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ACA Newsletter

Asian Contractor Association Receives 2012 Austin Award



Austin, TX— Asian Contractor Association has been selected for the 2012 Austin Awards in the Non-Profit Organization category by the Austin Award Program Committee.

The selection of ACA is “a reflection of the hard work of not only yourself, but of many people that have supported your business and contributed to the subsequent success of your organization. Congratulations on joining such an elite group of small businesses,” says the letter from the award committee.

Please see official press release at the next column.

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Asian Contractor Association Receives 2012 Austin Award
Austin Award Program Honors the Achievement

LOS ANGELES, CA, July 19, 2012 -- Asian Contractor Association has been selected for the 2012 Austin Award in the Non-Profit Organization category by the Austin Award Program.

Each year, the Austin Award Program identifies companies that we believe have achieved exceptional marketing success in their local community and business category. These are local companies that enhance the positive image of small business through service to their customers and our community. These exceptional companies help make the Austin area a great place to live, work and play.

Various sources of information were gathered and analyzed to choose the winners in each category. The 2012 Austin Award Program focuses on quality, not quantity. Winners are determined based on the information gathered both internally by the Austin Award Program and data provided by third parties.

About Austin Award Program

The Austin Award Program is an annual awards program honoring the achievements and accomplishments of local businesses throughout the Austin area. Recognition is given to those companies that have shown the ability to use their best practices and implemented programs to generate competitive advantages and long-term value.

The Austin Award Program was established to recognize the best of local businesses in our community. Our organization works exclusively with local business owners, trade groups, professional associations and other business advertising and marketing groups. Our mission is to recognize the small business community's contributions to the U.S. economy.



Raymond Chan has found life in America a fruitful and gratifying one since he moved to Austin 35 years ago. Not only did he find a wonderful life partner, his wife Grace, he also found a successful business now with an annual sales volume exceeding two million dollars.

As young as 19 years old, Raymond left his home in Hong Kong and traveled across seas to enroll in the University of TX, Austin. Little did he know when he first set foot in Austin in 1972 that it would be the place where he would get married, raise a family, and start an engineering consulting company.

His journey to success in the US has been marked by dedication, hard work, and many steps in the right direction. Raymond found employment immediately after graduation from UT with the largest civil engineering and environmental consultant company in Austin at the time, Espey, Huston & Associates (EHA). Because of his work ethic, attitude, and engineering knowledge, EHA decided to sponsor his application for a permanent resident visa for him to stay in the U.S.

After ten years of service at EHA, Raymond moved on to work for then the second largest civil engineering consulting firm in Austin, Carlson & Dippel (C&D). At C&D, Raymond acquired knowledge in project management and office administration, which later proved to be very useful in managing his own company. Four years later in 1989, Raymond launched his own endeavor named Raymond Chan & Associates, Inc. (RC&A), a civil engineering consulting firm.

To some, 1989 was perhaps not the best year to start a business. The country was in the middle of a recession due to the Savings & Loans institution failures, similar to the massive bank failures in 2009. Many civil engineering consulting firms were cutting back under the distressed economic environment.

But to Raymond, it was a unique opportunity for him. The City of Austin had just passed favorable ordinances to encourage participation of Minority/Women-owned Business Enterprises in City construction projects. Raymond's service as a minority subcontractor to larger firms would not only help keep their cost down, but also help them meet the City's M/WBE participation goals.

The strategy worked. Following a few years of diligent work with prime contractors, the City began to award prime contracts to RC&A. Raymond's consistent quality work and the trust and relationship that have been built between the City and RC&C have paid off. RC&A has collaborated with the City on numerous major Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects, including the Austin-Travis County 911 Center at the old Robert Mueller Municipal Airport, several major drainage facilities at the Austin-Bergstrom International Airport, the George Washington Carver Library & Museum, the Crystalbrook Flood Control Project, a regional water quality pond at West Bouldin Creek, the South Austin Police Substation, and the erosion assessment for over 20 watersheds.

Raymond grew the company from an annual sales of

\$70,000 in 1989 to approximately \$2.3 million in 2009. Over the last 30 years, RC&C has been able to survive several economic downward turns. The unyielding strength of the company is contributed to the owner's

conservative business philosophy. Raymond believes in investing in his employees by fostering individual growth through training and mentoring. He thinks an "assembly line" type of production, as profitable as it may be, hinders the professional growth of individuals. Today RC&A is 100% debt free and 100% owned.

In the last 20 years, RC&A has completed over 500 City projects, either as a prime consultant or as a subconsultant. The entrepreneur summed up the keys to his success as being: a) responsive; b) sensitive to the neighborhood and stakeholders' concerns; c) able to meet the City's project timeline and budget requirements; d) frugal of the public dollars so that more can be accomplished; e) mindful of the project impact, particularly on the environment and the natural resources of the City and e) always thorough and complete in producing construction documents.

His advice to new comers who are interested in doing business with the City of Austin is patience. He recommends starting out as a sub-consultant to prime consultants and allowing time for the City staff to know your capabilities and the quality of your work through projects large or small, then the chance of being selected as a prime consultant will be greater. He said it took his company approximately three years to obtain the first prime contract from the City.

Raymond also said that in the case that your proposal is not selected by the City, it is always a good idea to obtain a "debriefing" from the City, so you can improve on future proposals.

On a personal note, Raymond has been active in the Asian community and the community at large for over 15 years. For the Asian community, he is one of the founders of the Network of Asian American Organizations (NAAO) and served as the first president of the NAAO. Besides NAAO, he has also served as a board member for the Texas Asian Chamber of Commerce and the Asian American Resource Center. For the community at large, he has served on the City's Charter Revision Commission. Raymond has also volunteered his time and served as a panelist on many public forums for small business owners and engineers. Currently, he is serving on the Mayor's Community Cabinet.

Raymond feels very fortunate to have his lovely wife Grace working side by side with him and assists him in all financial and administrative matters. He has three grown children Jonathan, Stephen and Britney. In his past time, Raymond loves to spend time with his family and friends, plays golf, and travels around the Country and the World. (Contents provided by RC&A)



A Glance at Formula 1 Construction Site in a Private Tour to Austin City Officials and Minority Trade Associations

Austin, TX— Austin city officials from the Small and Minority Resources Department and representatives from Asian Contractor Association attended a private tour of the Formula 1 construction site on August 28th arranged by Haynes-Eaglin-Waters, a firm employed by General Contractor Austin Commercial to provide minority outreach services for the project.

The multi-million race track sits on a 1,100 acres of land and runs approximately 3.5 miles, according to Jeremie Martinez, Austin Commercial Project Administrator, seen in a pre-tour briefing in photo 1.

Building the uniquely-engineered race track demands four special pavers to roll on the asphalt all at one time (seen in photo 2), while the observation tower (seen in photo 3) is protected by 12-inch walls and stands at 263 feet high in the middle of the race track.

Racers will come up to an upward curve (photo 4) at the first turn of the race within a short distance from the starting point, presenting tremendous challenges to drivers requiring extraordinary skills to navigate their high-speed vehicles with very low cockpit viewpoint, commented Mr. Martinez.

Photo number five shows the first leg of the race with a grand stand (photo 6) equipped with vomitories, a term that briefly drew gasps and raised eye brows from the tour. Mr. Martinez explained that these amenities were necessary for those in the audience who might have too much to drink during the race.

Austin will host the first Formula 1 race in the US since 2007 on November 18, 2012, which is expected to attract more than 100,000 fans and tourists from around the globe to Central Texas.



photo 1



photo 2



photo 3



photo 4



photo 5



photo 6