



NYC makes history at BOMA Int'l. Conv. taking home 2 TOBY Awards

August 08, 2008 - Owners Developers & Managers

For years, buildings that started on the path to winning the top award in our industry, the BOMA International TOBY (The Office Building of the Year), made it through the stiff Pinnacle competition and on to the TOBYs at the Middle Atlantic Conference Regional level, only to stall out and be denied an International win.

But this year, it was full speed ahead, all the way to the top. Three buildings went on to compete at the BOMA International Conference in Denver: The Ted Weiss Federal Office Building, pushing the envelope in two categories, Government Building and Earth; The Sony Building (US HQ), going up against seven other competitors in the Corporate Facility Category, and Time Warner Center, taking on five of the country's biggest towers in the Operating Office Building, 1 million s/f plus category.

Two emerged as winners - Sony and Time Warner Center - and scored a record number of wins for New York. And the win was all the sweeter because the one award New York sees as its home turf - Operating Office Building Over 1 Million s/f - has always eluded us, going to towers in the West, Texas and the Southeast. But this year, the award belongs to the Big Apple.

And justifiably so, says BOMA/NY president Angelo Grima, who launched a "Take Back the TOBY" initiative throughout New York and the Middle Atlantic Conference to bring more awards back to New York and the Northeast.

Peer Review

Part of that involved more mentoring in the TOBY book compilation process, which Grima spearheaded by having all the book submissions reviewed at the Regional level in draft format with judges asking for clarifications, pointing out areas of improvement, and occasionally doling out well-deserved praise. (TOBY awards require nominees to prepare an in-depth submission on the building's operating systems and procedures.) The nominees then redoubled their efforts to make the improvements, Grima said, and the results paid off.

This year, there was a dramatic rise in submissions from the Middle Atlantic Conference (MAC), which includes New York. Up to 30 buildings from around the region, encompassing the North East and Middle Atlantic, entered the competition regionally. New York was the only local Association from the MAC to take home the top prize.

Blueprint for Success

Grima began the improvement process two years ago and "it is still in the works. While these wins were monumental and I am very proud of our winners, we know that to keep us in the upper echelon of management, there are areas we must improve."

"No one manages a building like a New Yorker," Grima continues. "In fact, some of our winning techniques have become part of the TOBY rules. But the key to the TOBY is communicating how we

do, what we do. The TOBY make us put it all down on paper, and in turn, the TOBY gives us a blueprint for managing our buildings successfully. The rules spur us on to dig deeper, think harder, and pursue a higher standard of operations. They are a blueprint for managing your building to the highest level. And every year, that level increases, which is why I am so proud that New York took two awards this year."

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