Tri-State Masonry Institute held its 12th Annual Architectural Awards Celebration to recognize designers and the masonry industry at the Hollywood Casino. Once again TMI offered a “People’s Choice Award”. Voting for the People’s Choice Award took place at the banquet after all attendees viewed the projects and heard the judges comments. All of the architects representing the winning projects were guests of TMI at this annual event. In this publication are the projects honored with comments from the jury prepared by Tony Costello, Costello + Associates, FAIA. TMI mason contractors associated with specific projects were also awarded.

The judges evaluated submissions to determine if a project was worthy of an award and what award should be designated.

To be worthy of an award, a project must:

1. EXHIBIT DESIGN EXCELLENCE as a piece of architecture at all scales - from site development to material detailing … regardless of its function, size, contexts (freestanding or dense, urban site), or cost.

2. RECOGNIZE THE CONTRIBUTION A BUILDING MAKES TO ENHANCE THE “QUALITY OF LIFE” of a community, whether it a public, not-for-profit, or private sector facility.

3. CELEBRATE THE USE OF MASONRY as used on both of the exterior and in the interior of a building, as well as its use in adding significantly to the quality of the site development: hardscape-landscape design.

4. RECOGNIZE THE FULL RANGE OF “APPROPRIATE USES” of masonry in terms of it being a primary material system used or a secondary material system that compliments another material system that logically is used as a primary material system.

5. RECOGNIZE THE EXPLORATION OF THE UNLIMITED RANGE OF ESTHETIC STATEMENTS that can be achieved through the creative use of masonry.

6. RECOGNIZE THE CONTRIBUTION MADE BY MASONS THROUGH THEIR OUTSTANDING WORKMANSHIP to enhance the quality of architecture and site development.

The criteria used by the judges in determining the award level a project receives:

A MERIT AWARD was granted to worthy submissions that met the basic submissions requirements including masonry design and installation as set forth in the TMI Awards Program.

AN HONOR AWARD was granted to a project that responded in a very positive and meritorious manner to a large number of the criteria and with respect for its building type.

AN EXCELLENCE AWARD was granted to a project that responded in an exceptional manner to almost all the criteria and with respect for its building type.

THE EXCELLENCE IN MASONRY AWARD WAS BESTOWED ON A SINGLE PROJECT in recognition of the excellent and exemplary manner in which it met all of the criteria and the opinion of the jury, rose above all others, regardless of its building type.

TMI and the Ohio Masonry Industry congratulate all who were honored at the banquet and are recognized in the following pages with the judges commenents.
Excellence in Masonry Design
Clark Montessori School
Architect: Glaserworks
TMI Mason Contractor: Jess Hauer Masonry
Submitted by: Division 4, Inc.

After spirited discussion and debate, the jury unanimously felt that this project deserved the Excellence in Masonry Award. This was another project that required the jury to review it several times, each time evaluating it against specific criteria. In the end, this project emerged as the single project worthy of the prestigious award.

The descriptive words or phrases that the jury members seemed to keep using in their discussion were sophisticated, intelligent, understated, elegantly proportioned, and singular iconic element. However, the one element or component of the building that all of these referred to was its stone and brick masonry. Its use on the interior is more akin to that of most schools.

However, on the exterior … this building reveals itself as something special. Just as boldly as the elegantly curved wall with the incised name of the school helps to receive those arriving by automobile, the very well-thought out and beautifully-executed brick bonds speaks to the building’s quiet sophistication.

The very limited pallet of materials used is made up predominantly of two story high walls of a brick color-mix that results in a deep orange-red color. This sits on a continuous base that wraps the building and extends from the ground up to the sill height of the first floor windows. The brick used for this base is of a tan mix color.

A thin course of stone is used for this horizontal element as it is for a limited number of medallions carefully placed at selected locations at the head of the second story windows. An exception to this noted by the jury occurs at the gymnasium block where the height of the tan brick courses are doubled to respond to the height of the space within. Above the stone course here is a very subtle reference to the historic pilaster simply achieved by the recessing of the brick within the pilaster.

All windows in the classrooms are “punched openings” with a very simple metal frame used for the windows. The exceptions are two very prominent, second story “bay windows” clad in a dark metal and glass curtain wall system. Their projected roof overhang and eve with fascia further articulates these elements.

The most prominent use of limestone occurs at two entries with the one at the main entry being defined in plan by a projecting end portion of the curved wall. A bas relief is carved above this entry that also contains a very minimalist steel and glass canopy and two flanking wall-mounted lights. For all of the above reasons, the jury feels very secure in awarding it the 2011 TMI Excellence in Masonry Design Award.
Excellence Award
University Masonry Design
Xavier University Residence Hall
and Hoff Dining Facility
Architect: Shepley Bulfinch
with MSA Architects
Submitted by: Essroc Italcementi Group

This is a project that the jury kept returning to as it realized that here was a project that had to be given serious consideration for the overall excellence award. Although it ultimately decided on another project, this project certainly won the highest accolades from the jury.

The jury realized that the more in depth that it studied and evaluated this student residential complex, the more the ability of the architects to deal effectively with a large-scale project in a historic campus context became apparent.

From the outset, the jury acknowledged the design logic of breaking down the massing of the complex with the articulation of distinct volumes representing what the jury felt were sub-divisions …sometimes called “halls” or “houses.” The commitment to a constant use of four (4) and five (5) story units, the bridge element that allows for pedestrian passage through the complex and creation of a very strong “street-wall” speak to strong urban design principles that deal with acknowledging campus circulation patterns, appropriate scale as well as the definition of the street.

Although subtle, the jury recognized that the architect articulates the four story height-line on the five story element through the use of a stone band course. Other details that the jury thought demonstrated the architect’s understanding were based on both the esthetics and construction methods of the historic stone and brick work.

Synonymous with three centuries of this style of campus architecture were the abstracted stone medallions directly below the stone cornice, the stone window surrounds, all within walls of brick. The use of the ogee arch at the main entries and the subtle articulation and detailing of the buttress at corners were also lauded by the jury.

Lastly, the jury felt the use of a unadorned stair towers, and very contemporary metal and glass curtain walls used on the walls of the common spaces gave the building a decidedly contemporary look.

Excellence Award
Retail / Multiple Family Housing
Masonry Design
The Banks Phase 1A
Architect: CR architecture + design
TMI Member Mason Contractor: Ollier Masonry, Inc.
Submitted By: Ollier Masonry, Inc.

From the title of the submission, it was obvious that this project was the initial phase of a multi-phased project that, when totally implemented, will complete a multi-decade, multi-phase river front development project. Incorporating massive infrastructure redevelopment, and structured parking garages and featuring two professional sports stadiums and a museum of national significance, this residential component assumes a very critical role in terms of both the ultimate functioning of the site and the final quality of its urban design.
With this in mind, the jury first complemented the entire team … the City of Cincinnati, private developers and investors, urban designers, architect, engineers, and the general and masonry contractor for achieving a project of such high quality … given that it is driven by a myriad of political, financial, and technical constraints. More importantly, it is a project whose ultimate success … will depend on how well this team understood the “quality of life” in this downtown living context that residents seek … actually demand.

On all accounts, the jury felt that this project’s response to all these forces bodes well for the remaining phases and, thus, the entire project. It felt that the major decisions concerning density, underground parking decks, commercial use at the sidewalk level and the use of masonry as its primary exterior material were ones that have resulted in a project with a truly “downtown or urban housing esthetic” and not a “suburban housing typology” on steroids.

The architect's skill is evident in the color palette of the bricks used that result in what might be labeled as “cohesive but enlivened.” From afar the facades display a sense of balance and proportion in their architectural composition and up close, the high level of detail … including the sophistication of the design at entries and sign graphics as well as the quality workmanship that has been achieved is evident.

Honor Award Elementary Education Masonry Design
Academy of Multilingual Immersion Studies
Architect: GBBN Architects
TMI Member Mason Contractor: Weisbrod Masonry
Submitted By: Division 4, Inc.

This is a building that, from the first viewing of the submitted slides, greatly impressed the jury for demonstrating that masonry is certainly a material that, in the hands and mind of a creative architect and designer, can result in a building that blurs the boundary between “art and architecture.”

Some quick research by the jury chairman revealed that the Academy of Multilingual Immersion Studies, also known as AMIS, is a French and Spanish immersion program located near Roselawn. It is part of Cincinnati Public Schools and a magnet school, which means that its students come from all parts of the Cincinnati Public School district.

First; the jury must compliment the Owner … the Cincinnati Public School District … for its commitment to innovation in educating its children. This school represents the best of combining educational objectives with those associated with award-winning architectural design. Kudos to all!

It is also obvious to the jury that the entire team … owner, architect, contractor … formed a strong partnership that was committed to a building that students would enjoy learning in, teachers would enjoy teaching in, parents could take pride in sending their children to. In a sense, this building is all about a community willing to invest in providing the best education for its children and grandchildren.
One must walk around the exterior of this building to fully appreciate the remarkable design esthetics that has been obtained through a fine balance between exuberance and sophistication … not an easy interface. The jury discussed that the architect might well have seen these facades as canvases on which they painted a picture … in the tradition of Mondrian. The bricks were their paint, if you will, and their choice of both the brick colors and patterns obtained from the various positioning of soldier courses their artistic decisions.

The attachment of red painted, projecting screens at selected windows add a bit of three-dimensionality to the facades as well as playful shadows. Bright colors painted on the interior complete the stimulating environment.

For AIA Educational programs please contact the TMI office at 800-443-6779 or visit OMA’s Website at www.ohiomasonry.org for a list of AIA Accredited programs offered through the National Concrete Masonry Association.
Honor Award
Religious Masonry Design & Peoples Choice Award
Horizon Community Church
Architect: CDH Partners, Inc.
TMI Member Mason Contractor: Ollier Masonry, Inc.
Submitted by: Ollier Masonry, Inc.

This project impressed the jury when judged against all of the criteria it had established. It recognized that the architect had chosen to execute the project according to a skillful interpretation of a time-honored, architectural style used for 200 years in religious and educational institutions.

They recognized that this is a project that can only result from a strong partnership between owner, architect, general contractor and masonry contractor. The high quality of both the materials and craftsmanship displayed throughout this project harkens back to bygone generations when both a reasonable cost and the availability of skilled artisans were more prevalent.

The skill of the design-build team is evident at every scale … from the careful proportioning of the massing of main elements to the beautifully executed detailing of every door and window as well as gutter and downspout.

In fact, the very well-considered and executed juxtaposition of both the lighter colored, ashlard-laid, natural stone and the more earthen-toned brick led the jury to question if this was a project totally constructed at one time or a project that had been built in two phases. Regardless, the final result speaks to the success of the architect’s design.

Honor Award
Historic Preservation Masonry Design
Voice of America at Bethany Station
Architect: Fearing + Hagenauer
Submitted by: Iron Clay Masonry

The jury was quite intrigued by this building … would have really enjoyed a “before picture,” and assumed it was a building that had great significance in the world of international broadcasting.

The chairman of the jury took it upon himself while writing these comments to research the building and discovered that this building now houses the National Voice of America Museum of Broadcasting. This building, designed in the Art Moderne Style, is indeed an internationally-significant building and one that elevates the importance of its restoration. Built in 1944 under the direction of Powell Crosley Jr., the Voice of America Bethany Relay Station would be used to deliver U.S. news in a total of 52 different languages throughout the world from 1944 to 1994.
The museum houses one of the country’s largest collections of antique radio equipment in the Gray History of Wireless Museum. Radios made by Crosley Broadcasting and an original Cincinnati Police transmitter built in 1927 are featured in the exhibit.

When Bethany Station began operating, the broadcaster stated, “We shall speak to you about America and the war. The news may be good or it may be bad, but we will tell you the truth.” Adolf Hitler, the dictator of Germany and one of the United States’ main opponents in World War II, often referred to the Voice of America as “the Cincinnati Liars,” hoping to convince his diminishing supporters that Germany still could and would succeed in the conflict.

The restoration of this building has guaranteed that a very important part of both America’s and Ohio’s history is preserved for generations to come. The jury praised the entire team … including the owners, architects, fund-raisers, and masonry restoration contractor … for bringing this project to fruition. Often, it is buildings like this that … deteriorating due to the harsh climate of Ohio winters and its “freeze thaw cycle” … are demolished due to the cost of a high-quality restoration.

The jury lauded the care in replicating the unique tiles that were used on window sills as well as the precise bonds in which the tiles were laid and the restoration of the unique lighting fixtures that flank the main entry.

The architect is also to be complimented for creating a building that proudly declares its role in the community. The jury lauded the use of brick to create a very strong, two story base for the projecting, wing-like roof that floats above and is separated from it by a third story with a façade clad with a strip window and horizontal metal siding system.

The use of painted CMU masonry on the interior and incorporation of a “green roof” serve to reinforce the building’s response to lifestyle costing criteria which is extremely important in any publicly-funded building.
Merit Award Jr. Sr. High School Masonry Design
Mount Healthy Jr. Sr. High School
Architect: SHP Leading Design
TMI Member Mason Contractor: Weisbrod Masonry
Submitted by: Essroc Italcementi Group

After reviewing the photos of this building several times, the jury engaged the questions focusing on the assets and liabilities of a building that exhibits multiple aesthetic images.

It applauded the architect for the exploration of various ways in which the rough-hewn stone was used and felt that it was more successful when used as it has been traditionally … namely to form a strong statement of a base to the walls. They felt it was less successful when used as a spandrel material in the semicircular, entry element.

There was one view that really caught the eye and admiration of the jury. It was the one that allowed two dramatically solid (no apertures) walls set normal to each other to form a dramatic backdrop for a horizontal composition of stone wall, with continuous strip windows above that allows the horizontal fascia on both the entry element and room formed by the wall to “float.”

Their admiration was strengthened when the interior view revealed that the wall was freestanding and esthetically read as solid stone wall that defined space but was free of the roof above. This esthetic expression was made famous internationally in Mies van der Rohe’s Barcelona Pavilion.

Merit Award
Commercial Medical Masonry Design
Benjamin and Marian Schuster Heart Hospital
Architect: LWC Incorporated
TMI Member Mason Contractor: Benchmark Masonry Contractors, Inc.
Submitted by: Reading Rock, Inc.

The jury concluded that this project has resulted in giving this hospital complex a new and impressive image that symbolizes state-of-the-art medical care. An important component of this new image is the skillful use of brick as the major exterior cladding material.

The inherent qualities that have historically distinguished masonry materials … quality control, strength and durability, and range of colors and textures … are especially striking when viewed against the existing building that uses a range of gray brick and a horizontal emphasis somewhat reminiscent of the “Early Modernists.”
The new building also employs a very strong reference to the traditional esthetics of brick masonry … that of a strong expression of structural bays with engaged pilasters at the column bays that are articulated at the cornice line. The subtle detail of extending the darker brick used at the low floor levels up on these engaged pilasters / columns did not escape the jury’s eye or their admiration.

This is building typology … the supermarket … that the jury noted is finally receiving some investment by grocery chains in the quality of both design and the materials employed.

First; they believed it is a “business decision” based on the need to attract customers to stores in a business that relies on the volume of sales. Second; they concluded that architects … like the one for this building … are responding with a serious commitment to the improved design requirements as mandated in the most recent editions of zoning and development codes.

The use of masonry materials and its historic design construction esthetic is very rational based on life-cycle costing and budget constraints. This is evident at various scales … from the articulation of the pilasters at the column bay locations that modulate the building’s very large dimensions to the use of split-face CMU’s at the base to cast stone sills that articulate the transition to the brick used for the remainder of the façade up to the cornice. The concern at the smallest … but no less important … scale is evident in the detailing one sees in the skillful incorporation of a soldier course and two stacked courses as well as in the very fine craftsmanship.

Congratulations to all Winners!
The jury recognizes the architect of this building … and the hotel chain … has achieved a building that has risen to a level of design and use of quality materials often not witnessed with this particular hotel cost and amenity classification.

This distinctive look is achieved mostly through the use of masonry materials that recognized the historic use of the larger-sized stone or “stone-esthetic” unit to form the base of a façade and then transition to the smaller-scaled brick above.

Visual interest is intensified by varying the height to which the stone is carried with the highest at the entry bay element and articulated, end-of-wing element as well as the incorporation of continuous, recessed stone courses.

This project struck the jury for its attempt to break-away from the non-inspiring image associated with many elementary schools. This is evident in the architect’s exploration in both the various volumes that have been used as well as in the shapes, compositions, and detailing of the windows.

The 3D / volumetric exploration is most evident in the two designs that appear on the gabled-ends of the most prominent element. One composition combines the vertical expression of the central tower with the horizontal emphasis of the arcaded entry. This aesthetic is further enhanced by the use of three different, but compatible colors of brick.
The other façade offsets an entry tower element and successfully ties it to the composition through the strong horizontal band of the arcade’s fascia. The use on the arcade’s piers of varied height bands of different colored brick reinforces this element’s horizontal expression.

All of this struck the jury as even more noteworthy given the strict budget limitations imposed on educational facilities.

The jury lauded this project’s use of masonry as the secondary material whose solidity and opacity creates the context for the building’s iconic element … the semicircular metal and glass entry that is truly impressive at night.

It also noted the use of a pallet of traditional masonry materials … ashlar-laid stone, cast stone sill, and brick in a manner that celebrates the historic elements that have been used by architects to articulate the various elements and transitions between them of a building’s façade … base, transitional sill course, and brick. It also commended the architect’s use of the same materials for retaining walls and main sign.

TMI provides quality educational programs for designers, owners, contractors, educators, public officials, school boards, etc. For more information about TMI’s educational programs or to inquire about TMI’s promotional activities contact Josh Naragon, Executive Director at 800-443-6779 or masonry@hughes.net.
The jury recognizes the architect’s successful attempt to use Neo-Classical Style of architecture as a precedent for the design of the exterior of this educational facility. The incorporation of the classical elements such as the semicircular distinctive pediment on the face of the gable and cornice on the entire building, use of the arches on the larger opening for doors and windows, and the use of six over six, double hung windows give testimony to use of this style’s major elements.