

Contact: Lisa Parrish
Company Name: Gold Nugget Awards/PCBC
Telephone: 909-987-2758
email: Lisa@pcbc.com

Written by:
Rebecca Hardin
Open Line Public Relations
805-963-0123
rebecca@openlinepr.com

As Good As Gold

Winners Of 2015 Gold Nugget Awards Celebrated At PCBC In San Diego

San Diego, June 26, 2015 -- Since 1963 the real estate development industry has looked to the Gold Nugget Awards for design and planning leadership. The 2015 winners were announced in gala celebrations on June 25 in San Diego, as part of the annual PCBC conference and exposition, sponsored by the California Building Industry Association. Reviewing more than 630 U.S. and international entries, judges talked of fresh ideas and all around excellence.

Some top entries offered new takes on classic concepts. Some delivered daring creativity. All reflected depth of thinking. "Different just to be different did not work," noted Jeff LaFetra, AIA, President, Bassenian Lagoni Architects. "The playful use of materials, forms and colors is great, but not without consideration of performance and purposes served."

Value redux— A renewed industry still shows corrections from the downturn, especially in single-family. But today's value consciousness is less grim economic ruler than a parameter for fresh takes on existing plan forms and elevation types. "Buyers want assurance their investment is worth it, that a home will contour over more years of ownership," said Jerry Gloss, AIA, CAASH, Senior Partner, KGA Studio Architects.

Integrated design – To that end, winners showed inventive approaches to volume spaces, indoor/outdoor relationships and floor plans. Also finding favor were unexpected materials, sophisticated lighting and striking details.

Architectural sculpting moved beyond a typical lofty foyer, pulling intriguing volumes well inside to enrich the thrifty forms that still dominate single-family. Outdoor spaces expanded on the proven exterior room, wrapping more of the footprint with inviting spaces that boost appeal and function for the most modest home.

Plan re-programming addressed lifestyle variations. Built, conditioned space is smaller. Informal spaces better define the multi-functional subsets of their open layouts. Single rooms are elastic: the formal dining room for you will be an office for me.

Excellence, the universal style – the days of a trend setting architectural style are gone, at least for now. “Elevations ran the gamut and judges genuinely appreciated their quality,” said Andrew Suzuki, AIA, President, Suzuki Designs. He noted winners from Modern, Coastal, Farmhouse, Spanish, Craftsman and Polynesian vernaculars.

Vertical solutions meet horizontal traditions – Accounting for nearly 160 entries (with 54 in mixed uses), multi-family is clearly the industry workhorse. It is also blazing a progressive design trail that shows attached housing is far more than the affordable alternative to detached. “At every density, we saw real design energy, chances being taken and plans and projects that addressed growing families as smoothly as empty nesters,” said Suzuki. “These innovations will weave into single-family designs to come.”

Impressive: Commercial, Mixed & Special Use – Judges found much to like. Built and on the board mixed use took honors for creative, viable and vibrant concepts. Educational and senior housing projects were praised for breaking out of standard issue solutions. Common to all: attention to human scale, well-balanced architecture and quality details.

Context matters – a renewed emphasis on historical context won applause in custom homes, multi-family and non-residential. All showed high regard for the authentic and time-honored. Adept melding of nostalgic context with contemporary liveliness was particularly apparent in re-use and renovations.

Judges saw a search for meaning and for doing something better with the land. “Re-vitalization of blighted locations and re-purposing of historic buildings was big, visible and vibrant,” said Gloss. “People are appreciating the connections to the past and the benefits of maintaining established community fabrics.”

Sustainability – while energy efficiency still leads the charge, the commitment to sustainable development practices has clearly expanded since the 2002 debut of these categories. Winners model thoughtful site planning and materials choices, connectivity without the car, water-conserving, indigenous landscapes and educational outreach that encourages emulation.

Over the Top – alive and well, led by international entries that displayed opulent aesthetic frameworks without parallel in most U.S. work. An exception is high-end single-family markets, where capital infusions from overseas buyers are making a big splash in new home customization.

The bottom line for Gold Nugget 2015 reflects a healthy upward spiral for the development field. For the more than 900 in attendance at this year's Gold Nugget gala, it was time to take note of real excitement and to cheer the well-considered design and planning of all Gold Nugget winners.