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Serving the Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Industry in Arizona

Volume 15, Number 7

March 2008

## Arizona contractors win top national ACCA awards

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HVACR Today

Arizona contractors stole the show at this year's Air Conditioning Contractors of America (ACCA) national meeting in Colorado Springs, Colo. when three of this state's contractors were nominated for the association's top awards, and two were selected as winners.

Hobaica Services of Phoenix, Ariz. won the 2008 ACCA Award for Excellence in Residential Contracting. A second-generation, family-owned business serving the Phoenix metropolitan area, Hobaica is celebrating its 55th anniversary.

Tri-City Mechanical of Chandler, Ariz. won the 2008 ACCA Award for Excellence in Commercial Contracting. The company was a finalist in this category a few years ago.

Scottsdale-based Air Conditioning by Jay was also among the three finalists for the residential award.

"It has been an extreme morale booster around here," explained Paul Hobaica, who owns Hobaica Services with brothers Mike and Louis. "Everyone has been raving about it to customers, and I think it has just raised everyone's energy and excitement level."

Hobaica was actually a finalist in the commercial category last year. Though the company takes pride in their significant amount of commercial work, the three brothers conceded that it was difficult competing with much larger, commercial-focused companies, and that residential is more of their main focus.



**Top honors.** (Left) Tri-City Mechanical (President Joe Nichter) and Hobaica Services (owners Mike, Louis and Paul Hobaica) won the ACCA 2008 best commercial and residential contractor awards, respectively.

"We already have such a great team environment here," added Mike Hobaica, who attended the national meeting with Paul. "You know, all the employees believe in what we believe in and we support them in what they are doing. So, this just reinforces what they have been striving for to get this award. And to get this award against the top contractors in the nation, it just means so much."

Joe Nichter, president of Tri-City Mechanical, said his company always strives to be one of the best places to work, and it is nice to be recognized for those efforts.

Nichter, who was on-hand at the convention to receive the award, added that it was a great experience. "It was awesome, and we were really flattered to receive the award. It certainly speaks loudly for the team we have here at Tri-City."

To be eligible for the prestigious

awards, ACCA-member contractors must first be nominated, then must complete a rigorous application process which evaluates criteria such as customer satisfaction, quality control, ethical standards, business practices, contributions toward advancing the industry, how well employees are treated and trained and even community involvement.

"I am pretty impressed with the fact that Arizona had such a great representation," said Bryce Johnson, owner of Air Conditioning By Jay. Johnson feels the results are in part indicative of an evolving market in the Valley. "I just think we are maturing as a marketplace and getting more professional."

During the convention, Air Conditioning By Jay team members won first (Jessica Morrison), second (Michael Goater) and a finalist position (Cherri Marrese) in the 'I have

an Idea' contest.

Though up for the same award, Johnson explained that Air Conditioning by Jay and Hobaica had a great time together during the award ceremony. "I have respected their organization for years, and I am seriously proud to have been in the running with them for that award. I want to congratulate them—they run a fantastic organization."

The Arizona chapter of ACCA—the fastest growing chapter in the nation—was well represented at the meeting with over 30 people from chapter members and staff attending the national meeting.

And all three companies acknowledged the rising profile of the Arizona Chapter. Louis Hobaica, Paul Hobaica and Joe Nichter are all Past Presidents of ACCA-AZ. Nichter also serves with ACCA national.