More than 2,700 people attended the 84th AWCI Expo: Construction Directions, which was held March 20-25, 2001, in Nashville, Tenn.

The 168 exhibitors, who occupied 325 10-by-10 booths (vs. 288 booths at the Las Vegas trade show last year), were quite pleased with the exhibit hall. This year the hall sold out many months in advance, and it was swarming with traffic during both days of the trade show. The trade show was well attended because of an agreement with the Associated General Contractors, which allowed their convention registrants to attend the AWCI trade show, and vice versa.

The convention and trade show also featured education sessions, committee meetings, a golf tournament, a forum for safety directors, many networking opportunities, social gatherings and tours.

Here are some of the highlights.

**Special Awards**

Bill Carroll and Ed Jakacki received special honors for their extensive industry and association involvement. Both were awarded an AWCI Honorary Member Plaque that was engraved with, “In recognition of your continuous and meritorious participation in the association to advance the industry.”

Carroll took over his family’s business when he was 19 and has been involved in plaster contracting ever since. For more than 50 years, he has been actively involved in AWCI. He is an AWCI past president, the recipient of both the McNulty Award and the Pinnacle Award, and president of Lifetime Member company, Carroll Ventures, Inc., in Albuquerque.

Jakacki recently announced his retirement from USG, Chicago, where he worked for more than 43 years. He joined the company in 1957 as an assistant in USG’s building-plaster research lab and worked his way up through a number of assignments in research, marketing/development and management, and eventually become product manager.

At AWCI, Jakacki has served as chairman of various committees and is currently a member of the Foundation of the Wall and Ceiling Industry’s board of directors.

Carroll was the featured contractor in the April 2000 issue of AWCI’s Construction Dimensions, and a profile of Jakacki was in last month’s issue.

**Best Booth Winners**

For the first time this year, even more excitement was generated on the trade-show floor by the Best Booth Contest. Prizes were awarded in the categories of Best Truck Booth, Best 10’ x 10’ Booth and Best Multiple Booth.

The Best Truck Booth prize went to Cargotec, Inc. of Swanton, Ohio. The booth featured the new HIAB 235K crane.

Hard Industries of Windsor, Calif., won for Best 10’ x 10’ Booth, which showed off the Universa* drywall pump.
Renegade Tool of Parsons, Kan., showed off the “MudBuggy” in its Best Multiple Booth.

Winners were selected by Marlys K. Arnold of Total Image Specialists. Arnold provided all exhibitors with a special education session on how to create a better image for your booth and maximize your results at the show. Winners were chosen on the basis of booth appearance, logistics, creativity and staff.

Scholarship Winners

Other winners are the recipients of the 2001 scholarships awarded by the Foundation of the Wall and Ceiling Industry. Each will receive an initial $750 grant applicable toward tuition costs for the fall 2001 semester. By maintaining an acceptable grade point average and a full-time course schedule, they will automatically receive up to three more identical $750 grants for their next three semesters of study provided they maintain good grades and a good academic standing.

The scholarships are given only to AWCI member (or their dependents) students pursuing a post-high school education in construction management, engineering or architecture.

The winners are Jennifer LaFever, Sheri Lynn Strattan and Jonathan Wies.

LaFever lives in Hollister, Calif. She is the daughter of John LaFever and Michele McDonald, who is a construction estimator and project manager for Culberson Drywall of Mt. View, Calif. Jennifer is graduating from high school this spring and will study engineering at a yet-to-be-determined university.

Strattan lives in Cheboygan, Mich., and is the daughter of Gordie Strattan and Laurie Strattan. Gordie is a carpenter with Bouma Corporation, Grand Rapids, Mich. Sheri is a sophomore studying architectural illustration at Lawrence Technological University in Southfield, Mich.

Wies lives in Wentzville, Mo., and is the son of Terry and Versy Wies. Terry is president of Wies Drywall and Construction Corporation of St. Louis, Mo. Jonathan is a sophomore studying engineering management at the University of Missouri-Rolla.

Foundation Winners

Among the winning opportunities was the Foundation Auto Raffle—and this year it was done with a twist. Five winning raffle tickets were drawn. Each of the five winners received a key, only one of which would turn the engine of the 1965 Ford
Renegade Tool won the Best Multiple Booth Award.

Hard Industries won the Best 10’ x 10’ Booth Award.

Cargotec, Inc. won the Best Truck Booth Award.

Mustang convertible. But, before trying their key, each winner had the option of either keeping their key or auctioning it off and keeping half the proceeds. The other half would be used to benefit the Foundation of the Wall and Ceiling Industry.

Two of the key winners elected to auction off their keys, and one of the winning bids was made by Bruce Miller of Denver Drywall, Englewood, Colo. And it’s a good thing Miller was the high bidder, because he ended up winning the car.

The FWCI Golf Tournament also had some winners. Winning the whole tournament with the lowest score was the team of Jim Hagen, Chris Jacquot and Chad Onofrio. This threesome won the tournament with a score of 11 under. Al Beingessner of Rosmar Drywall & Acoustics, Guelph, Ontario, won for getting his golfball closest to the pin, and Jim Hagen of Fireproof Coatings, Encinitas, Calif, had the longest drive.

Committee Meetings

It wouldn’t be a convention without committee meetings. Here are some highlights from select committees:

Members of the Carpenters’ Craft Committee were told by AWCI Executive Vice President Steve Etkin that there are two new signatories to the International agreement. He also stated the current agreement will expire in about 18 months; prior to the expiration, members will be asked to identify any needed changes.

Etkin also told the group that the ergonomics standard passed during the Clinton Administration was eliminated by new legislation approved by the current congress.

Various members reported business conditions from their local areas. The views varied from weakening and uncertainty in some areas and to strong in other areas. Some major projects have been put on hold, and some have stopped with re-starts.
within six months. Californians are concerned that the energy shortage will cause new business to locate in states with energy surpluses.

The EIFS Curriculum and Examination Committee estab-
lished letter designations for the three categories: mechanics, inspectors and industry professionals. Recognition of ability is something all people crave, it’s identification for the industry of qualified personnel and it will help us with marketing. The other point is beginning an organized effort for recognition/requirement by the code bodies, architect specifications, licensing agencies, etc.

Bill Schell updated the Plasterers’ Craft Committee on the Operative Plasterers & Cement Masons International Association’s apprenticeship training. He said there was a 30 percent growth in apprentices trained in the last five years. They currently have 3,000 plastering apprentices and 4,000 cement mason apprentices, and between 11,000 and 12,000 journeyman plasterers.

The IUBAC reported that 2,000 apprentices have entered the plastering
apprenticeship program, and there 10,000 that have been through the program since its inception. The IUBAC is incorporating portions of AWCI’s “EIFS—Doing It Right” video and workbook into its curriculum.

The chairman of the fire safety task group, Kathy Taraba, outlined the pending code-change proposals to the International Building Code for the members of the Spray-Applied Fire-Resistive Materials Committee. Those proposals included eliminating footnote d to table 601 in the IBC, which allow a sprinkler trade-off that potentially results in a fire resistance rating of zero in certain assemblies; and a change to Table 1004.3.2.1 that would eliminate a similar trade-off in institutional occupancies. Tabara proposed a think tank composed of passive fire resistance industry people to strategize further means of promoting the use of passive fire protection features in the codes.

Members of the AWCI Safety & Insurance Committee are forging ahead with the new insurance program for contractors.

Several members of the Specialty & Acoustical Products/ Industry Stan-
The Standards Committee commented favorably on the Firestop Contractors International Association’s “Manual of Practice” and recommended it for distribution through the AWCI Bookstore.

The committee members discussed the recent frequent occurrence of new coatings recommendations by several manufacturers for various substrates commonly encountered by AWCI members. AWCI’s director of technical services will research and comment on these coatings and their efficacy at the next meeting.

Members of the Supplier and Manufacturer Members Committee voted to have George Kutcher of National Gypsum Company be considered by the AWCI Nominating Committee as the supplier member representative on the
AWCI board of directors. This term would begin July 1, 2004, and end June 30, 2005.

Also brought forward was the following slate for nomination, which was unanimously approved: Marshalltown Trowel's Ben Lester for a 2003 position on the committee, National Gypsum's David Drummmond, Gordon's Rand Falbaum and Nelson King Inc.'s Morris Deason for the three 2004 positions, and Hacker Industries' Kerry Hacker for the 2000–2001 secretary position.

In discussing their businesses, committee members voiced cautious optimism regarding business levels throughout 2001. While several reported slowing winter sales, initial reports on the remainder of the year look solid, if not spectacular.

Mark your calendar for the 2002 annual convention and trade show in San Antonio, Texas—March 12–17.