation Board). The gold award was presented to Harris Rebar. Silver awards were given to Leducor Construction and PCL Constructors Westcoast Inc.

The total value of the projects entered in the 2006 awards competition was \$809 million – up from \$518 million in 2005. ■

Special awards added to the list of winners

In addition to the main "project awards" handed out by the Vancouver Regional Construction Association at its recent annual awards ceremony, several "special awards" were also presented.

One was the landmark award. This is awarded from time to time when the VRCA awards committee feels a specific project adds to the overall fibre of the built environment.

This year's winner was Leducor Construction for its transformation of the former West Coast Transmission Building on Georgia Street into a condominium project called The Qube. When first built in 1967, the building became an instant landmark on the Vancouver skyline due to the way it was suspended from cables.

The association also recognized firms that brought a specific innovation to the industry. Three innovation awards were presented.

The first went to Gauvin 2000 Construction for research it is conducting in Coquitlam. The company is studying 28 different wall panels installed on the roof of its own building. They are being monitored electronically to assess moisture conditions.

Lockerbie & Hole, a major mechanical contractor, won for a system it developed to install giant pipelines as part of the upgrading of the GVRD water system.

The final innovation award went to KWH Constructors of Burnaby for a \$10 million suspension bridge it designed and installed in the tropics of Equatorial West Africa. ■

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