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**Building a Better Central Oregon Selects 2015 Awardees**

Bend, OR, October 9, 2015. The Central Oregon Association of REALTORS® (COAR) will present the 39th Annual Building a Better Central Oregon (BBCO) Awards on October 22, 2015 at the The Riverhouse. BBCO’s main purpose is to recognize worthy residents who have enhanced their community with outstanding new or renovated residential, commercial or industrial buildings. Projects are judged on economic impact, neighborhood improvement, unique design or use of materials. The 2015 winners are:

**Bonta' Natural Artisan Gelato Juli and Jeff Labhart**

After four years of operating a small gelato kitchen out of their garage, Juli and Jeff Labhart secured an industrial space on SE Bend to build their new 2,700 square foot creamery. They worked with Ascent Architecture and Scott Young Construction to complete the project after approximately six months of work. The new facility provides the space for a large walk-in freezer, cooler, pasteurizing vat and multiple batch freezers. It has more than tripled their production to up to approximately 700 gallons of gelato a week that is sold throughout Oregon.

Shortly after signing the lease for the new creamery, their “dream” location for a scoop shop came available in downtown Bend on Minnesota Avenue. They again worked with Ascent and Scott Young to design and craft a comfortable space that represents their hand-crafted, all natural product. The shop opened in April and has been and amazing success. Customers love the feel and look of the shop and it provides a fun place for families, local and tourists alike to enjoy a local, handcrafted product.

**COCC Residence Hall-Central Oregon Community College**

In support of creating a more vibrant campus, opportunities for greater student success and to meet the needs of today's college student, Central Oregon Community College worked with Mahlum Architecture and Lease Crutcher Lewis to design and build a new, 330-bed student residence hall. Awarded Oregon's Earth Advantage Gold Standard, the building employs a "suite-style" approach to student housing. This approach allows four students to share either a two- or four-bedroom unit, small living space, or private bathroom.

The building includes spaces designed to intentionally build community amongst students, albeit in the private living space in each suite, lounges shared by different wings or larger gathering spaces to include a living room, study spaces, community kitchen, and a game room. The residence hall was intentionally located adjacent to the Barber Library, Coats Campus Center and Mazama Gym, providing students with ready access to programs and services supporting their long-term success.

**Habitat for Humanity ReStore- Bend Area Habitat for Humanity ReStore**

The Bend ReStore first opened in 1998 with only two volunteers and inside a 500 square foot space. Last year the Bend Area Habitat for Humanity ReStore opened in the former Backstrom Builders location after a $500,000 renovation. The 18,000 square foot facility now has a larger inventory for used building materials, furniture and appliances. The ReStore had outgrown its former location in size and access to parking. The Restore is critical to Habitat’s funding by financing nearly 90% of their operations with the goal of 100% operations supported by the ReStore. The store provides funding to support home ownership programs in Bend and Prineville while also providing quality home improvement materials, appliances and furniture at affordable prices.

**Legum Design-Jeannie Legum and Keith Legum**

Legum Design started business in beautiful Bend, Oregon in 2004. After many years of being on the industrial side of town, it was time to expand and find a new space. The opportunity arose to purchase and remodel a building in the sought after area of downtown Bend.

The old Bend Mapping Building sat vacant and unused for some time. Despite its dilapidated state, the Legums saw the potential of the space and decided to take on the daunting project. They worked with architect Darren Thomas to create a space that would be not only big enough for a team of designers, clients and an extensive showcase of sample materials, but also that would reveal the original beauty and charm of the building. The result is a modern industrial showroom in the heart of downtown Bend.

**New Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Facility-Bend Research, a division pf Capsugel**

Bend Research, a division of Capsugel, recently completed a new pharmaceutical manufacturing facility at its northeast Bend campus. The building represents the latest in architectural design for structures of its kind. As a good manufacturing practice (GMP) certified facility with high-tech pharmaceutical processing equipment, the company manufactures new, game changing medicines and treatments for serious medical conditions. Only a few facilities worldwide have these processing capabilities and technology, bringing significant international attention and new business activity to the Central Oregon area. Capsugel’s investment has boosted the local economy by creating more jobs in Bend and will help drive future growth for Central Oregon

**Oregon Spirit Distillers-Kathy and Brad Irwin**

Oregon Spirit has converted the former ReStore retail and storage buildings into a working distillery and associated cocktail lounge/tasting room. This represents an expansion of Oregon Spirit's operations, allowing them to increase production capacity and enlarge their tasting room. The project makes use of an underutilized property in the rapidly developing "Maker's District," and the cocktail lounge will bring new activity to this part of the city. This is a prime example of the kind of project that can help transform a former industrial area into the mixed employment model the city has designated for the area.

**The 1001 Tech Center-The 1001 Building Associates**

The 1001 Tech Center is a 27,000 square foot building that is dedicated to being an entrepreneurial, collaborative tech hub for Central Oregon. Seven Peaks Ventures, Bend Tech, Five Talent, Pneuma33 Design, Kellective, Stackhouse Café and LCL Ten are currently operating in the space. The 1001 Tech Center is located on Emkay Drive and has created a new-vibrancy in the Emkay, Columbia, Colorado area. Completed in 2015, the former office building is now a vibrant tech hub where entrepreneurs can gather, work and collaborate. Spacious ceiling heights, an assortment of lounges, several conference rooms, think tank board rooms, indoor/outdoor cafe/bar, redundant fiber internet, ample parking and indoor bike racks are all designed in a beautifully sophisticated way. The Center is a cornerstone of the growing tech industry in Central Oregon and located near the new OSU-Cascades Campus.

**The Tree House-Deborah Benson and Daniel Slape, Neal Huston & Associates Architects Inc.. The Right Hand LLP and Carol Gregg – Interior Designer**

When Deborah Benson and Daniel Slape decided to build a new home, they first examined their lifestyle and determined a commitment to “do the right thing” for the community while maintaining their desire to design something that did not conform to the popular “northwest lodge” style. After exploring numerous options, they were drawn to the idea of building in an established neighborhood on an infill lot. What they quickly learned was that infill lots (especially view lots) in established neighborhoods are available for a reason. Generally, they are considered economically unbuildable or they are owned to protect views, etc.

The couple found an available lot in Bend’s West Hills that was narrow, steep and pretty much a rock pile, i.e., unbuildable. They then approached Neal Huston & Associates to come up with a concept. The lot had a special pine tree growing out of a rock outcropping that that they told Neal must be saved To offer an even larger challenge, they instructed Neal to disturb the lot as little as possible and the house had to be single level. The project commenced in October, 2012, and was completed in September 2014. Bruce Hight of the Right Hand LLP did the construction and we relied on Carol Gregg for the interior design. The result is the “Tree House”.

**US 20: Cascade Avenue Improvements Projects-Sisters, Oregon Department of Transportation and the City of Sisters**

US Highway 20 crosses the Cascades Range and connects Central Oregon with the Willamette Valley's population centers. Nearly 12,000 trucks and cars travel it daily through the tourism-based town of Sisters, Oregon where it serves as a major regional freight route and as a Downtown Main Street, known locally as Cascade Avenue. The Downtown suffered from narrow, aging sidewalks, substandard ADA ramps and deteriorating, unsafe curbs. The highway was failing and severely rutted with sinkholes. The Oregon Department of Transportation and the City of Sisters partnered to rebuild the road, replace the storm system to properly handle runoff, construct curbs, sidewalks and cross walks, and install benches, sitting walls, water fountains, bicycle racks and street lighting. The construction schedule was one of the main concerns for Sisters business owners. The six-block section of Cascade Avenue through Downtown was completely reconstructed and open to traffic within two and a half months to minimize business impacts.

The award presentation will take place at a reception at The Riverhouse on October 22, 2015 from 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM. The event is presented by the Central Oregon Association of REALTORS® with sponsorship from Arbor Mortgage Group, Cascade Sotheby’s International Realty and WIN Home Inspections Tickets for the event are $25 and are available by calling 541-382-6027 or at [www.coar.com](http://www.coar.com).

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*The Central Oregon Association of REALTORS® (COAR) is your voice for real estate in Central Oregon. COAR is a trade association serving the professional needs of its 1650 members. In addition, COAR is dedicated to enhancing and protecting the real estate industry. COAR believes we can build better communities by supporting quality growth, seeking sustainable economies and housing opportunities while protecting a property owner’s ability to own, use, buy and sell property.*