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ICSC awards 18 Gold and 40 Silver U.S. MAXI winners

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In keeping with its tradition of recognizing and honoring the premier marketing, community outreach, sales promotion, and visual merchandizing efforts within the retail real estate industry, the International Council of Shopping Centers, Inc. (ICSC) has awarded 18 Gold and 40 Silver U.S. MAXI Awards as part of the refocused annual MAXI Awards. Now known as the ICSC U.S. MAXI Awards these awards are designed to honor and recognize the premier marketing, community outreach, sales promotions and visual merchandizing programs solely for U.S.-based retail real estate professionals and companies. These awards not only enhance and compliment the other industry regional award programs currently offered by ICSC but provide information and insight into the entire retail real estate industry on what it takes to achieve the highest level of recognition in marketing and specialty leasing within the U.S.

The ICSC U.S. MAXI Awards featured 10 award categories: Cause Related Marketing (formerly Community Relations), Public Relations, Advertising, Sales Promotion and Events, Grand Opening, Expansion & Renovation, Business To Business (B2B), Alternative Revenue, Category Integration, Visual Merchandising, and new for 2010, New Media. The New Media category recognized and honored strategic programs and plans that include Web Sites, Online Branding Campaigns, Social Media (Blogs, Social Media Sites) and/or Text Messaging to achieve brand and marketing communication goals for a shopping center or company. Programs also included E-newsletters, email or other digital communication as entries into the New Media category.

All entries into the ICSC U.S. MAXI Awards must have been undertaken and completed between November 1, 2008 and October 31, 2009 to be eligible to compete. In addition, all entries had to be implemented and entered by a recognized U.S.-based shopping center and/or U.S.-based shopping center owner, developer and/or management company. Entries in the Visual Merchandising category could have been submitted from U.S.-based specialty retailers, specialty leasing managers, marketing directors and/or general managers.

"The revamping and refocusing of the MAXI Awards on solely shopping centers within the U.S. allowed ICSC and the industry to do what it does best - recognize and honor the most outstanding examples of marketing, community outreach, sales promotions and visual merchandizing while raising the standard of shopping center marketing and specialty leasing in the U.S.," said Cheryl Megill, SCMD, vice president, marketing, Inland Western Retail Real Estate Trust, Inc., Oakbrook, Ill, and chairman of the 2010 MAXI Awards. "This year's MAXI winners are truly the best examples of how vibrant, exciting, and creative shopping center marketing is in the U.S.," Megill added.

Winners in the ICSC U.S. MAXI Awards program were announced recently during the 2010 Fusion Conference, ICSC's conference for shopping center marketing and specialty leasing professionals, on March 2 at the Sheraton Chicago Hotel and Towers in Chicago, Ill.

In addition, the 18 Gold winners, along with Gold winners from other regional marketing programs,

are now finalists in ICSC's Global Awards competition, the Best-of-the-Best, and are eligible to be named the most outstanding example of shopping center marketing within the retail real estate industry. The winners of the Best-of-the-Best Awards will be announced during RECon, ICSC's annual convention in Las Vegas, Nev. in May.

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