

THE BROOKINGS REGISTER

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Celebrate with Mills at OAC Local Construction Company wins national award

BROOKINGS – Mills Construction has been awarded a National Associated General Contractors of America 2016 Build America Award for its work on the Outdoor Adventure Center of South Dakota, and the company invites the community to help them celebrate later this week.

Celebrate the collaboration the city has shown, and the many things its residents can accomplish together to better the community, at a Thursday open house. The celebration begins at 7 p.m. at the OAC, 2810 22nd Ave. S.

The OAC shares the parking lot with the softball fields on 22nd Avenue South. Desserts will be served. There will be a short program at 7:30 p.m. with Bryce Healy, president of South Dakota AGC, presenting the award to Mills Construction. Self-guided tours of the facility will be welcome.

Last month, Mills Construction's OAC project was chosen as the winner of the Alliant National Build America Award, in the Building Under \$10 million New Category. It was selected from 92 building chapters representing more than 658,500 construction firms in the country.



From left to right, are **Michael Parizino**, Executive Vice President, Alliant Insurance Services; **Paul Sahr**, Operations Manager, Mills Construction; **Charles L. Greco**, 2015 AGC of America President; **Randy Hanson**, President, Mills Construction; **Stacey Hanson**, Accounts Payable, Mills Construction; **Michael Cusack** Managing Director, Alliant Insurance Services.

Award: Working collaboratively

Mills Construction President Randy Hanson said the company's desire to give back to the community motivated the design and construction of the OAC in Brookings. IT is a multi-use facility providing activity space for young adults, active seniors, sportsmen and outdoor enthusiasts of all ages. The non-profit center was built with collaboration in the Brookings community, including sensitive treatment of the environment and its surroundings.

Hanson said the Mills team faced the demands of linking three different building types: architectural precise concrete for the live fire range, structural steel for the concourse, offices and classrooms and pre-engineered metal for the archery range.

Mills also handled sensitive environmental concerns due to the facility's location adjacent to Brookings' largest park, once a city landfill. Hanson said the project team worked to isolate noise from the live firing range and archery range so as to not disturb park visitors and ensured the landscaping accentuated the park's surroundings.

The Alliant Build America Awards highlight the nation's most outstanding construction project: buildings and infrastructure that demonstrate the very best when it comes to construction excellence, building a better America and improving quality of life. Award-winning project highlight how firms are succeeding by planning ahead, ensuring a safe work environment, performing quality workmanship and overcoming unexpected challenges. The awards are considered by many to be the most prestigious recognition of construction accomplishments in the U.S. It is considered the "Oscars" of the construction industry.

The most consistent theme amongst this year's winning projects had little to do with construction processes. Rather, award winners credited their success to people working collaboratively as a team. A central element that set the award winners apart was their commitment to building relationships with the many parties involved in projects, including subcontractors, owners, designers and members of their communities.

Mills Construction took a different approach to people power, donating architectural services for the design of the \$2.6 million Outdoor Adventure Center and giving financially to fundraising efforts. Hanson still volunteers at the center. The company also helped the client seed donations from subcontractors and material suppliers.

"Winning this Build America Award is an affirmation that our team is performing at the very high level," Hanson said. "This award is one of the highest honors in the construction industry and we are very privileged to have been selected. The Outdoor Adventure Center was a great community project, and it took the community of Brookings all working together to make it happen."

Hanson said this award is about the Brookings community and collaboration, and the project would not have been possible without the donors, volunteers and groups involved. Mills Construction is excited about this national award but is quick to share it with the Brookings community, to whom it also belongs. "Brookings also celebrates this project because of the way it contributes to our community through workforce recruitment and retention," Hanson said. "Many of the businesses and the Brookings Economic Development Corporation support the OAC because of the quality of life component, giving their employees and families something more to do in the community."

From staff reports