

EXCELLENCE ON DISPLAY: The ULI Nashville Excellence in Development Awards 2012

View pictures at: <http://www.slideshare.net/PamelaB66/ed-event-2012>

With a birds-eye view of the Nashville downtown core, all the way out to the region's furthest necklace of hills, nearly 250 developers, architects, bankers, engineers, land planners, attorneys, and all the rest of the industries involved in the use of land, gathered to celebrate excellence in development, to recognize successful collaboration among development partners, and to acknowledge the importance of building strong communities.

On the evening of May 3rd on the 21st floor of The Pinnacle at Symphony Place, ULI Nashville hosted its 4th annual Excellence in Development Awards gala. An Award recipient in 2010, The Pinnacle's wide open, raw floor space on '21' featured floor-to-ceiling windows that offered guests the chance to admire the Nashville skyline, and to envision what development and land use opportunities lay ahead in the years to come. With clear views of the convention center progress, riverfront's Cumberland Park, and artists' lofts and trolley barns construction/renovation rolling along at Rolling Mill Hill, attendees visited with colleagues who share the same passions for excellence in development. Its likely that the beginnings of many 'deals' in the coming years were explored over drinks and delicious appetizers, including bite-size offerings of sliders, mac-n-cheese, and pigs in a blanket at a 'Construction Table'...comfort food at the top of a skyscraper!

The event logo 'in lights' decorated the walls and floor, and 6 ft. banners hanging from the ceiling heralded the Awards' Sponsors and all of the impressive projects included in the 2012 program. But mostly, the city itself was the star décor. The sky turned pink and orange as the sun began to set, signaling that it was time to begin the evening's program celebrating excellence in development and the Development Teams who made those projects happen. Award entries represented projects from the private and public sector, commercial and residential uses, and locations from Metro to across the region. They also represented adaptive reuse, infill, new construction, and public/private partnerships ...all used to weather the challenges the economy has heaped on the development industries the past few years.

Our experienced, respected Award judges were charged with the unenviable task of identifying those projects that, in their judgment, most completely exemplified excellence. Projects were judged in the context of the ULI Nashville Awards criteria; a challenging task they took very seriously. Those Evaluation Criteria include: innovation in land use and design; design excellence; contribution to the community; reflection of the regional or neighborhood character; public/private partnership environmental sensitivity, and; financial viability.

The packed room was first welcomed by ULI Nashville Chairman, Ed Owens, Riverfront Development Director (MDHA), who quickly segued to a laughter-inducing film featuring not quite 'award-worthy projects' that haven't (yet!) gotten out of the ground!

View the video! http://youtu.be/F2IWmh_3Az0

Film 'star' and producer, Mac Pirkle (Creative Communications, LLC), then served nimbly, wittily, and with sincere respect as the evening's Master of Ceremonies. Mac efficiently led to the Keynote speaker, ULI Foundation president and past president of the ULI Worldwide, Rick Rosan (FAIA). Familiar with and impressed by development and leadership in middle TN, Rick served as a judge for the Awards in 2010 and 2011. He also worked with Mayor Dean, who was part of the first class of mayors serving as ULI Daniel Rose Fellows on urban issues. Rosan spoke with knowledge on Nashville's development accomplishments and opportunities, weaving together current trends in demographics, construction, and the impact of anchor institutions and their technological innovations on economic development and development opportunities. The dynamics of these trends, as Rick explained, also will impact land use patterns, and transportation and educational policy initiatives, as middle TN/Nashville moves into a new era of 'best practices' in city building.

As the night lights of the city spectacularly dotted the views, Mac hosted the 'name-sake' part of the evening...announcing each winning project. Sharing a few comments the judges had on each recipient, Mac also read aloud all the members of the Development Team as they were invited up to the stage to receive the award from Rosan. Acknowledging the value of the entire multi-disciplinary team is an important practice of the ULI Nashville Awards.

After all six winning projects and teams were recognized, Mac concluded the evening with a final appreciation of all who helped make another year of the ULI Nashville Awards a success: volunteers, Annual Sponsors, Event Sponsors, event attendees, and, of course, that strong catalogue of projects submitted every year.

2012 WINNING PROJECTS

ULI Nashville honored six area development projects with Excellence in Development Awards on May 3rd at The Pinnacle at Symphony Place. Please join ULI Nashville in extending its **congratulations to its 2012 winners:**

**Astoria
Franklin Theatre
McCabe Park Community Center
Nance Place
Room in the Inn, Campus for Human Development
Ruby**

You may also read coverage on the event in local press reports:

[The Tennessean](#)

[William Williams' Blog](#)