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IFMA Boston names winners of 2023 Awards of Excellence

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A Look Back As We Look Forward

Boston, MA The Boston chapter of the International Facility Management Association (IFMA), a non-profit association dedicated to serving the facility management profession, today announced the winners of the 2023 Awards of Excellence.

Presented to recipients at the 20th Annual Awards of Excellence event on May 10th. This year's IFMA Boston awards will take place over breakfast at the organization's signature event – FMForward at Bentley University.

Lori Stewart Coletti Award: John Boucher, Harvard University Art Museums

About the Award: The Lori Stewart Coletti award is given in recognition of service to the Boston

Chapter of IFMA that goes above and beyond expectations. Each year, the winner of this award makes a substantial impact on the membership and success of the organization.

2023 Winner: This year's recipient, John Boucher, has been an integral part of the Think Tank committee as well as co-chairing the Career Expansion committee. He is always willing to leverage his contacts to create opportunities for amazing content for our members. He is a ready moderator, event creator and event host.

Lifetime Achievement Award: Kate Thibeault, CFM, MCR, MBA, Pearson (Retired)

About the Award: The Lifetime Achievement Award is given to recognize one of our members who has dedicated their career to the furthering of the facilities management profession.

2023 Winner: Kate Thibeault, CFM, MCR, MBA has been an IFMA Boston member for more than 30 years. In that time, she has held countless leadership positions with the chapter including president from 2008-2010. Throughout her career she has been an advocate and mentor for other women within the profession and an ongoing educator at Wentworth Institute of Technology. She loves data, metrics and all things benchmarking and has contributed her knowledge to the chapter as a speaker, panelist, and white paper contributor. And while she has just retired from her role as VP Workplace Americas at Pearson she has ambition plans to further her influence within the profession.

President's Award: Mary Mills, Raytheon

About the Award: The President's Award recognizes an individual who is passionate about what they do – either as a leader from within or outside the IFMA Boston chapter and represents the very best of the IFMA's core values. This award is selected by the current chapter president and reflects strong service to the profession.

2023 Winner: Mary Mills has been instrumental in the chapter's efforts to close the FM talent gap. As a crucial member of the Career Expansion team, Mills has worked tirelessly to build a relationship with SkillsUSA and create the opportunity for us to host our own Facilitathon competition with local vocational technical high school students. In our third year, Mills, who now serves also on a national board for SkillsUSA, has quadrupled the participation in this annual event, which introduces students to the profession through a day's long challenge.

Excellence in FM: Maria Vickers, CFM, WTW

About the Award: IFMA Boston recognizes a facilities manager that has excelled in a critical project over the past year that was submitted for an Awards of Excellence.

In early 2020, WTW was occupying three floors in the Prudential building, with a lease term coming mid-year 2021. They had started looking for new space when it was announced that WTW would be acquired by AON. This announcement threw everything into confusion, and therefore they decided

to look for short-term space, so that we could have the flexibility to adapt to the merger when the time came.

WTW was approached by WeWork, who had built out a new floor in the Back Bay and had concerns about filling it during the pandemic. They offered them exclusive use of the entire floor for a one year term with two +one-year options. The arrangement required WTW and the FM team to completely rethink the way they operated.

As part of WTW's previous transition to agile, they had eliminated assigned desks, and instead designated "neighborhoods" for each dept. But because the WeWork desk areas were in closed rooms, they felt that designating each room as a neighborhood would cause isolation. Vickers proposed to have no neighborhoods, but rather to encourage colleagues to choose any room or desk and/or, to utilize several different types of spaces during a day. This was a major culture change that required thoughtful and persistent communication. She then created a program to present themselves as "pioneers" in the use of the space, and named the conference rooms to reflect this (Discovery, Exploration, Journey, Opportunity). Prior to occupation, they used newsletters, FAQs, and "day in the life" scenarios to evangelize the move.

Where previously WTW had 1 receptionist and several team members with assigned desks, Vickers decided to have the entire facilities team stationed at the new front desk. This not only gave them a central space from which to operate, it allowed them to keep a better pulse on what was going on around the office and a very visible position from which to operate. Having the entire team at the central desk has strengthened their ability to share tasks and responsibilities, meaning that each team member's skill set has grown & developed.

The experience within the WeWork space has been so successful for WTW that they moved forward with a five year lease extension. And WeWork has now used it as a model to provide enterprise membership in other markets.

Excellence in FM: Jesus Rivera, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts

About the Award: IFMA Boston recognizes a Facilities Manager that has excelled in a critical project over the past year that was submitted for an Awards of Excellence.

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts set out to renovate their suburban locations in Quincy and Hingham to refresh the design, provide more amenity space, reclaim unused space for new flexible conferencing, and increase ergonomics, upgrade lighting and controls. Rivera led the team, in conjunction with their Margulies Perruzzi design team, to renovate both space with limited funds, while occupied and through the pandemic. After the renovations, and as associates have come back to the office, they are finding new amenities that promote collaboration and ideation, brighter and more welcoming spaces, and workstations that fully support their health and productivity.

The project team was able to save on costs by utilizing surplus DIRT product to maximize flexibility in the renovated spaces, limit waste, and reduce warehousing costs.

Excellence in Facilities Transformation

The Excellence in Facilities Transformation award is presented to a project team for its work on facilities innovation projects that are “more than meets the eye.”

Worcester Art Museum

The Worcester Art Museum (WAM) facility, originally built in 1898, is situated on a sloped site and has grown via a series of attached, building additions. The additions, constructed prior to the adoption of the Americans with Disabilities Act and often placed directly adjacent to the precious addition, allowed the site slope to dictate the placement of the floor plates. As a result, circulation is dependent upon a complex network of stairs and elevators, some of which fall in 1898 construction.

The facilities and capital project team identified the need for a comprehensive building model in an effort to rationalize the various iterations and complexities of the facility, utilize the 3D asset for master planning and coordination, as well as provide sub-consultants with accurate collateral.

Working with existing conditions to create a line-of-sight 3D model, WAM developed a digital asset that is integral to the planning and implementation of a series of capital projects and general facilities improvements. Now equipped with this new technology, and supported by the museum staff, and an external OPM, WAM has begun tackling 30+ years of deferred maintenance via a decades-long capital campaign and master plan.

We're proud to recognize The Worcester Art Museum's innovative solution with our Excellence in Facilities Transformation Award.

Excellence in Building Synergies

This award is presented to a project team for its work on a project that brings opposing forces together with creative thinking and innovative solutions.

Structure Tone

In 2022, Structure Tone's lease on Boston's Atlantic Ave. was coming up for renewal – a space they had occupied for more than 20 years. And while it was what everyone was used to, it presented many challenges including an inconvenient location for any employees not commuting from the south, a lack of amenities and an aging infrastructure, and not reflecting the level of quality, flexibility, and design as they provide their clients.

That's when the Structure Tone team partnered with Newmark Knight to explore finding a new facility to better meet our company's needs and expectations when it comes to collaboration, productivity, quality, and overall employee satisfaction. They relied on their own team to provide facilities siting and management oversight. After strategically considering the options, their team

ultimately opted to move to a new facility: 40 Broad St.

Their new 10,000 s/f facility addressed their challenges to the letter. The entire team feels rejuvenated and excited to be in a new home in a new, more dynamic neighborhood. Aside from the clearly upbeat vibe they all feel in the space, we're seeing other more definitive impacts of the facility:

In a post-COVID culture, they are seeing a rate of 70% of employees coming into the office daily. Their newly designed flexible and varied collaboration spaces are occupied 75-80% of each day. Their new office has ample space for hosting events and since last summer have hosted dozens of events as well as meetings with clients, regional executive leadership meetings, employee town halls, and more. Their new space is targeting LEED GOLD and WELL certification, neither of which could be pursued in their previous facility. They were able to reuse 70% of their furniture saving funds and avoiding landfill waste. And they have implemented an extensive paper recycling effort during their move resulting in 1.24 metric tons of recycled paper.

We're proud to recognize Structure Tone's new office construction project with our Excellence in Building Synergies Award.

The Boston Chapter of IFMA was founded in 1984 by ten facility managers. Today, the chapter numbers nearly 500 members, making it the third largest chapter in the country and long recognized as one of the most active and progressive Chapters.

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