

THE ICRI 2014 FALL CONVENTION



BY DALE REGNIER

Each year, the Fall Convention gives our members the opportunity to contribute to important and ongoing committee work, learn something new from our technical presentations, and celebrate the winners of our coveted annual Project

Awards. The ICRI 2014 Fall Convention, held November 12-14, 2014, at the InterContinental Kansas City at the Plaza in Kansas City, MO, once again proved that membership in ICRI is more important than ever.

Our new tradition for fall is to begin with the “Visit the Exhibits” Continental Breakfast on Wednesday morning and then send attendees on to the first four technical presentations. While a majority of those registered for the convention then took Wednesday afternoon off, the local hosts—the Great Plains Chapter—held an afternoon outing at Kansas City’s College Basketball Experience. Those who attended were pleasantly surprised with how fun, entertaining, and interactive this museum turned out to be. There was some great food, a bar, and a scavenger-hunt-style contest where teams took off around the museum to try out the many different games and challenges, making sure each player participated and gathered points. The Great Plains Chapter hosts then provided gifts for all and prizes for the winners. It was great fun.



SPECIAL
EVENT



Five teams competed in the scavenger hunt-style contest at the College Basketball Experience

GENERAL SESSION



ICRI President Michael Tabassi with his wife Soolmaz really enjoyed the competitive spirit at the College Basketball Experience. She won!



Convention attendees enjoy lunch on Thursday before the guest speaker



Guest speaker Debra Zabloudil presented a fun, interactive, and music-filled program on how rock and roll can motivate

Wednesday evening found attendees gathering for the official Welcome Reception. There was a jam-packed floor of 46 exhibitors and plenty of folks to network with from all over the world. Right before the Welcome Reception, the ICRI Board of Directors took a quick moment to host a private gathering for first-time attendees. This intimate group allowed newcomers to meet the Board and get a first-hand account of what they could expect from their first ICRI convention.

The theme of this convention, "Mega Projects," allowed for members of the Technical Activities Committee to recruit a wide variety of the finest concrete repair professionals the industry has to offer. These professionals provided in-depth and exclusive access to some amazing projects during their technical session presentations. Some of the projects were large in scale, like a stadium, while some were large in scope, like an entire water system. Presenters covered topics such as corrosion, nondestructive evaluation, design-build, masonry, and preservation.

Much of what ICRI does as an industry association comes from the work of the technical and administrative committees. We broaden our reach and expand the industry by working together in these committees. And it seems a new committee is formed at each convention, drawing in more members to share their expertise. Committee meeting attendance was exceptional at this convention, with many first-time attendees getting involved. Visit the Technical Committee page of the ICRI website to see a full list of committees that includes a description of what they are working on right now.

The convention's General Session during lunch on Thursday included a brief welcome from ICRI President Michael Tabassi and featured a guest speaker whose program tackled leadership through the lessons learned by our favorite rock stars. Debra Zabloudil, President of the Learning Studio, spent some time discussing how the extraordinary leadership skills of many famous rock musicians can help all of us become successful at whatever we do. It was a fun, interactive, and music-filled workshop that captured the attention of the whole crowd.

If you have ever joined ICRI for a Fall Convention before, then you know that the annual Project Awards program is the highlight. For 2014, the 22nd annual Project Awards event was updated a bit. It included a red carpet arrival area for all the guests, an awards-show-style presentation of all the Awards of Merit and Awards of Excellence, and the big reveal of the coveted Project of the Year winner. This year, no one knew which of the three project award finalists would win. After each finalist gave their summary, the judge's decision was revealed and a new Project of the Year winner was announced. Attendees then spent the rest of the evening at the rooftop reception enjoying heavy hors d'oeuvres and refreshments. A special thanks and congratulations to all the ICRI Project



Katherine's niece, John Blatz, Katherine Klosowski-Blatz, and Katherine's Mother



Leo Whiteley



Ashish Dubey



RED CARPET ARRIVALS



Rick and Susie Edelson



Jessi Jackson Meyer and Scott Harrison



David and Beth Karins



Aaron Ushiro, Eissa Kishek, and Brad Kamin



Jim Sorg



Steve Bradway and Elena Kessi



Charles Mitchell



Heidi and Joe Logan



Beth Newbold and Pat Winkler



Jorge Costa

CELEBRATION CEREMONY



Sika Corporation, taking home the 2014 Project of the Year Award, was represented by Aamer Syed and Randall Kratz



Winners from STRUCTURAL included (left to right) Tarek Alkhrdaji, Dave Clark, and Jay Thomas



Celebrating a win for CTLGroup was C.P. Bok (left) and Peter Kolf (right)



Garth Fallis from Vector Construction



Award of Excellence winner John Mischkot from JQ



Celebrating a team effort (left to right): Jacques Bertrand, Tim Argento, Beth Newbold, and Pat Winkler



Otto De Jager and Michelle Rieth with an Award of Merit

RECEPTION



Relaxing at the Project Awards Reception after the Ceremony were (left to right) Heidi Braverman, Tanya Wattenburg Komars, Monica Rourke, Rick Edelson, Susie Edelson, Tom Ouska, and Gina Crevello

Award winners for their hard work, not only on the projects themselves but also on the high quality of all the entries received.

To wrap things up, the Great Plains Chapter delegation hosted a sold-out gathering at local Boulevard Brewing Company, one of the largest specialty beer brewers in the Midwest. The open bar included a variety of the brewery's best beers and the food really hit a home run for the crowd.



Brenda Jones, Ralph Jones, Kirk Matchell, and Rick McGuire—all representing the Great Plains Chapter—enjoying the Awards Reception

The chapter brought in Jack Stack Barbecue, one of Kansas City's premier BBQ restaurants. One word seemed unanimous with the guests during the meal: amazing! To wrap up the evening, local magician and entertainer Joe Cole worked his way through the crowd, garnering "oohs" and "aahs" and plenty of laughs all the way until the end.

Kansas City and the Great Plains Chapter were wonderful hosts. ICRI wishes to thank all the attendees, exhibitors, sponsors, presenters, and award winners for joining us. We hope to see everyone at the ICRI 2015 Spring Convention in New York, NY.

SPECIAL EVENT



The event sold out for the Great Plains Chapter, filling the Boulevard Brewing Company party room to capacity for an evening of beer, BBQ, and magic



Enjoying the evening are (left to right) Naomi White, Tom Ouska, John McDougall, Alexandria Prokic, Donna Halsted, and Stephen Powell



The entertainment provided by magician Joe Cole captivated the crowd