

Wall And Ceiling Alliance Raises Industry Standards

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The Wall And Ceiling Alliance (WACA), representing union-signatory contractors throughout Northern California, is working hard to raise industry standards, support prevailing wage and create a positive labor relations environment. WACA is the result of a 2010 unification of seven regional drywall and plaster associations, and now represents over 100 union-signatory contractors.

The unification “makes it more efficient and productive for us to do what we need to do,” said WACA Executive Director Frank Nunes, “in partnership with the Carpenters to increase market share, to work to preserve prevailing wage in our industry and to do training properly.”

WACA is particularly proud of its technical division, the Wall & Ceiling Bureau (WCB), which communicates regularly with architects, spec writers, building inspectors and code officials to develop code and standard language that “keeps the bar high enough to assure safety and quality,” Nunes said. WACA and WCB collaborate and partner with other allied organizations throughout the nation.

WACA representatives meet regularly with all the standard-setting groups, Nunes explained. “We are the go-to resource for the wall and ceiling industry,” he said. “And we work with all the union apprenticeship and journeyman training programs to help make sure that members stay up-to-date with current practices. ... We carry the flag way out front on the development and implementation of standards. The non-union contractors say it’s too expensive. We say it’s too expensive not to do it right.”

WACA is particularly enthusiastic about the UBC International training and certification program on exterior envelopes. “They are doing an outstanding job to raise skill levels in both interior and exterior wall systems,” Nunes said. We are proud to have been invited by the Carpenters International Training Center (CITC) to contribute to their good efforts.”

Energy codes and new technologies associated with advanced construction, plus the risk of water intrusion, have significantly increased the complexity of construction over the last several decades, Nunes said. “Standards have to be higher now, and training has to be better,” he added. “We’re lucky to have a partner like the Carpenters Union in keeping those standards high.”