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2010 Canstruction R.I. sculptures break previous donation records

May 12, 2010 - Rhode Island

A Canstruction Rhode Island awards gala held recently at Providence Place celebrated the success of teams of designers, contractors and supporters who created six "cantastic" sculptures to draw public attention to the growing problem of hunger in Rhode Island and provide more than \$37,750 in much-needed donations to the Rhode Island Community Food Bank.

The event culminated months of efforts by the nonprofit organization's donors and volunteers to plan and create the themed sculptures from approximately 27,000 canned goods, valued at more than \$30,000, for donation to the Food Bank after a two-week exhibit at the mall. While each team contributed enormously to the effort, the Dimeo Construction-led team broke all previous records for individual sculptures by building the largest with more than 10,850 cans and presenting a surprise check for an additional \$7,750 at the awards gala, according to Canstruction R.I. co-chair Drayton Fair, AIA, ALA, LEED AP, an AIA-RI past-president and a partner at Lerner | Ladds + Bartels.

The exhibit is the third Canstruction Rhode Island event that the American Institute of Architects Rhode Island Chapter (AIA-RI) and Young Constructors Forum (YCF) of the Rhode Island Associated General Contractors (RIAGC) have organized under the auspices of the Society for Design Administration, the national Canstruction sponsor, as a joint public service activity.

The awards, sculpture themes, and the firms whose employee teams created them were:

Juror's Favorite - MINI-mize Hunger (a MINI Cooper); Saccoccio & Associates Architects with DiPrete Engineering and the Young Constructors Forum of the R.I. chapter of AGC.

Best Use of Labels and People's Choice - It IS Easy Being Green (Kermit); The Robinson Green Beretta Corp.

Structural Ingenuity - Dinner is Surfing (a surfer on a giant wave); Dimeo Construction Company and Vision 3 Architects with Professional Electrical Contractors.

Best Meal - Don't Be CRABby, Help Feed the Hungry; William Kite Architects and Consigli Construction.

Honorable Mention - Wind CAN Feed Power (wind turbine mural); Innovative Office Interiors with Durkee Brown Viveiros & Werenfels and United Natural Foods.

Honorable Mention - CANdy Land Castle; Lerner | Ladds + Bartels and Shawmut Design and Construction.

The exhibit had drawn praise from visitors and jurors alike. "As our teams of architects, contractors and other team members were building the sculptures, there were thousands of people streaming through the mall's Skywalk Concourse," said Canstruction RI co-chair Michael Busam, also YCF co-co-chair and a project engineer at Gilbane Building Co. "They all watched as they walked through, and some stopped to ask questions, compliment us and even photograph the process. In the following days, all 1,500 ballots that we had printed were used to cast votes for the "People's

Choice" award."

"We are very appreciative of the time that our distinguished panel of jurors and our supporting partners have contributed," said co-chair Fair. "And, we are extremely grateful for the many donations - large and small - of our organizing sponsors and team sponsors. Despite a very difficult year in commercial construction, their response to the increased needs of the R.I. Community Food Bank was awesome."

At the gala, Providence mayor David Cicilline congratulated individual teams. Awards were presented to all six teams for their sculptures. They were selected for honors in various Construction competition categories by a panel of nine jurors. In addition, a "People's Choice" award was determined by ballots cast by visitors to the exhibit. Four of the sculptures will be entered into the national Construction competition.

The nine jurors were: James Barnes, AIA, professor, Rhode Island School of Design, and James Barnes Architects; Eric Brennan, vice president-sales, Inskip Auto Mall; Dana Caggiano, Synet Inc.; MacArthur Coates, senior vice president, Carpionato Properties Inc.; Leslie DaCosta, CMD, director, National Resource Group, General Growth Properties; Bonnie Frechette, marketing team leader, Whole Foods Market; William Morgan, architectural critic and author; Dietrich Neumann, Royce Family Professor for the History of Modern Architecture and Urban Studies at Brown University's Department of the History of Art and Architecture and president, Society of Architectural Historians; and William Mackenzie Woodward, architectural historian and author, R.I. Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission.

Major donors to the organization of the event and gala were G-Tech, AIA Rhode Island chapter, Inskip AutoMall, Synet and Whole Foods. Supporters included: ABC Imaging, Associated General Contractors-R.I. chapter, BankRI, R.I. chapter of the Construction Specifications Institute, Chaffee Communications, Providence Place, R.I. Community Food Bank, R.I. Rentals, Sandy Connor Art Direction, and Service Point.

The sculptures were disassembled on April 24, and delivered to the Rhode Island Community Food Bank. Construction RI is incorporated as a 501(c)(3) organization.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540