

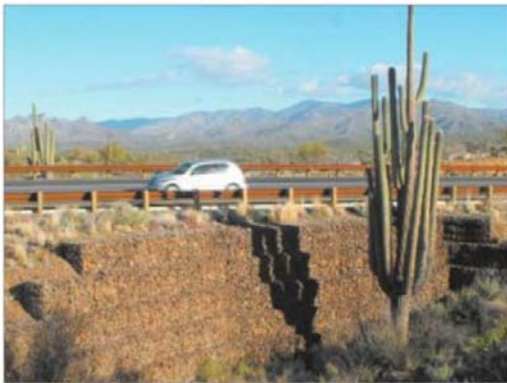
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EDITOR'S *Picks*

Environmental Excellence Awards

Annual Valley Forward event is all-encompassing in its quest to honor environmental sensitivities in the built and natural environments, education and art. 14



Gonzales Pass, a stretch of U.S. 60 east of the Valley, won major accolades at the Environmental Excellence Awards.

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US 60 project wins big prize for Environmental Excellence

If taking a Sunday afternoon drive is part of your routine, check out Gonzales Pass on U.S. 60 east of the Valley. The new four-lane highway took the President's Award — the highest honor at the 31st annual Environmental Excellence Awards on Sept. 17, sponsored by Valley Forward and Salt River Project.

Freeways have an anti-environmental stigma attached in general, but not this 10-mile stretch that serves as the Valley's gateway to the Superstition Wilderness and the Tonto National Forest.

As part of the widening, some 35,000 cactuses were inventoried and replanted. Tortoise and other wildlife crossings were integrated into the design. What was a narrow two-lane roadway is now a safe and beautiful showcase of the desert landscape. The project, which won the President's Award, was submitted by Logan Simpson Design Inc.

This is what I love about the Valley Forward event: It's all-encompassing in its quest to honor environmental sensitivities in the built and natural environments, in education and in art.

The Soleri Bridge at the Scottsdale Waterfront took home two Crescordia awards, one for Site Development and Landscape Trails and one for Art in Public Places. It's a dynamic structure designed by renowned artist and architect Paolo Soleri that creates a memorable image for those strolling the area. It was submitted by Howard S. Wright and Scottsdale Public Art.

Intel Corp.'s Ocotillo Campus in Chandler also won two Crescordia awards, one for Buildings and Structures in Industry and one for Public Works, as well as the Environmental Stewardship Award sponsored by SRP. That was given in recognition of the campus' silver rating from the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design program.

There were many other awards, including the other Crescordia winners:

- Meritage Homes, net-zero homes in the Buildings and Structures for Residential category.
- Chandler City Hall, submitted by Smith-Group, for the Buildings and Structures for Civic Use category.
- Santa Fe Freight Depot, submitted by Arrington Watkins Architects, for the Buildings and Structures Historic Preservation category.

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- U-Haul Contributions, for the Buildings and Structures Commercial and Mixed-Use category.

- Paradise Valley Community College Life Science Building, submitted by Marlene Imirzian & Associates LLC, in the Buildings and Structures Institutional category.

- Standards for Landscape Care in the Desert Southwest, submitted by the Arizona Landscape Contrac-

tors Association, in the Livable Communities Sustainable Communities category.

- Chandler redevelopment, submitted by the city of Chandler, in the Livable Communities Public Policy and Plans category.

- Arcadia Residence, submitted by colwell:shelor Landscape Architecture, for the Site Development and Landscape for Residential.

- W.L. Gore & Associates Phoenix Campus, submitted by LVA Urban Design Studio, for the Site Development and Landscape Private Sector category.

- White Tank Branch Library and Nature Center, submitted by the Maricopa County Library District, for the Environmental Technologies Public Sector category.

- Ikea Tempe solar project, for the Environmental Technologies Private Sector category.

- Glendale conservation and sustainable living programs, submitted by the city of Glendale, in the Environmental Education and Communication for the Public Sector category.

- Sonoran Sustainable Building Advisor Program, submitted by Sonoran SBAP Inc., in the Environmental Education and Communication for the Private Sector category.

- Valley Permaculture Alliance's education program, for the Environmental Education and Communication for Educators and Students category.

Because the awards are so inspirational — the Valley has some show-stopping environmental designs and some very important stewardship programs — I can hardly wait for next year's event to come around.