

FWCI Awards

Educational Scholarships



By Jane Northern

To assist those who wish to pursue a career in construction management, engineering or architecture, this year the Foundation of the Wall and Ceiling (the educational arm of the Association of the Wall and Ceiling Industries—International) awarded educational scholarships to three individuals who are seeking degrees in disciplines related to the building trades. The winners were selected by the FWCI board of directors from the applicant pool for best meeting the scholarship requirements. The three who were chosen exceeded expectations with their academic and personal achievements. The scholarship recipients are Geoffrey P. Gonzales, Sheri Lynn Strattan and Jonathan Thomas Wies.

The financial award amounts to \$2,000 (for each recipient) dispersed over a two-year period. Each winner receives an initial \$500 grant applicable toward tuition costs for the fall 1999 semester, then \$500 for three consecutive semesters, assuming the requirements of the scholarship continue to be met.

Gonzales will attend Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, Calif, where he will be working toward a degree in construction management. He is a project engineer/estimator trainee with Performance Contracting, Inc. of Hayward, Calif, where he practices estimating, does take-offs copies blueprints and walks the jobsites. In his high school extracurricular activities, Gonzales has done service duty by helping to maintain order around the school, including stopping fights and keeping the school clean. He also was a member of the Block "W" Club, a club that raises money for sporting events; and was a member of the cross-country and track and field team.

Among his volunteer activities, Gonzales is a member of a team that stuffs sandbags and loads them on trucks for people in need during the storms of El Nino.

Strattan will attend Lawrence Technological University in Southfield, Mich. She has declared a dual major in architectural illustration and architecture. She is the daughter of Gordon Stratton, an employee of Bouma Corporation, Grand Rapids, Mich. Her extracurricular activities include the following: cheerleading, soccer, a member of the church Youth Group, a Habitat for Humanity volunteer and a member of the Drafting Club. She also participated in her local community college's architecture competition, and is a member of Women in Technology.

Wies of Wentzville, Mo., is a warehouse assistant and son of Terry Wies of Wies Drywall and Construction Corporation, St. Louis, Mo. Wies major is engineering management, and he will attend the University of Missouri's School of Engineering. While in high school, Wies was a member of the National Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta (math achievement), Junior Achievement, the chemistry and debate teams and the German Club.

Some Answers

As part of the application process, applicants must answer an industry-related essay question. That question is as follows: *You have an unlimited budget to build or renovate, design or engineer any building—new or existing—anywhere in the world. What do you build? Where do you build it? What materials do you use to build it? How is the building to be used? And why are you building or renovating it!*

This years' scholarship recipients gave some interesting answers.

Gonzales would build a new stadium for the San Francisco



Gonzales



Strattan



Wies

49ers football team, and he'd like to have it done it time to host the 2004 Super Bowl. This state-of-the-art stadium would feature luxury suites, bleachers closer to the field and a mini shopping mall. Why does Gonzales want to give the 49ers a new home? His answer tells it like it is: "They are a five-time Super Bowl champion organization, and yet they still play in a beat-up dump called Candlestick Park/3-Com Park."


As an architect with an unlimited budget, Strattan would remodel the health and fitness club in Cheboygan, Mich., because it is a box-shaped building without any architectural details. Strattan says, "I would transform these facilities into an explosive, colorful atmosphere." How? First, two additions are needed for the front and rear of the building to provide more space and varied shape to the layout. Exterior improvements include tinted windows, domes and skylights. Metal structure would accent the brightly finished stucco, and various rooflines would unify the additions with the original structure. The gypsum wallboard would be finished with wallpaper and paint.

Wies would take his unlimited budget and build a new skyscraper in St. Louis, Mo. His 50-story dream building would be framed with steel. The facade would be glazed with a mirrored glass, and the entry would include glass doors that lead to an atrium that has direct and indirect lighting. The high-traffic areas would have commercial-grade tile floors, while offices and meeting rooms would be carpeted. Finally, the walls would be built with 5/8-inch drywall, the ceilings with

2-by-4 tiles with fine line grid, and all would be accented with plaster columns.

The Criteria

Applications for the scholarship program were accepted only from employees or direct dependents of employees of AWCI or FWCI member companies who are pursuing a post-high school education in construction management, engineering or architecture. Eligible applicants must have attained a cumulative 3.0 grade-point average for the last two semesters immediately prior to the application submittal due date. During this time, the applicant must have completed a minimum of nine hours of course work per semester.

In addition to the essay question, the applicants are asked to give detailed information regarding his or her career choice, previous experience in the industry, extracurricular activities and employment history. They also must submit one evaluation from a faculty adviser and one from a non-related adult. 

About the Author

Jane Northern is AWCI's director of membership marketing and programs.