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ACEC to honor Nitsch Engineering for Children's Wharf, Martin's Park project

March 20, 2020 - Construction Design & Engineering

Boston, MA Nitsch Engineering has earned a National Recognition Award for exemplary engineering achievement in the American Council of Engineering Companies' (ACEC) 53rd annual Engineering Excellence Awards (EEA) for the Children's Wharf, Martin's Park project.

Children's Wharf, Martin's Park replaced a previously passive waterfront park with a play-space that is more accessible, sustainable, and active. Redesigning the site presented several engineering challenges, including safely addressing highly compressible soils while raising the site's grade up by 15 feet in some areas, interfacing with a seawall, and locating a large playship structure directly above the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority's Silver Line tunnel.

Innovative solutions included unique use of geofoam to reduce loads on the tunnel, integrating a mat foundation to disperse loads atop the geofoam, and creating structural support using both precast-prestressed concrete piles (PPCPs) and micropiles. The high-profile project brings an accessible active space for children into the Seaport, meeting the Boston Parks and Recreation Department's goal of improving access, equity, and excellence in public spaces. Perhaps most importantly, Children's Wharf, Martin's Park supports the community's future welfare while also serving as a symbol of healing through its dedication to Martin Richard, the youngest victim of the 2013 Boston Marathon bombings.

The project is eligible for additional honors as part of a record 203 entries this year representing engineering excellence from throughout the nation and the world. Judging for the awards program—known industry-wide as the “Academy Awards of the engineering industry”—took place in February and was conducted by a national 35-member panel of built environment leaders, along with experts from government, the media and academia. Award criteria focused on uniqueness and originality, technical innovation, social and economic value, and generating excitement for the engineering profession.

Recognition of all award winners including top winners—20 Honor Awards, 16 Grand Awards and the prestigious “Grand Conceptor Award” for the year's most outstanding overall engineering achievement—will take place at the annual EEA Dinner and Gala, a black-tie event to be held April 28 at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, D.C.

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