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**Real Estate & Development**

# SteelStacks bests big city projects to take home gold urban excellence award

By **Stacy Wescoe**, June 19, 2017 at 10:30 AM



The SteelStacks Arts and Cultural Campus in Bethlehem has received the gold medal in the Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence. (Contributed photo)

The Lehigh Valley is once again in the national spotlight for one of its economic development projects.

Named as a finalist earlier this year, the SteelStacks Arts and Cultural Campus in Bethlehem has received the gold medal in the Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence, beating out finalists from Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles and New Orleans.

A nationwide committee of urban experts determined the winners from among the finalists.

"We're pretty proud," said Tony Hanna, executive director of the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Bethlehem "We bested some big city competition."

The project will receive a \$50,000 prize for taking the top award. Hanna said the money will be put into an endowment fund to help pay for ongoing maintenance of the site.

The 9.5-acre SteelStacks campus on former Bethlehem Steel property design was led by WRT of Philadelphia and developed by a consortium led by the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Bethlehem.

This is far from the first accolades for the project. Hanna estimated the project has received 25 to 30 awards in the past few years.

In 2014, the project was a winner in the Urban Land Institute's Global Awards for Excellence. That's the award that Allentown's Revitalization District was nominated for this month.

Hanna said he likes that the project was recognized by both the ULI and the Bruner group because each takes a different look at what makes a project valuable to a community.

He said the ULI award is much about the functioning design of the project.

"This is how a project lives," Hanna said.

He said that one of the benefits of SteelStacks to the community is that it is for everyone, regardless of their socioeconomic background.

While there are many ticketed events, there also are many free events and attractions on a daily basis.

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Writer and online editor Stacy Wescoe has her finger on the pulse of the business community in the Greater Lehigh Valley and keeps you up-to-date with technology and trends, plus what coworkers and competitors are talking about around the water cooler — and on social media. She can be reached at [stacyw@lvb.com](mailto:stacyw@lvb.com) or 610-807-9619, ext. 4104. Follow her on Twitter at [@morestacy](#) and on Facebook. Circle Stacy Wescoe on **Google+**.

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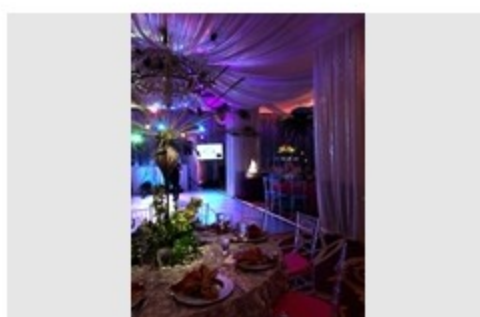
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