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The Masonry Magazine of Texas

Volume 28, No. 3 Summer 2024

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– plus –
Women in Construction

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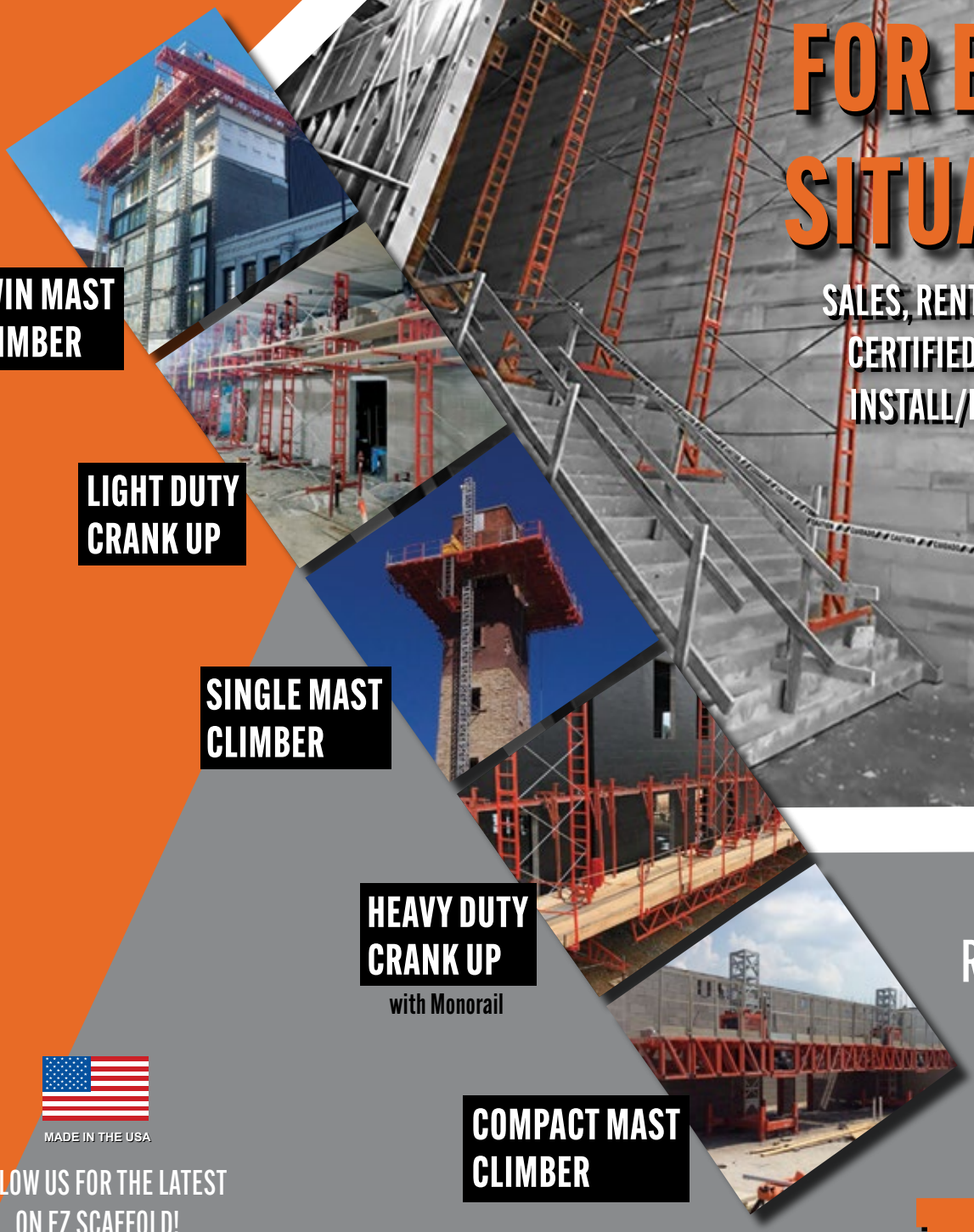

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UMCA

Dallas - Fort Worth Regional Winners

Winning Projects:

1. Everyday Excellence: Milestone Church Addition I Vaden Plastering & Masonry, LLC I **ARCHITECT: GFFdesign**

2. Multi-Family Residential: The Tradition - Clearfork I DMG Masonry Inc. I **ARCHITECT: Jackson & Ryan Architects**

3. Government & Institutional: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church I DMG Masonry I **ARCHITECT: HH Architects Inc.**

4. Industrial & Commercial: Dallas Country Club. - Sports Building I Dee Brown Inc. I **ARCHITECT: Marsh & Associates Inc.**

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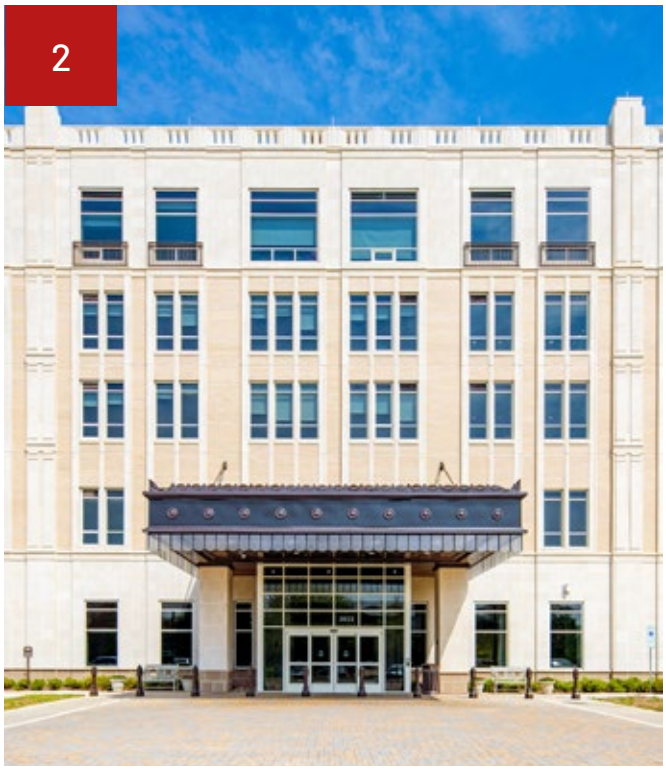

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UMCA

Dallas - Fort Worth Regional Winners

Winning Projects:

5. College & University: SMU Moody Graduate School of Research and Advanced Studies, Frances Anne Moody Hall | DMG Masonry |
ARCHITECT: SmithGroup

6. Primary & Secondary Education: Walnut Grove High School | Skinner Masonry, LLP |
ARCHITECT: Huckabee

7. Hardscape & Landscape: Eagle Mountain Saginaw ISD Central Admin Building - Landscape | Skinner Masonry, LLP |
ARCHITECT: VLK Architects

8. Restoration: Westgrove Aviation | Wayne A. Smith

9. Block: Bill R Johnson CTE Center | MidTex Masonry | **ARCHITECTS: VLK Architects**

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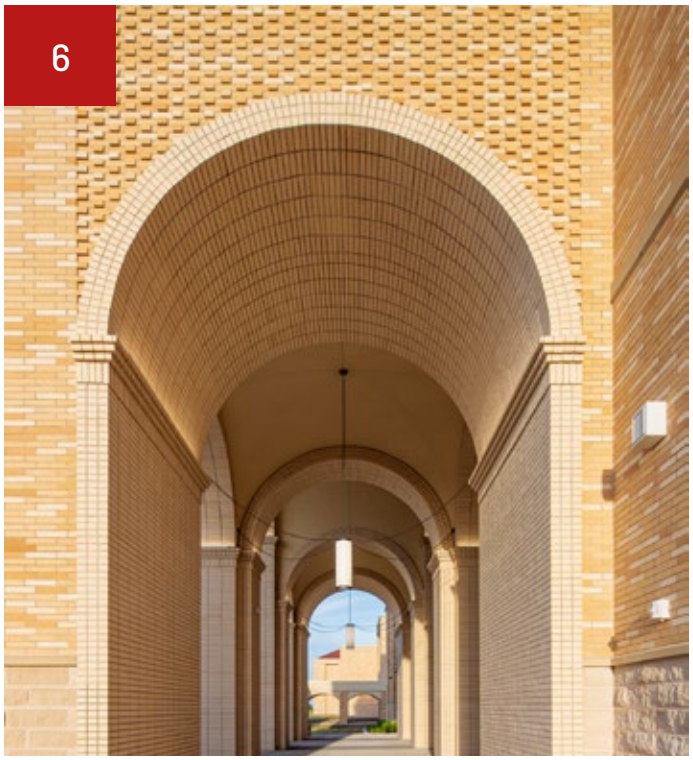

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AMCH

Houston Regional Winners

Winning Projects:

1. Everyday Excellence: Christ The Redeemer Garden I Authentic Masonry & Stone I **ARCHITECT: Ziegler Cooper**

2. Single Family: Casa Blanca en el Lago I Precision Development I **ARCHITECT: Sullivan Henry Ogerro and Associates**

3. Government & Institutional: St Mary's Seminary Dormitory I Camarata Masonry Systems, Ltd. I **ARCHITECT: Studio Red Architects**

4. Industrial & Commercial: Shell Federal Credit Union Home Office I Surock LLC I **ARCHITECT: SLI Group, Inc.**

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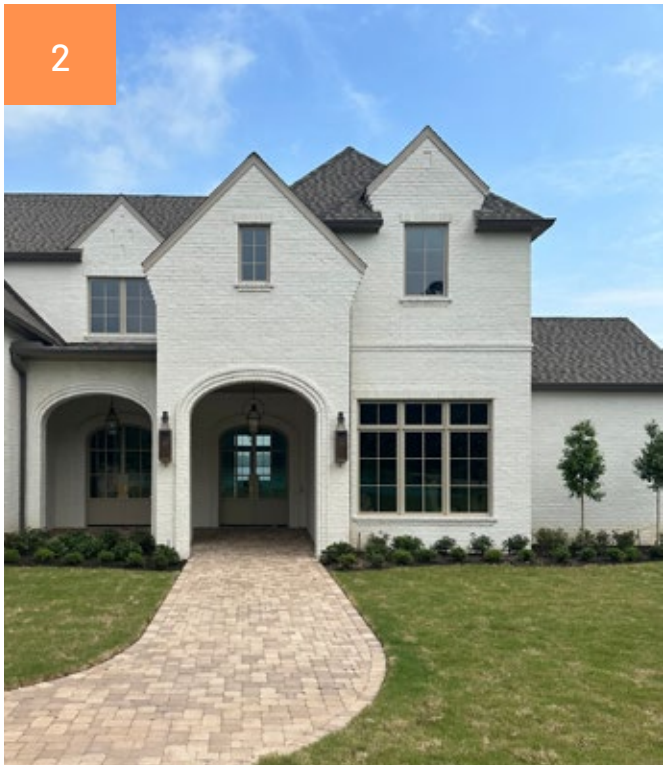

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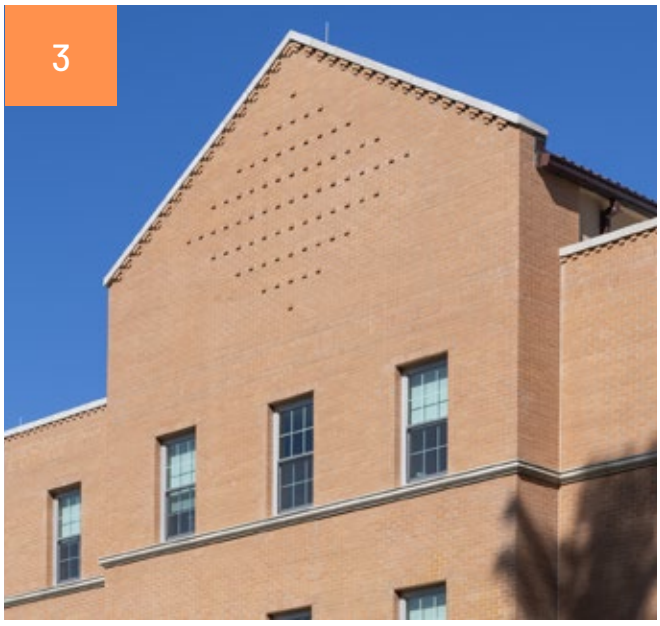

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AMCH

Houston Regional Winners

Winning Projects:

5. College & University: Rice University New Engineering and Sciences Building | Camarata Masonry Systems, Ltd. | **ARCHITECT: Skidmore, Owings & Merrill**

6. Primary & Secondary Education: Cathedral High School | Paul Yeatts Enterprises, Inc. | **ARCHITECT: Jackson & Ryan Architects**

7. Hardscape & Landscape: TMC3 - Helix Park | Camarata Masonry Systems, Ltd. | **ARCHITECT: Mikyoung Kim Design**

8. Restoration: The Commons at Hermann Park | W.W. Bartlett Inc. | **ARCHITECTS: Marlon Blackwell Architects**

9. Block: TMC3 Parcel D | Camarata Masonry Systems, Ltd. | **ARCHITECT: Elkus Manfredi Architects**

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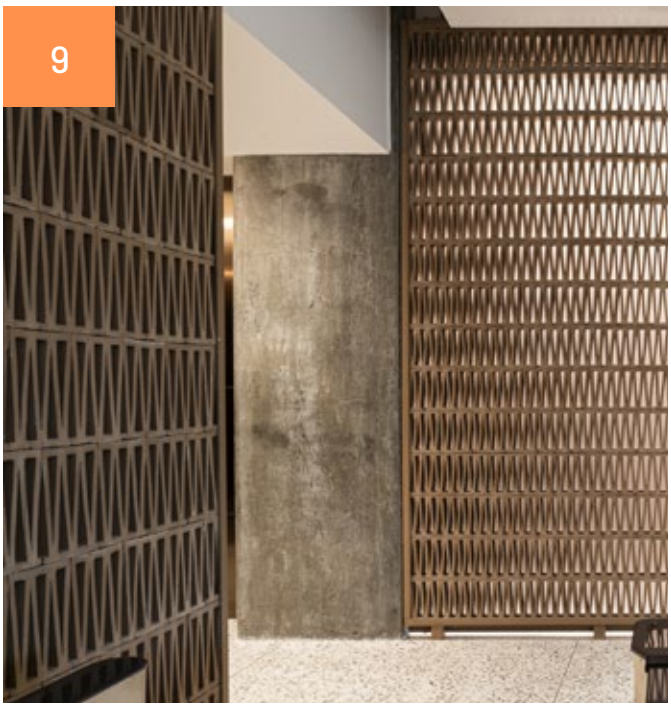

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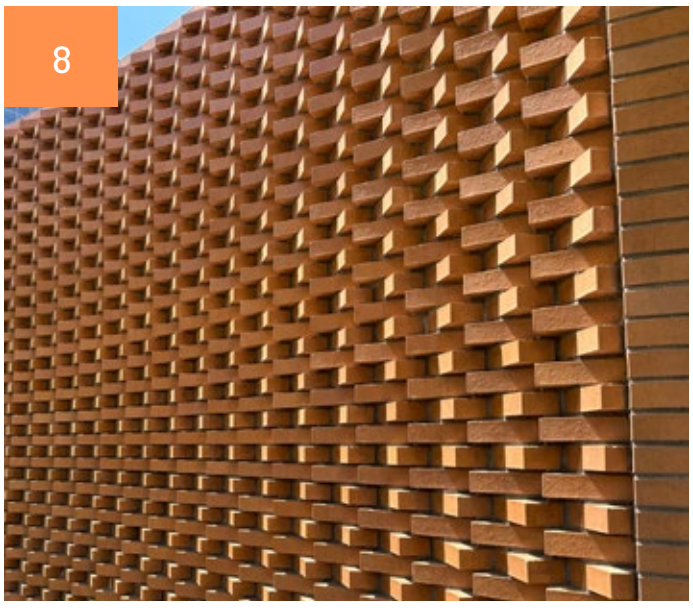

SAMCA

San Antonio Regional Winners

Winning Projects:

1. Everyday Excellence: Veramendi Retail - 4B4C Shell Buildings I Ericstad I **ARCHITECT: RVK Architecture**

2. Single Family: Canyon Poolhouse I Curtis Hunt Restorations, Inc. I **ARCHITECT: Tobin Smith Architect**

3. Government & Institutional: San Marcos Fire Station #6 I Ericstad I **ARCHITECT: Westeast Design Group LLC**

4. Industrial & Commercial: Lemon Creek Ranch Building A2 I Mills Brothers Masonry I **ARCHITECT: Nelson Partners**

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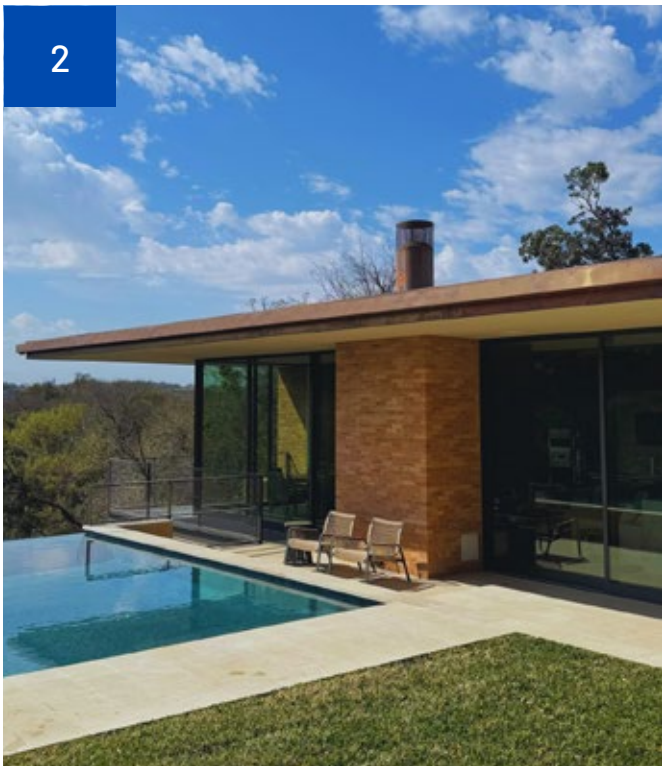

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SAMCA

San Antonio Regional Winners

Winning Projects:

5. College & University: Trinity University - Dicke Hallg I Rudd & Adams Masonry I **ARCHITECT: Lake Flato Architects**

6. Primary & Secondary Education: NISD Katie N. Reed Elementary I Rick Stone Masonry I **ARCHITECT: Garza Bomberger & Associates**

7. Hardscape & Landscape: Hemisfair Civic Park I Shadrock & Williams Masonry I **ARCHITECT: GGN, ltd.**

8. Restoration: Merchants Ice Storage Building I Shadrock & Williams Masonry I **ARCHITECT: Douglas Architects, Inc.**

9. Block: Texas Biomedical Research Institute: Animal Care I Rick Stone Masonry I **ARCHITECT: FLAD ARCHITECTS**

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CTMCA

Central Texas Regional Winners

Winning Projects:

1. Everyday Excellence: Nollina Amenity Center | C.W. Oates Masonry | **ARCHITECT: DTJ Design**

2. Multi Family: Frazier Pointe | LMS Lonestar Masonry | **ARCHITECT: 7D4 ARchitects and PLACE designers**

3. Government & Institutional: Westphalia Church of the Visitation | Division 7 Waterproofing | **ARCHITECT: K4 Construction**

4. Industrial & Commercial: Bouldin Creek | Rudd & Adams Masonry | **ARCHITECT: Studio8 Architects**

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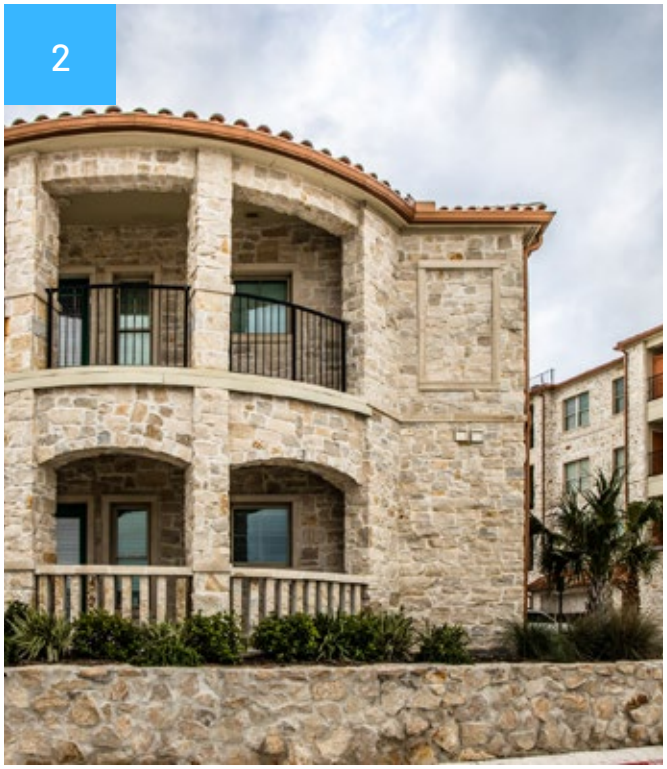

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CTMCA

Central Texas Regional Winners

Winning Projects:

5. College & University: Texas A&M Instructional Laboratory + Innovative Learning Building | Brazos Masonry Inc.| **ARCHITECT: Treanorhl**

6. Primary & Secondary Education: Del Valle Middle School | Brazos Masonry Inc. | **ARCHITECT: Stantech**

7. Hardscape & Landscape: 600X Amenity Terrace | C.W. Oates Masonry | **ARCHITECT: Gensler**

8. Restoration: Houston Fire Museum | Western Specialty Contractors | **ARCHITECTS: REPRACTICE architecture**

9. Block: Spurs Victory Training Center | Brazos Masonry Inc. | **ARCHITECT: RBDR Architects**

10. Single Family: Northwest Hills Residence | GHM Masonry & Stone, LLC | **ARCHITECT: Hunt Architecture**

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A Leading Lady:
Roberta 'Lynn' Skinner

In 1984, Skinner Masonry was established by Rickey and Lynn Skinner, who have been working together as a team for 40 years. Just Masonry, a women-owned masonry contractor founded by Lynn, was established in 1994.

Lynn served on the United Mason Contractor Association of Dallas Fort Worth Board of Directors from 1995 to 2000 and actively participated in numerous committees – she is often remembered for hosting memorable Christmas parties.

Lynn made history by becoming the first female President of the UMCA from 2002 to 2003. Her leadership and dedication have greatly contributed to the success and strength of the regional organization; today, the UMCA remains strong and continues to grow with 18 contractor members and over 50 associate members.

Lynn's integrity, loyalty, and leadership in the masonry industry have influenced and guided both men and women throughout the state of Texas.

Jodi Easley, owner of Air-Tite Foam Insulation said, "Lynn was a woman who paved the road for women in the construction industry. She set an example for me when I was a young woman just starting as a business owner. I admired her and will never forget how she helped me."

Lynn and Rickey's inclusive philosophy has been the bedrock of their success, creating an environment where every company, regardless of its size, feels welcomed and valued. This approach has not only fortified the masonry community but has also been crucial in establishing a robust and competitive market in the Dallas Fort Worth region.

Barb Schmidt said, "What I admired about Lynn was her genuine compassion for everyone! She was indeed a rock star in the masonry industry and was an inspiration to me when I would call on Skinner and Just Masonry!"

Lynn Skinner's legacy embodies a profound impact that extends far beyond the realm of professional mentorship. Her exceptional ability to form meaningful connections, provide adept guidance, and ignite inspiration has left an indelible mark on individuals, ranging from seasoned professionals to aspiring apprentices.

Lynn's influence is characterized by many as a deep-seated commitment to fostering growth and development in others, nurturing talent, and imparting wisdom that resonates far and wide. This legacy is carried on today by those she has impacted and the team at Skinner Masonry.

Women in Construction:

Breaking Barriers and Building Futures

Women face challenges in the construction industry – from lack of recognition to lack of resources. Despite these challenges, many women have managed to break down barriers and lead in construction. Women in construction are paving the way for the future, and we must recognize their challenges and successes.

This article explores the unique issues women in construction face, the benefits of more female involvement in the industry, and strategies to encourage more women in this field. We'll also explore how to create a positive workplace culture, provide education and training, and provide financial incentives to support women in construction.

Overview of Women in Construction

Women in construction have long been fighting against the odds to gain an equal footing in the industry. For generations, the construction industry has been male-dominated. Despite this, the percentage of women employed in the construction sector is on the rise, with the latest data showing that more than 20 percent of those employed in the industry in Texas are women.

The increasing presence of women in the construction industry is primarily attributed to the relentless efforts of organizations such as the Women in Construction Forum, a part of the Construction Industry Federation, and the Women in Construction Network. These entities advocate for women in construction, have raised awareness about the issue, and have advocated for improved opportunities for women in the sector.

The concerted efforts of these organizations have yielded significant results in recent years, with the construction industry implementing a range of female-friendly initiatives. These include establishing mentorship programs for women in the sector and introducing initiatives to provide better guidance on applying for and securing construction jobs.

Moreover, in recent years, women have spearheaded numerous projects, such as the world's first building to be constructed and maintained entirely by women. The project, known as the Zawiya Project, was initiated in 2013 by a group of women in the northern Iraqi city of Sulaimaniyah. It became a symbol of female empowerment and showed the potential of women in the construction sector.

Women still need to gain equal access to construction jobs and be fully integrated into the sector. However, with the efforts of many organizations and the commitment and dedication of individual women, more progress will certainly be made in the future.

Barriers Faced by Women in Construction

Despite making strides in all industries, women in construction still face various barriers compared to their male counterparts. One of the most significant challenges women working in the construction sector must overcome is a need for more access to resources and training opportunities. Many companies do not have a successful track record for hiring, retaining, and training women employees, thus creating a gender gap in the field. Additionally, some women experience gender bias and hostile work environments, where they are overlooked for promotions and opportunities for growth. Despite these obstacles, the number of women entering the construction industry is increasing. With the support of their employers and the industry, they have the potential to break down long-term barriers and build successful careers.

Benefits of Women in Construction

There has been a growing demand for women in the construction industry in recent years as organizations recognize the potential benefits that women can bring. These benefits include increased productivity, creativity, innovation, and communication and collaboration skills. Additionally, having women in the construction industry contributes to a more diverse workforce and cultivates a more inclusive environment, leading to higher employee retention and satisfaction. Ultimately, having women in construction can positively impact the industry, creating more opportunities for both men and women.

Strategies to Encourage Women in Construction

As the construction industry becomes more gender diverse, several strategies can be employed to encourage women to pursue construction careers and foster an inclusive workplace.

First, it is crucial to ensure that women are being considered openly and fairly for jobs within the construction industry. Companies should focus on actively recruiting, hiring, and promoting female candidates. Furthermore, the online language and imagery used to attract job applicants should be more reflective of the diversity of the construction industry, including women.

Second, it is essential to provide female employees with the same wages, job opportunities, and resources available to male employees. Companies should strive to create equal pay structures for everyone regardless of gender. Additionally, providing resources and programs that focus on helping female employees advance in their roles can create a supportive environment for women in Construction.

Third, hiring a diverse team of mentors and supervisors can help to create an environment where women feel supported and respected. Mentoring programs should be intentional in their efforts to guide and support women in construction and should be open to all genders. Additionally, supervisors should be trained to recognize and address gender bias in the workplace and create a culture of fairness and respect.

Finally, creating a safe and secure environment for women to work in is essential. Adequate training

should be provided to all employees on harassment and assault prevention and on developing supportive interpersonal relationships. Furthermore, company policies should be in place to ensure that any instances of harassment or discrimination are reported immediately and investigated swiftly.

By taking these steps, the construction industry can work towards creating an industry in which women can thrive and reach their full potential. By investing in strategies that create more equitable and supportive workplace environments, the construction industry can become more inclusive and foster growth and success for all genders.

Creating a Positive Workplace Culture

Creating a positive workplace culture is essential for the success of women in construction. As the construction industry becomes increasingly diverse, companies must recognize the value of creating an inclusive and supportive culture. This means giving women the same respect and opportunity as men, encouraging their ideas and contributions, and providing resources to help them succeed. Companies should create a culture that includes training and development opportunities, equitable compensation and recognition, and a safe and secure work environment. Women in construction should be allowed to thrive and break down the barriers that prevent them from achieving their full potential. With the right environment and support, women in Construction can help shape a brighter future for the industry.

Providing Education and Training

Education and training are integral to breaking barriers and building futures for women in construc-

tion. Expanding access to education and training for women in the construction field is essential for providing them with the skills required for various roles in the industry. TMC's Masonry Rocks Career Training Program, held for high school students throughout Texas, is a good example. By providing access to training, women can gain a foothold in the industry, enabling them to develop their understanding of the sector, its requirements, and their qualifications and capabilities. Furthermore, providing education and training to those who may not have had access before can help to promote a more diverse working environment in the industry, bringing further benefits to all involved. By taking these steps, women in the construction industry can advance the field's current state and set an example for future generations.

Holding Women Leaders Accountable

The upsurge of women in construction is a significant step forward in the development field; however, their impact's full potential is yet to be realized. To bridge the gender gap, leaders in the industry must be held accountable for empowering these women within their organizations and setting guidelines to break the existing barriers. This will require decisive action from the top tiers of the organization. A system must be in place to ensure that women are provided with the necessary resources and opportunities for growth and professional advancement. Further, the upper levels of management are responsible for creating a safe and inclusive environment for them. As the saying goes, "Actions speak louder than words." Women leaders should back up their words of empowerment by holding their colleagues and subordinates responsible for their actions and ensuring that these women are given the respect they deserve.

Providing Financial Incentives

Attracting women to construction is one of the most important methods of ensuring gender equity in the industry. These incentives must be designed to recruit and retain qualified women. This can be

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achieved by providing financial assistance for training and education, increasing wages for female workers, and offering incentives for those who stay in the workforce longer. When considering incentives, it is essential to ensure they are tailored to meet the needs of the specific population and industry. For example, some incentives may target women in lower-paying positions or focus on encouraging more women to enter particular trades. Overall, providing financial incentives to increase the number of women in construction is essential to creating gender parity in the industry.

Women in construction are making remarkable progress in the industry, helping to break down barriers and further gender equality. From fighting for a fair wage to obtaining leadership positions, women make their voices heard and show the power of collaboration and hard work. Women in construction are no longer a rarity but a growing presence in the workplace and the construction industry. Moreover, women in construction are paving the way for future generations of women to make their mark in the industry. With the continued dedication of female construction workers and the support of organizations and advocacy groups, there is no limit to the growth and advancement of women in construction. Women are proving themselves to be vital assets to the industry, helping to build a brighter future for all of us.

Construction Law

Document, Document, DOCUMENT!

Spike Cutler

Attorney Spike Cutler, and the firm of Cutler-Smith, P.C., are staunch advocates for the rights and interests of construction trade contractors. Cutler provides legal counsel to a number of trade organizations, including the Independent Electrical Contractors (IEC) of Texas, IEC- Dallas, IEC – Fort Worth, the Subcontractors Association of the Metroplex ("SAM"), the Texas Masonry Council, the United Masonry Contractors Association of DFW, and the North Texas Stone Fabricators Association. He is also a member of the Attorneys Council of the National Subcontractors Alliance.

Fair disclosure: the advice I give here today only matters for projects on which problems arise; so, if you know now – before the project starts – that nothing bad can ever happen on a project – you can stop reading now.

If, on the other hand, your crystal ball is out of calibration this week, read on and consider the warnings I offer.

We have lost count of the number of times the client has told us, "We didn't do anything wrong! Why are we being sued?" We always must remind our clients of the most fundamental reality of litigation: it doesn't matter what happened; it only matters what we can prove happened.

You Do Great Work - Why Worry?

You need to worry because you have control only over what you do, and your work is but one piece of the complexity of construction. As a masonry contractor, you have no control over the underlying design of the project, and poor design will always lead to failure. As but one of many subcontractors on the job, you don't get to decide the sequence of work, and sequencing and coordination of trades are critical to having a successful, profitable, and well-constructed project. You have no control over the job site as a whole, only your immediate work area (if that!), so damage can occur to your work or the work of others despite your best practices. Finally, you can't possibly know, today, whether some "legal and expert" groups will decide that the project as a whole has "construction defects" eight years down the line and that you'll have to answer for.

The Best Defense is a Good Offense

Remember: the goal is to be able to find trouble before it happens, and document things so, that if trouble arises, you're better situated to win. The single best action you can take to protect yourself from trouble is what we call the "Daily Project Review." This means having a skilled "someone" (likely your superintendent or equivalent) review the construction project every single day, and prepare basic documentation of the review. Ideally, you are already doing this in some form, to prepare Daily Reports (you are preparing Daily Reports, right?), so some strategic planning can go a long way.

Your Daily Project Reviews should start well before your work starts; you should be reviewing a project site weeks or months, before your scheduled start, looking for progress towards your projected start date, and possible issues with the quality of the work you'll be building on top of. Look for things like questionable contours in the dirt work, poor site preparation, improper or shoddy formwork, all the things that could lead to delays in your work or defects in the surface

upon which your work is placed. If you find issues at this stage, you'll be saving trouble not only for yourself but for other subs and of course the general contractor.

Your Daily Project Review becomes increasingly important as the beginning of your work approaches; you don't want to have scaffolds delivered to the job site and erection crews mobilize, only to find that there are piles of dirt, sloppy mud pits, exploratory holes or poorly-compacted surfaces where your scaffolds are supposed to be safely and securely erected. With your Daily Project Review, readiness for scaffold erection, laydown areas, and other critical work infrastructure like available water, areas for silos and mixing, and convenient electrical connections will be easy to determine, and more likely to occur.

Once the work is underway, your Daily Project Review will allow you to anticipate and call out interference with other trades before it impacts your work, and you'll be spotting issues with the quality of your work – the kind of quality issues that the Mason on the wall might not see from three feet away, but your inspection will reveal from thirty or one hundred feet. It's always better to identify a potential problem early, so the responsible party can fix it before the burden of repair is multiplied. Plus, finding these things early will help to avoid conflict and bad feelings with your general contractor.

At substantial completion, the need for a Daily Project Review hardly ends; it is at this phase of the work that the masonry contractor's completed scope is very often damaged, and if you are not regularly present to observe and call out this damage, you will likely end up eating it when it comes time for a fix. To be blunt, until the project is fully accepted by the Owner and Contractor, and paid for in full, you have to keep an eye on it.

Review Practice and Records

When the assigned employee performs the Daily Project Review, they should include at a minimum a notation of the weather conditions, who is working at the project (your people and other trades), and accompany with photographs documenting the project as a whole – all elevations and locations – not just your work areas, and documenting the status of your specific work, including both close-up photographs and photographs with a broader aspect. These observations and photographs should be sent back to the home office every day, preferably in real-time, and should be organized such that you can always track down notes and images for any given day without having to conduct a lengthy search. Never rely upon records stored in some guy's cell phone – the data may be lost, the guy may quit, all kinds of possibilities – none of which are good for you!

Someone in Project Management should be receiving and reviewing this information immediately, as well. If there is a problem, a concern, or an unan-

swered question, timely and detailed written notice to the general contractor is the only way to go. Tell them what you saw, whether there's a conflict or a question, demand the resolution right away, and don't forget to follow up; you don't want to find that a problem could have been abated by a simple answer to a question asked months before, and replied-to with "I'll get back to you on that." Never forget to ask, at the time of the observation, for relief; relief could be an extended schedule for a portion of the project, more money to perform the work, or clarified and detailed responses to the design problems observed. Virtually every subcontract calls for you to give notice on a short fuse of anything you observe, and this is a good way to catch issues before they become problems.

Retain the Records!

Make certain you have an affirmative plan for storing and retaining records of every project, including all of your Daily Project Review documentation, as well as submittals, responses, correspondence, and, of course, photographs. You should plan to keep readily accessible project files, in detailed electronic form, for 12 years after completion of every project. Electronic storage is cheaper than paying judgments or (heaven forbid!) lawyers for defense. Contemporaneous records with plenty of photos can be your "get out of jail" card when trouble arises years after the project is done.

The Bottom-Line

Aggressive project monitoring may seem tedious, and burdensome when you're doing it; but, the process will inevitably lead to you spotting issues with the project, issues with the work of others, issues with sequence and scheduling, and issues with your own work before the general contractor ever notices (if they ever do). In so doing, you will protect yourself from unwarranted losses, and plant the seeds for a successful defense down the road.

When you have knowledge of the past,
you have solutions for the future.

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From Contemporary Designs to Carbon Sink and Cost Savings: There's More to Concrete Block Than Meets the Eye

Newfound Concrete Masonry Checkoff shines a spotlight on the unexpected benefits of building with block

DENVER, April 2024 /PRNewswire/ -- As climate extremes and environmental accountability coalesce, the need for more resilient structures has never been more apparent. Concrete masonry construction is uniquely positioned to help communities overcome these challenges and more.

Concrete masonry is well known for its structural capability, safety, and resiliency. However, other inherent benefits, such as aesthetics and design flexibility, energy efficiency, and low embodied carbon, are underutilized or unknown.

After more than a decade, the U.S. Department of Commerce authorized the establishment of the Concrete Masonry Checkoff (CMC). CMC is entirely funded and led by industry, with a mandatory penny-per-block-sold assessment to support research, education, and promotion around the value of concrete masonry construction. Similar efforts in other commodities-based industries, from the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council to The National Honey Board, have seen product demand soar from sustained investment and communication.

St. Rita Square, Milwaukee, WI, Courtesy of Echelon Masonry

With CMC now in place, communications will focus on architectural, engineering, and construction professionals, encouraging them to rethink what's possible with block.

"There's not a project that couldn't benefit from the all-around appeal of concrete masonry," said Kim Spahn, CMC CEO. "Strength and durability are a given, but the economic and environmental advantages of block extend far beyond stairwells and elevator shafts." Regarding curb appeal, Spahn says concrete masonry is limited only by imagination. "Its modular nature combined with various textures, tones, and finishes allow you to achieve a stunning appearance inside or out that won't lose its luster."

Versatility and Design

Comprising clean lines and geometric shapes, concrete masonry allows for the creation of intricate patterns and contemporary designs. Over time, concrete masonry maintains its intended aesthetic without warping, rotting, rusting, or combusting.

"With concrete masonry, you don't have to sacrifice aesthetics for resilience," Spahn added. "Whether your focus is commercial or residential, block gives you the best of both worlds."

Whatever the style, concrete masonry easily integrates with other materials such as glass, steel, or wood, creating visually interesting contrasts and combinations.

Carbon Conscious

Sustainability claims don't always account for the

considerable transportation impacts of sourcing building materials from afar. Concrete masonry units (CMUs) are produced locally in all 50 states, which helps builders comply with green building requirements mandating that materials be sourced near their job site.

CMUs start sequestering carbon from the atmosphere as soon as they're formed and continue to absorb CO2 throughout their lives through a process called carbonation. Block contains calcium hydroxide, which reacts with carbon dioxide to form calcium carbonate, a solid mineral that effectively locks in carbon. This naturally occurring process can help offset new-build carbon emissions.

"For new construction to be deemed 'sustainable,' embodied carbon has become the new standard," said CMC Board Member and Chair of the Programs Committee, Heidi Jandris. "With the latest studies, we're starting to see just how big concrete masonry's role is in reducing a project's carbon footprint. CMU is made with dry-cast or zero slump concrete which sequesters more carbon dioxide at a much faster rate than other types of concrete."

On the manufacturing side, block producers nationwide are adopting new processes to reduce embodied carbon. Strategies include substituting new and novel materials for traditional cement, optimizing mix designs, and emerging solutions for utilizing CO2 in manufacturing.

Longevity and Savings

Given block's ability to withstand extreme conditions, expecting an operational life long into the future is typical. "Many parts of the world have relied on concrete for centuries—it's rooted in their culture and rich history," said Major Ogilvie, Chair of the CMC Board. "Here in the U.S., it's perplexing to see when structures are built and rebuilt with materials that aren't designed to last."

Many disaster-prone regions across the country have adopted a proactive approach to loss prevention by legislating the use of concrete block. According to Florida's Block Strong program, 99 percent of homes in South Florida now feature concrete construction, namely block. After Hurricane Andrew in 1992, residents, code officials, engineers, and designers worked to enhance local building requirements to position concrete block as the preferred, practical solution against the looming threat of damaging winds.

Occupants of both residential and commercial concrete masonry structures in any region enjoy savings derived from lower energy bills. The inherent thermal mass keeps spaces warmer in winter and cooler in summer, allowing for the installation of smaller, more efficient, and affordable HVAC systems.

Insurance premiums for concrete structures also tend to be lower because providers project damage claims to be few and far between, and costs to repair after extreme events are lower than rebuilding.

A May 2021 study from the Southeast Concrete Masonry Association (SCMA) compared construction costs in Charlotte, N.C., finding that concrete masonry units were 5 to 6 percent cheaper than conventional wood and light gauge steel framing. SCMA's insurance cost studies in Charlotte and Atlanta found that Builders Risk Insurance went down more than 50 percent with concrete masonry, with Actual Property Insurance being 2.5 to 3 times cheaper for CMUs than wood-framing.

To learn more about the unexpected benefits of concrete masonry, visit www.concretemasonrycheckoff.org/newsroom.

ABOUT THE CONCRETE MASONRY CHECKOFF

The Concrete Masonry Checkoff (CMC) is an industry-funded initiative to support the education, research, and promotion of manufactured concrete masonry units in the United States. It is the first-ever Checkoff Program at the Department of Commerce. For more information, visit https://www.concretemasonrycheckoff.org/.

Media Contact: Tom DiBacco, (202) 420-0593, tdibacco@clutchperformance.com SOURCE Concrete Masonry Checkoff

AGC Previews Project GHG Emissions Assessment, Tracking, Reduction Tool

Playbook on Decarbonization and Carbon Reporting in the Construction Industry, set for posting by May 1 at www.agc.org, is among Associated General Contractors of America's efforts to make sure construction firms play a leading role in crafting carbon-reduction measures throughout project delivery. A four-step process guides contractors and partners to confirm and document who should be accountable for various carbon emissions associated with a job.

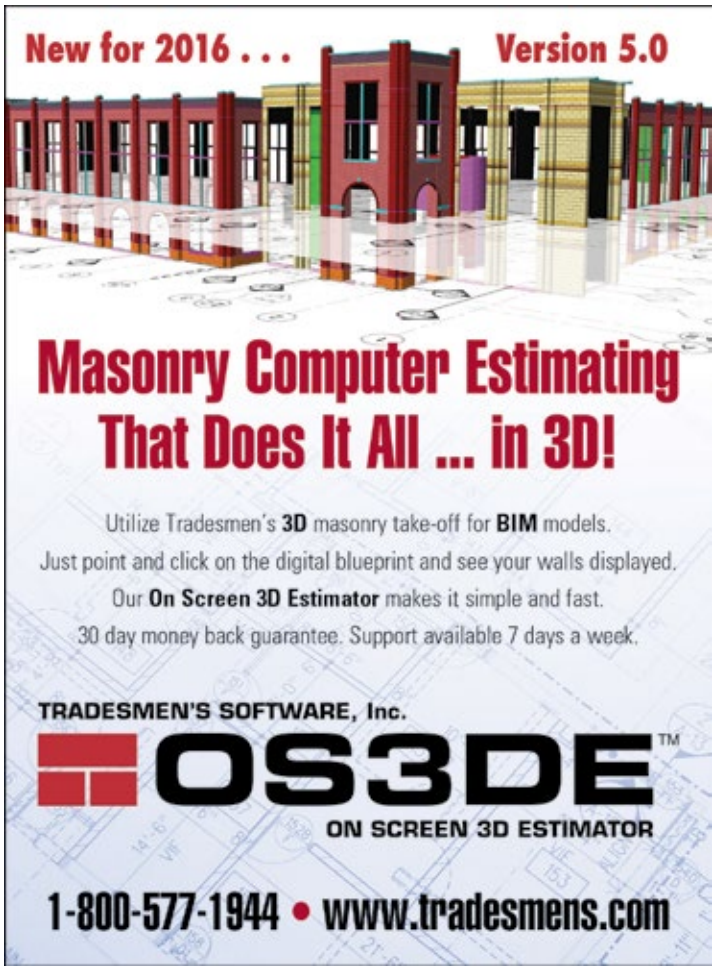
"This new tool will help firms understand the basics of tracking carbon emissions," says AGC CEO Jeff Shoaf. "This is the first document of its kind written by contractors, for contractors, to help them assess the impacts of the projects they are hired to build. Our goal is to make sure members have clear, actionable, and replicable resources to understand their responsibilities, measure the impacts of their projects, and operate as efficiently as possible."

The playbook includes resources to help calculate the carbon footprint of projects, factoring emissions of such key materials as concrete, steel, asphalt, and flat glass. It also lays out ways to track and report construction process emissions, primarily from material transportation and equipment operation. Authors also offer a host of industry-identified strategies and tips for reducing carbon emissions from their projects, from proposing alternative, less carbon-intensive materials to ways to operate more efficient job sites. Along with the playbook and related tools for members navigating the carbon era, AGC continues to share proposals with policymakers about the best ways to reduce carbon emissions from the built environment.

OSHA ISSUES CITATION IN FATAL PRECAST SOUNDWALL HANDLING INCIDENT

Occupational Safety and Health Administration investigators have cited Concrete Impressions of Florida Inc., Plant City precast sound barrier panel producer and installer, and Adcock Cranes Inc., Tampa lifting services provider, with one other-than-serious and two serious violations tied to a 2023 Orlando highway ramp site fatality. Investigators determined that a boom crane outrigger gave way as crews attempted placing a 5-ton panel, the boom hitting a Concrete Impressions crew member on an aerial lift platform. Adcock Cranes did not ensure ground conditions were adequate to support the crane while lifting the precast, investigators contend, while Concrete Impressions allowed workers to use extension ladders to reach the panels and neglected to document a required 12-month record of inspections of a chain used for picks. OSHA proposes upward of $21,000 in combined penalties for the violations.

April 24, 2024, Concrete News
Source: Associated General Contractors of America, Washington, D.C.



Acme Brick Company Wins Best in Class in 2023 Brick in Architecture Awards Sponsored by the Brick Industry Association.

Acme Brick Company won four awards in this 34th annual international competition, which honored the best projects in brick design from around the world. A total of 44 awards were presented.

Acme Brick was awarded a Best in Class in the Education category for the Texas Christian University Music Center in Fort Worth, Texas. Architects are Bora Architecture and Interiors.

A second Acme project, the Amanda & G. Brent Tower at the University of North Texas—Dallas, won a Silver Medal. Its architects are Treanor HL.

An Acme 2023 Bronze Medal award winner was Northstar Dermatology in North Richland Hills, Texas. The architects are AN.ONYMOUS. Acme's fourth winning entry in the competition was a Bronze Medal for Saint Mary's New Catholic Church in College Station, Texas near the campus of Texas A&M. The architects are BRW Architects.

Acme's President and CEO, Ed Watson, said, "I think that for anyone, recognition from your peers is the most rewarding kind of accolade. Projects using Acme Brick won nearly 10 percent of the awards given in this historic worldwide competition. That speaks to the efforts of everyone involved, from our folks who make this amazing product to our architectural reps who coordinate with everyone involved, and, of course, to our architectural clients who find such creative and beautiful new ways to demonstrate the enduring beauty of Acme brick. These awards are a great way to celebrate Acme's 133rd birthday!"

Acme Brick Hosts 2024 International Brick Collectors Association's Annual Brick Swap Meet.

On Saturday, April 19th, Acme hosted the organization's annual Swap Meet where avid brick collectors gather to swap bricks with other collectors and on April 20th to bid on unique bricks to add to their collection at an auction at Acme's Fort Worth headquarters. Members walked the show to view bricks available beginning at 9 am on the first floor of Acme's Fort Worth headquarters and the auction began at 11 am.

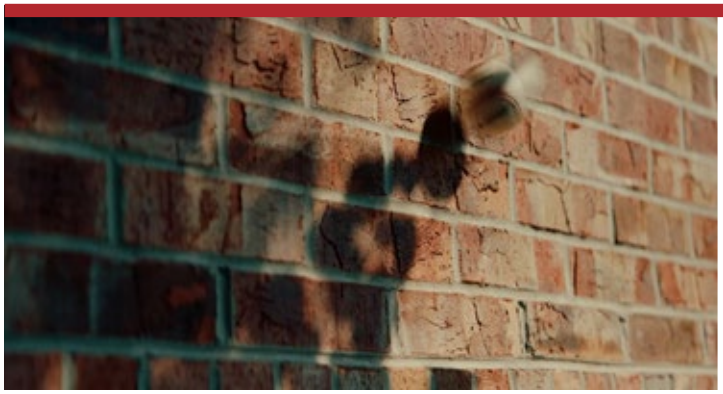
On the day before the auction, collectors visited Acme's historic Bennet Plant near Weatherford which is the site of the company's founding in 1891. Fittingly, Acme also celebrated the company's 133rd birthday during this week on Wednesday, April 17th.

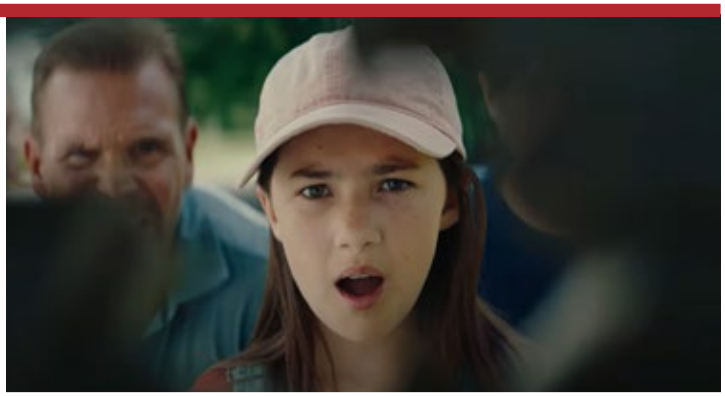
In addition to the Swap Meet, the first floor of Acme's headquarters hosted members on April 20th for art tours featuring huge, carved brick murals, the Walter Bennett International Brick Collection, and more. Texas brick historian Judy Wood was also on hand to answer questions about the history of brick in Texas.

Attendees were also able to see Acme's Baby Clay, created in 2007 to honor Acme's 116th birthday. The 9,300-pound brick, created by Acme's Denton, Texas plant has been designated by the Guinness Book of World Records as the world's largest brick.

Acme Brick Company, founded in 1891, sells many quality building materials and design products for the home through over 50 Acme Brick Tile & Stone public showrooms across 13 states in the Southwest and Southeast. Acme is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Berkshire Hathaway, Inc. For more information visit brick.com. For more PRESS information contact: Ron Taylor/Ashley & Taylor Public Relations at (817) 874-8206 or ashleytaylorpr@gmail.com.

CLAY BRICK Vs. THE OTHER GUYS





Always Brick

From forever homes to short stays, building or buying a home is an important investment. If you want a home with low maintenance, higher resale value, savings on energy, and the ability to stand up to storms and debris, brick is always the better choice for your wallet.

alwaysbrick.com/houston

Red River Brick™

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Architect:
VAI Architects, Addison, TX
Design-Build Team:
TreanorHL, Dallas, TX (design architect)
Post L Group, Fort Worth, TX (construction contractor)
Vaughn Construction, Irving, TX (construction partner)
Precast Panels:
Enterprise Precast Concrete, Corsicana, TX

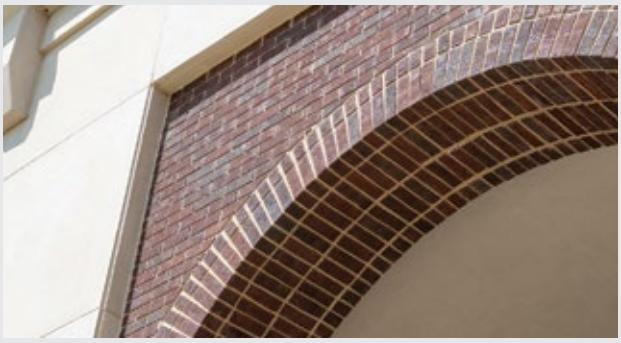
Taking Thin Brick To New Heights

Rising 180 feet from a hilltop, Ryan Tower at the University of North Texas at Dallas is a new landmark for south Dallas. Not only does it crystalize the soaring aspirations of students and the greater community, it also represents a thorough blend of old and new.

VAI Architects developed the tower's classic base-shaft-capital/cupola design, which recalls Moorish, Italianate and Georgian architecture. Execution was entrusted to the design-build team of TreanorHL, Post L Group, and Vaughn Construction. To meet a tight construction deadline, and to minimize disruption on a busy college campus, they utilized precast concrete panels over a traditionally built base. Enterprise Precast Concrete played a pivotal role: meticulously casting thinBRIK™ from Acme's nearby Denton, Texas, plant directly into the concrete panels using formliners – and then installing the panels. The diagonal Flemish bond pattern forms an intricate, decorative effect; additional visual depth is achieved with a grid of deeper bricks protruding an extra half-inch.

At the tower's base, east and west facing brick arches open to a tall, vaulted space with a donor wall, while weeping wall water features face north and south.

How far can thinBRIK from Acme take you? Consult with your Acme representative, or visit brick.com/thinbrik.



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