

# 9300 CONTRACTOR

**Tile Contractors' Association of America**

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**FEATURED INSIDE:**

***TCAA Announces  
2017 Scholarships***

***What to Consider When  
Choosing a Membrane***

***TCNA Bulletin—  
Choosing Your Tile Contractor***



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### 9300 Contractor

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## A Message from the President



### It's Back to School Time Again

Summer vacations are over and everyone is back to school and work again. Hopefully all of you had a great summer and you are reenergized—just like all the children who couldn't wait to get back to the classroom. And speaking of classrooms, be sure to read about this year's TCAA Architecture & Design Scholarship and Family Scholarship recipients introduced in this issue.

For many years now, TCAA has been committed to providing annual scholarships to young men and women studying for careers in the architecture and design segments of the construction industry. These young men and women are the future of our industry. In supporting their career goals, we also hope to achieve a common goal in our industry of helping to create future generations of design visionaries who find new ways of integrating tile and stone into their design vision. We certainly welcome and encourage everyone's continued support with our scholarship program. Many of our former winners have gone on to become leaders in their field.

TCAA also offers an annual Family Scholarship for students entering college for the first time or already working on an undergraduate degree in their chosen field. As the proud parent of the 2009 recipient of the TCAA Family Scholarship, I can tell you that this merit scholarship is an outstanding benefit for our members. The TCAA Family Scholarship is open to all students entering college or already engaged in their undergraduate studies, so long as a member of the student's family is employed as overhead staff by a TCAA contractor.

Continuing with our school and classrooms theme, Total Solutions Plus is just around the corner and will be here before we know it. There's no better place to continue the studies of the ever-changing world of tile than TSP. This annual event continues to grow each year and has, without a doubt, become a not to be missed event. As Monty Python said, "and now for something completely different", we've left the desert of California behind for a trip across the country to Washington, DC. There's no golf event this year but plenty of history to take in and probably not enough time for everything. Between what's planned with the educational and social programs of TSP and the historic places to visit in our Nation's Capital, it's sure to feel like we're all back in college cramming for finals with information overload. But when that information encompasses both our country's history and our industry's future, it's a great kind of overload to experience.

I look forward to seeing you all in DC.

**Brian Castro**  
**TCAA President**  
**DTI of Illinois**





## TCAA Labor Report

**John Trendell, TCAA Labor Committee Chair**  
Trendell Consulting LLC

### We All Know the Problem ... Let's All Be Part of the Solutions!

From coast to coast and all areas of the country in between a cry and hue can be heard. We need Tile Setters! We need Tile Finishers! We need more Skilled Labor! Every facet of the construction industry is in the same boat. No matter residential, commercial, craft, or contractor. TCAA has been part of a national commitment with the IUBAC and IMI to address this issue.

Over the last three years we have worked with our labor partners to establish a national curriculum for training new apprentices to standards that are common throughout the country as well as addressing regional items of importance. Included are essential elements such as communication skills, craft skills, life skills, mentoring programs, continuing education for instructors, and an understanding of the benefits of being a union craftworker.

The national program has been put in place with input from local and regional apprentice programs. To give the program even more legitimacy, IUBAC in conjunction with IMI must nationally certify each local apprentice program and this certification must be renewed on a regular basis.

Recognizing that recruitment and retention are the next steps in the process to rejuvenate our work force, IMI invited contractors and union officials from across the country to participate in a working group to address the issues. A meeting held in June included Tommy Conner of Superior Tile & Stone and myself as representatives for TCAA. Methods of inclusion, membership campaigns, diversity, and change strategies, were discussed. This group will be working in more specific terms over the next months.

PLEASE! We welcome any and all ideas! Call, text, or email Tommy or myself with your suggestions. Better yet, get involved with your local JATC. It is imperative for us as contractors and as integral participants and partners in this great and growing industry to be part of the solutions. ♦

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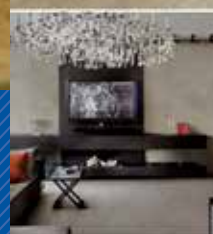
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TCNA BULLETIN

## CHOOSING YOUR TILE CONTRACTOR



**TILE:** It's the go-to finish when you're looking for high fashion and high function. But you might not get either if you leave it to just anyone to install. Unlike plumbing, electrical, and structural masonry trades, tile installers and the tile contractors that employ them are not generally required to meet minimum trade craft criteria to be in business.

The difference between trained, experienced installers and inexperienced installers is noticeably reflected in their work, and the difference between a quality contractor and a deficient one is reflected in their service and business operations.

Together, contractor and installer transform your concept into reality. Whether you're a design/build professional selecting tile contractors on a regular basis or a homeowner with a single tile project, it's just not possible to overestimate the importance of finding qualified contractors and installers.

### THE REPUTABLE TILE CONTRACTOR

- ✓ **Operates a legitimate business**, with responsible business practices and a policy of standing behind their work.
- ✓ **Invests in continuing education** necessary to stay up to date on current building codes, regulations, standards, and best practices. On-the-job training is the most popular way to learn a construction trade, but formalized training is a must for ensuring correct installation methods are being taught to and used by installers on your project.
- ✓ **Carries all required business licenses and insurances**, and doesn't push liabilities for property damages or worker injuries onto others.
- ✓ **Does not misclassify workers** to avoid paying into social security, unemployment, workers' compensation, and other employee programs.
- ✓ **Has a traceable business location** so customers can be sure post-installation questions and issues are addressed and resolved.
- ✓ **Has a track record for quality and service:** Good contractors can easily produce references and verifiable documentation of their commitment to quality and service.

## ARCHITECTS AND SPECIFIERS

Include language in job specifications requiring qualified labor and enforce it with the GC. See the *TCNA Handbook* for a list of industry recognized prequalification programs for installers and contractors such as the CTEF Certified Tile Installer Program, the ACT (Advanced Certifications for Tile Installers) Program, the NTCA 5-Star Contractor Program, and the TCAA Trowel of Excellence Program.

## GENERAL CONTRACTORS

Deliver a quality tile installation by fulfilling contractor qualification requirements in job specifications. When not included, utilize internally developed qualifications. Require proof of qualifications to be included with all project bids. Thoroughly compare estimates from bidding contractors before awarding contracts. Often, higher estimates reflect better materials and additional necessary components and tasks, like substrate preparation and movement joints.

## HOMEOWNERS

Don't hesitate to ask contractors for proof of insurance, their license (where required), and their installation qualifications. Thoroughly interview bidding contractors and check several references. Utilize consumer resources available from your state on the internet and from the Ceramic Tile Education Foundation.

"Because tile is a permanent finish, the lowest bid should not be the driving factor, but rather who is the most qualified to perform the scope of the work specified."

— *TCNA Handbook*



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## TCAA Announces 2017 Scholarships

Since 2001, the Tile Contractors' Association of America (TCAA) has had the honor of awarding two annual merit scholarships to outstanding architectural students. Beginning in 2017, the Architecture scholarship program was changed to award a single, larger annual scholarship of \$5,000. TCAA is committed to rewarding high achieving students who will lead their industry, shape the language of design, and create new ways of utilizing tile and stone for public and private space as art for habitation. As of August 2017, TCAA has awarded 30 architectural scholarships.

TCAA also offers a scholarship award to relatives of our TCAA Contractor members. This program is designed to recognize the academic achievements of our exceptional college, or college-bound, students with a \$2,000 merit based scholarship. One student is chosen each year to receive this scholarship. As of August 2017, TCAA has awarded 18 family scholarships.

## Congratulations to the TCAA 2017 Architectural Scholarship Recipient



### **Brennan Broome**

Brennan is currently working toward his Master of Interior Architecture degree at Florida International University. He carries a grade point average of 4.0 and is ranked #1 in his class. He previously earned a BFA in Intermedia at Pacific Northwest College of Art in Portland, OR.

During his time at Florida International University, Brennan has been the recipient of the 2017 Design Excellence Award in Workplace Design and the 2016 Design Excellence Award in Hospitality Design.

In addition to his studies in interior architecture, Brennan is an interdisciplinary artist, curator and designer. His practice includes video, installation, web-development, publications and printed materials which have been exhibited nationally and internationally. With his fiancée, Brennan is currently one-half of the design team at Miami-based design studio Raneytown and was previously a co-director and curator at Recess in Portland.

## Congratulations to the 2017 TCAA Family Scholarship Recipient



### **Danielle Czarkowski**

Danielle was ranked 21 in a class of 129 students and holds a 3.87 GPA. She is a member of the National Honor Society, French Honor Society and the Tri-M Music Honor Society. She also received the Presidential Silver Award for Service in 2016.

Danielle sent the following letter to the TCAA membership thanking them for her scholarship.

*To the TCAA Members,*

*My name is Danielle Czarkowski, I am the daughter of Nancy Czarkowski, and granddaughter of John Sekora and Doris Bader Sekora of Artisan Tile & Marble in New Jersey. I am also very proud to say that I am this year's winner of the Tile Contractors' Association Family Scholarship.*

*I wanted to reach out to you, as well as all of the association members, to express my gratitude for your generosity and to also share with you the letter that I sent to the selection committee.*

*I will be begin my college journey in a few weeks at DeSales University in Center Valley, PA majoring in Sports & Exercise Physiology with a minor in Kinesiology, and continue on to receive my Doctorate in Physical Therapy, specializing in sports PT.*

*Many students enter college without truly knowing what career path they wish to take. I am blessed that my love for all sports and my desire to help others has given me a clear direction and I am excited to begin my journey.*

*My heartfelt thanks to the Tile Contractors' Association for recognizing the hard work of students like myself and generously giving me the opportunity to earn the Family Scholarship this year.*

**Sincerely,  
Danielle Czarkowski  
DSU Class of 2021**



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The tile industry has three separate UL-Certified industry-wide EPDs for North American-made ceramic tile, mortar, and grout. Representing roughly 3.35 billion square feet of tile and 2.25 billion kg of grout and mortar produced annually, **these EPDs represent the vast majority of these North American-made products.**

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*Total Solutions Plus* brings together leading manufacturers, distributors and tile installation contractors from across the country who gain new business and technical information from nationally recognized experts, make valuable business connections and have a lot of fun in the process. With inspiring and informative keynote speakers, lively business and technical sessions, exciting leisure activities and, of course, lots of socializing in a luxurious and relaxed setting, *Total Solutions Plus* is the one industry conference you don't want to miss.

If you've got questions, the experts at *Total Solutions Plus* have the answers! From improving your negotiation skills to resolving common jobsite problems to understanding new ANSI standards for Gauged Porcelain Tile, you'll find the answers you need - plus the fun you want - at the 2017 *Total Solutions Plus*.

## NEW THIS YEAR!

Architects and Designers in the DC area are invited to attend a FREE three hour AIA-accredited program that explores the role of tile in sustainable design and construction and examines design and installation considerations for Large Format Ceramic Tile (LFT) and Gauged Porcelain Tile (GPT). This session will be held on Monday afternoon, November 6, followed by a complimentary reception and tabletop exhibits of the newest materials, technologies and applications the industry has to offer.

## ALSO NEW THIS YEAR!

TCAA will host a special dinner for signatory contractors attending *Total Solutions Plus* on Saturday evening, November 4, at Stone's Throw Restaurant, adjacent to the Marriott Wardman Park.

**Watch for your invitation in the mail.**

To see the full conference schedule and register for *Total Solutions Plus*, visit [www.ctdahome.org/tsp/2017/](http://www.ctdahome.org/tsp/2017/)



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Protecting the floor from substrate movement

## What to Consider When Choosing a Membrane

By Brian Petit, VP Operations NAC Products



Have you ever seen a beautiful ceramic or stone tile floor ruined by substrate movement that left cracked, delaminated tile, chipped edges and a hazardous walking surface? This is not the problem of the tile!

Concrete shrinks as it cures and this creates lateral substrate movement in addition to normal expansion and contraction from a concrete substrate.

Wood sub-floors continue to expand and contract with changes in humidity and temperature. When the substrate moves, so do they and 1/8" of thin-set is not enough to keep a new tile floor isolated from damage.

Installing a membrane over the substrate prior to the finished flooring is one way to protect your floor from substrate movement. The membrane creates a new surface to set your finished floor.

We're going to discuss membranes, their benefits and practical application.

### Crack Isolation Membranes

Substrates can have lateral movement caused by shrinkage, creep and thermal expansion and contraction. The increased use of skylights, large windows and heated floor systems (whether hydronic or tile warming systems) put extra

stress on the finished floor. This is too much movement for cementitious mortars to handle.

Crack Isolation, Anti-Fracture, Crack Suppression, Cleavage Membrane, and Uncoupling Systems are just a few of the descriptive words for systems being used under ceramic, porcelain and stone tile. The application of elastomeric sheet underlayment membrane systems provides protection for the finished floor.

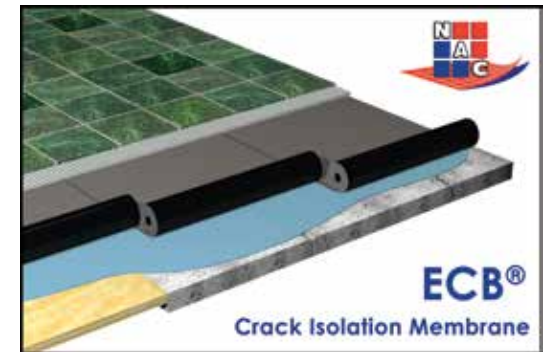
Self-Adhesive systems provide a sure and tenacious bond with the substrate that can be applied quickly, allowing fast tracked projects to stay on time. The membrane moves in-plane with the substrate protecting the finished floor from movement or cracked tiles. With some membranes, control joints do not need to be carried through to the tile layout and do not require the tile to be cut through above the substrate control joint. Check with the membrane manufacturer prior to installation.

A sheet underlayment membrane system is always the same thickness when delivered to the job site as manufactured. This eliminates the possibility for error as happens in trowel-applied systems. Trowel-applied systems require the installer to determine if the cured system (all liquid systems shrink as they cure) will be the proper, manufacturer recommended, thickness after curing.

Some sheet underlayment membrane systems can be walked on and tile can be set immediately on the membrane once installed. The membrane is tough enough to allow light traffic and other trades to be on it, allowing for more flexibility in staging work.

### Waterproof Membrane Systems

The need for elastomeric crack bridging products extends into areas where top down water penetration needs to be controlled. Bathrooms, commercial kitchens, hotels, malls and exterior decks are places where waterproofing and crack protection are necessary.



Using a sheet waterproof membrane system that can be installed quickly and easily is essential to keeping fast track projects on time. An elastomeric waterproofing membrane system that can provide crack protection for movement on the substrate is an advantage with one product providing multiple benefits.

Another benefit is would be if that membrane system prevents moisture vapor transmission (MVT). MVT can cause a variety of problems including delamination, so choosing a system with multiple benefits can also help by limiting the number of products needed to install the system which in turn reduces the amount of time needed for the installation.

A membrane system capable of handling the movement at control joints means that floors with control joints can be waterproofed. This system should also allow installation over hydronic heating systems and under tile warming systems provide for thermal movement in both.



Seam and corner tape is utilized for floor to wall joints making the application of the sheet membrane easier while creating a watertight seal. Elastomeric membrane systems capable of handling greater amounts of lateral movement, means that waterproofing integrity will last much longer.



Elastomeric waterproofing membranes are versatile and can be used interior or exterior.

The extreme temperature conditions occurring in exterior applications, make the

use of membranes under tile on balconies and decks a necessary element of the installation.

All waterproof membrane installations require proper slope to a drain per the Tile Council of North America wet area guidelines.

### Sound Abatement Systems

Elastomeric crack bridging products evolved in response to the industry need for sound abatement products in low to high-rise apartment complexes, condominium projects, office and residential living facilities and single family homes.

*(continued page 20)*

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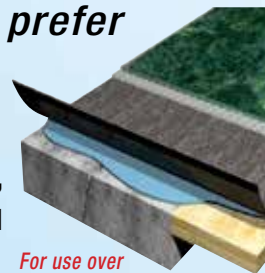
## Crack Isolation Membrane



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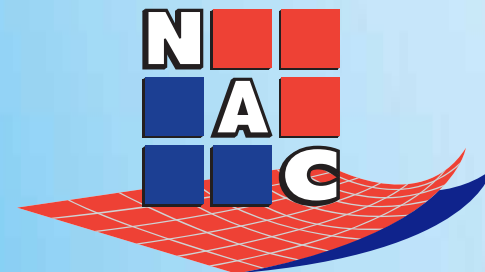
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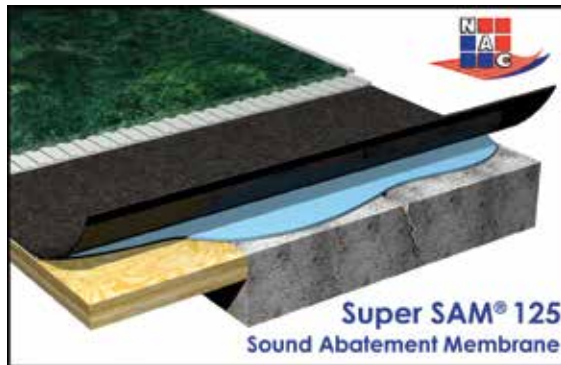
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It should be noted that sound abatement membrane systems will not eliminate sound transmission, but will abate, or decrease, the amount of sound transferred between floors. Membrane systems for sound abatement need to be bondable to both concrete and wood subfloors and also need to provide crack isolation protection as they are generally applied before ceramic, porcelain and stone tile finished floors which, by their nature, are resonant materials.

Sound membrane products need to accommodate buildings with and without SRCA's (Sound Rated Ceiling Assemblies). An SRCA is a cavity between floors that is comprised of insulation or other sound deadening material.

Sound abatement membranes should be lab tested with an independent, third party facility that will record the sound ratings achieved through a variety of testing procedures. This independent verification will support the capabilities of the product.

Although sound abatement systems are generally not needed inside a shower area, membrane systems need to be configurable to waterproofing when necessary.



A sound abatement system that doubles as a crack isolation membrane has the capability to provide the owner with two assurances in one application.

As ceramic and stone tile installations increase, the need for materials providing ease of installation, maintenance, mold and mildew resistance and non-allergenic qualities increases. When membrane systems are easy to install, they are installed correctly and cost effectively. ◆



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