Today’s rising cost of college tuition has forced many college students to look outside their educational institutions for financial assistance. To assist those who wish to pursue a career in construction management, engineering or architecture, the Foundation of the Wall and Ceiling Industry (the educational arm of the Association of the Wall and Ceiling Industries—International) has awarded scholarships to five students who are seeking degrees in disciplines related to the building trades.

The winners were selected from the applicant pool for best meeting the requirements of the scholarship. All five winners exceeded expectations with their academic and personal achievements. Through their experience and enthusiasm for the construction field, these five men are assured to be great assets to future of the wall and ceiling industry: Aaron Marshall Bucher, Charles W. Foster Jr., Matthew Carl Graves, Joshua Henry Johnson and Andrew William Newett.

The financial award amounts to $2,000 dispersed over a two-year period. Each winner will receive $500 toward tuition for the fall 1998 semester, then $500 for three consecutive semesters, assuming the scholarship requirements are meet.

The Criteria

Applications for the scholarship program were accepted only from employees of or direct dependents of employees of AWCI or FWCI member companies. The applicant must have either declared construction management, engineering or architecture as his or her major; or taken and passed a non-introductory level course in those disciplines; or been accepted into a program leading to a degree in one of the three disciplines.

Eligible applicants must have attained a cumulative B academic 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.

The scholarship forms require the applicant to give detailed information regarding his or her career choice, previous expe-
rience in the industry, extracurricular activities and employment history. Applicants also must answer an industry-related essay question. In addition, they must submit one evaluation from a faculty adviser and one from a non-related adult.

The Winners

Aaron Bucher, son of Albert L. Bucher, a carpenter with Mid-Illinois Companies, Peoria, Ill., begins his first year studying engineering at the University of Illinois this fall. While attending Astoria High School in Astoria, Ill., Bucher participated in the Spanish Club, football, yearbook and Student Council. In addition to being his class valedictorian, his academic accomplishments include the National Honor Society Illinois State Scholar, and High Honor Roll. Bucher’s employment over the last four years under a general contractor has given him the hands-on experience to choose construction as his career.

Charles Foster has worked for Grayhawk, LLC, Lexington, Ky., for eight years and is currently an estimator for the company. Foster is currently studying architectural technology at Lexington Community College. He is active in his community, serving as assistant director of Vacation Bible
School and as a Sunday school teacher. His hobbies include playing golf, softball and fishing.

Josh Johnson is the son of John Henry Johnson, a plasterer with the Bouma Corporation, Grand Rapids, Mich. Johnson plans to attend the University of Michigan to study engineering. While attending Zeeland High School in Zeeland, Mich., Johnson was involved in “For Inspiration and Recognition in Science and Technology,” a national high school robotics project. He enjoys activities such as downhill skiing, backpacking, hunting, fishing, camping and rollerblading.

Matthew Graves is a sophomore at Purdue University majoring in building construction management. His father, Jeffrey W. Graves, is the chief executive officer and president of Starhm Group, Inc., Ft. Wayne, Ind. At Purdue, Graves is a member of the National Association of Home Builders student chapter and Theta Chi Fraternity. His other interest are snowboarding, sailing and various other athletic activities.

Andrew Newett, an intern with C.J. Coakley, Inc., Falls Church, Va., is a third-year student at the University of Ulster at the Jordanstown Campus. He is studying
building engineering and management. Newett used his third year required internship as an opportunity to work with industry professional in the United States and observe various methods of construction. He plans to use his experience at C.J. Coakley when he returns home to Northern Ireland.

The Program’s History

FWCI was founded in 1981 for the purpose of serving the wall and ceiling industry through research and education. The scholarship was one of the programs established to meet these goals. The scholarship program took a five-year hiatus before re-emerging in 1998 with a stronger intent of assisting in the education of future industry professionals.

On April 19, 1998, five winners were selected by members of the FWCI board of directors.

All five winners have shown qualities of successful and determined students worthy of awards and assistance in reaching their goals. FWCI will continue to award financial assistance to the education of industry professionals.

To receive an application for the 1999 scholarship program, contact the FWCI at (703) 538-1614.

About the Author

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