MEDIA ADVISORY

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The 2017 California Fastest Trowel on the Block, Masonry Skills Challenge, and Bob Freeman Most Accurate Trowel high school masonry competition were hosted by Angelus Block at their EZ Mix location in Rialto. This event is a huge showcase of masonry craftsmanship and a testament to the speed and skills of the Southern California masonry industry’s workforce. Brought to you by Angelus Block, ORCO Block & Hardscape, and RCP Block & Brick, only those working journeyman masons who have the skill, confidence, and courage to face off with the Industry’s best are invited to compete in Fastest Trowel on the Block.

To officially open the event, Rialto High School Junior year Choir student, Viridiana Galicia, performed a cappella our national anthem The Star-Spangled Banner, before a crowd of competitors, families, contractors, suppliers, and judges.

There's money to win, fame to be gained, and 20 masons were ready to take on the 20 minute challenge to complete as much of a 30 foot long concrete block wall as possible using only their hand tools. Each mason has 1 tender as team partner, that stages the mortar boards, 8”x8”x16” concrete blocks, and shaking the mud for the mason.

With 130 block laid, and judged as the best skilled, cleanest, most correct, in time allowed, mason Howard Cole of Fontana won it again! Howard is a multi-year 4-time California champion in the competition. And once again, Howard earns the privilege to compete at the World of Concrete/World of Masonry 2018 in MASONRY MADNESS™ in Las Vegas where thousands of dollars in cash and prizes will be given away! Angelus Block President Edward Antonini presented Howard with the big check payout of $2,500. Howard is foreman with NuWay Masonry Inc. in Riverside. With MITA apprentice Martin Avendano as tender in the competition, they’re enjoying outstanding success.

1st place: mason Howard Cole with NuWay Masonry Inc.
2nd place: mason Bob Christensen with Haxton Masonry
3rd place: mason Juan Romero with OC Hills Company
Simultaneously held in conjunction with the Fastest Trowel, California’s Masonry Skills Challenge and MITA’s interscholastic high school competition take place. Like a 3 ring circus there’s lots going on.

The Masonry Skills Challenge hosted 15 dedicated and eager 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year bricklayer apprentices. They were put to a 3 hour timed test to build individual projects with block and brick, and then scored by a team of judges who are all seasoned masonry industry skills experts. Big shout-out and congratulations to these winners:

1st Year apprentice Anthony Gomez with Majestic Masonry
2nd Year apprentice Cristian Lopez with New Dimension Masonry
3rd Year apprentice Adrian Diaz with Winegardner Masonry
They’ll go to World of Concrete/World of Masonry 2018 too, competing alongside the ‘Best of the Best’ apprentices from around the U.S.

The Bob Freeman Most Accurate Trowel high school competition is critically important to introducing pathways to an in-demand occupation. MITA introduces masonry skills in high schools, and this event allows masonry students to enter a team of 2 masons and 1 tender, in a timed event to build a 13 ft. 3 5/8” wall. They build a first course of 8”x8”x16” block, and thereafter build with precision 4” highs. They are allowed to lay their first course before the clock starts. Then, they have 25 minutes to lay block. 1 minute break between laying and tooling. Then 5 minutes to tool joints.

Cheers and congratulations to every student who participated! This is huge for you, and your future looks bright! Employers are waiting to hire younger skilled masons, so hit the blocks, and the books.

1st place:
Ontario High School of Chaffey Joint Union High School District
Masons Adonas Sandoval and Usiel Robledo
Tender Gabriel Gonzalez

2nd place:
Upland High School of Upland Unified School District
Masons Joseph Gideon and Angel Andrade
Tender Maria Morales (oh yes she did!)

3rd place:
Boys Republic High School of Chino Valley Unified
Masons Samuel Castro and Carlos Godinez
Tender Gabriel Ortiz
The winning school received a powerful MK Electric Series Brick & Block Saws donated by MK Diamond – lucky Ontario High School masonry lab!

Enormous thanks and gratitude to industry sponsors who made the event possible. We’re most thankful for your valuable donations of time, effort, participation, and on-site presence in support of our masonry industry. We thank you!

MITA teams up with high schools, ROPs, and adult schools to promote and teach masonry to as many young people as possible. As funding cuts in education limit school resources, MITA assists the schools to improve the training and recruitment of new skilled talent towards careers in masonry. Local area education partners include Chaffey Adult School ROP/Ontario High School, Baldy View ROP/Boys Republic School, Upland High School, Grossmont District, and Valley High School.

Emphasizing apprenticeship and on-job-training as key to a growing middle class, 3 of the top 5 of the fastest growing occupations in California 2014 to 2024 are in masonry! Including bricklayer, blocklayer, and stone mason. The State of California Division of Apprenticeship Standards assists in the creation apprenticeship programs, and the Federal Department of Labor is expanding more targeted training and apprentice programs. Currently 9 out of 10 apprentices end up in jobs that pay average starting salaries of above $50,000 a year.

Founded in 1946, Angelus Block is California’s leading producer of concrete masonry units, interlocking concrete pavers, permeable pavers, decorative site wall units, and segmental planter wall units. Angelus Block distributes top national brands such as Pittsburgh Corning Glass Block, Spec Mix® Preblended Mortars, and Trenwyth Astra-Glaze-SW+® architectural masonry units. Angelus Block is located in Fontana and Rialto, and has 7 other locations in Southern California.

Family owned since 1946, with over 67 years of service in Southern California, ORCO Block & Hardscape is a leading manufacturer of Concrete Masonry Units, Specialty Mortars, Pavingstones, Mortarless Wall Systems and LID/LEED solutions. With facilities located throughout the region, ORCO has earned the reputation for high quality, outstanding customer service, and leadership in environmentally responsive solutions.

Since 1947, RCP Block & Brick has been manufacturing and supplying the finest hardscape products and masonry supplies to Southern California contractors and homeowners. With 6 convenient masonry supply and hardscape supply retail locations in Southwest Riverside County and San Diego, RCP supplies hardscape and masonry building materials to the region.
When Ken Thompson started his building materials business in the little Southern California town of Tustin, he made a pledge to provide only the highest quality materials to his customers. 50 years later, we’re still honoring that promise now in Fontana and our many California locations. Thompson Building Materials has provided the highest quality building materials since 1962, and is home of the Southland’s most sought-after masonry, stucco, and landscape materials. We serve both contractor and home owner alike, with quality customer care.
Source: Thompson Building Materials

Resource Building Materials has been supplying California contractors and homeowners with quality building materials since 1945. We carry an extensive line of products to meet the needs of any project. We have 12 locations – and growing – throughout California, ready to serve you! Customer satisfaction is what we strive for and with a fleet of trucks and acres of inventory we can supply your job with quality products, prompt service, and quick deliveries. We have specifications on all our materials and can help you, your contractor, or your landscape architect find the products needed for your job.
Source: Resource Building Materials