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CONSTRUCTION DIMENSIONS

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**AWCI Member
Spotlight
Tri-State
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BESTJOB EVER

Rob Aird, C. Brent Allen, Lee Zaretsky, Davis Sprague and Travis Vap share a passion for transforming spaces and structures with an eye for craftsmanship, innovation and historical preservation. You'll see what we mean.

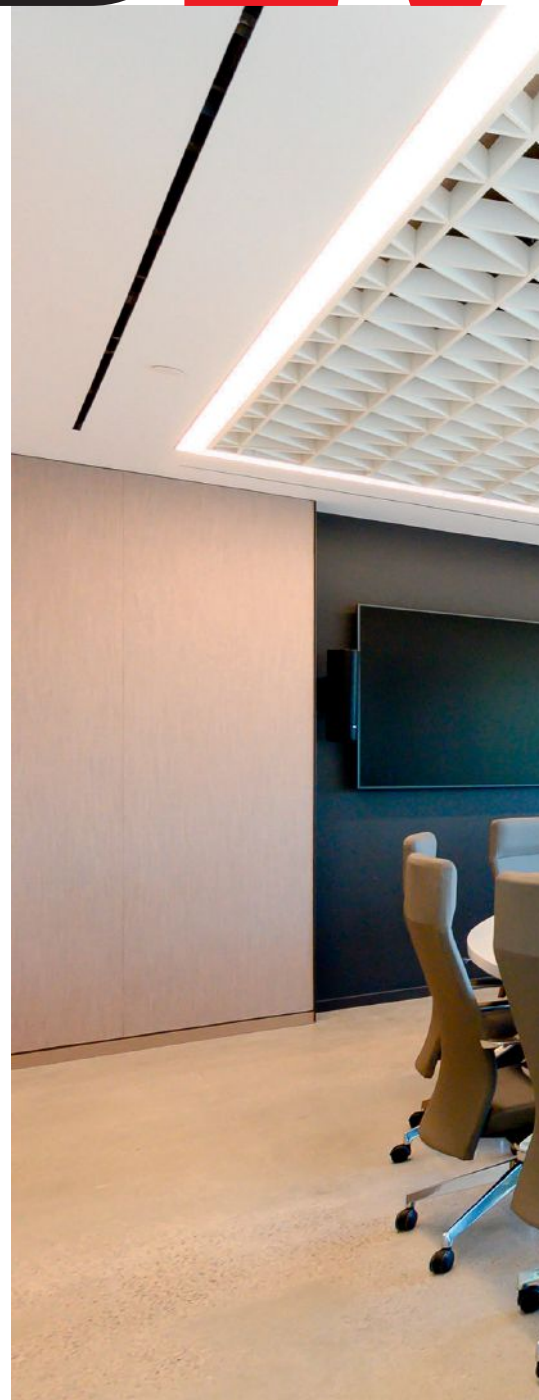
By Mark L. Johnson

IN TODAY'S WORLD of construction—where craftsmanship meets innovation, and time management and team collaboration are always a challenge—five leading AWCI members have redefined the landscape of how things get built. From Rob Aird's restoration of historical landmarks to Lee Zaretsky's high-end craftsmanship, Davis Sprague's ceiling artistry, C. Brent Allen's solutions for repurposing old factories and Travis Vap's

trailblazing in technology, these AWCI contractors' most transformative projects have reshaped city skylines—and given us awe. Their work stands the test of time—and showcases the power that collaboration, innovation and passion can have in specialty contracting.

Aird, Inc.: Breathing Life into Structures

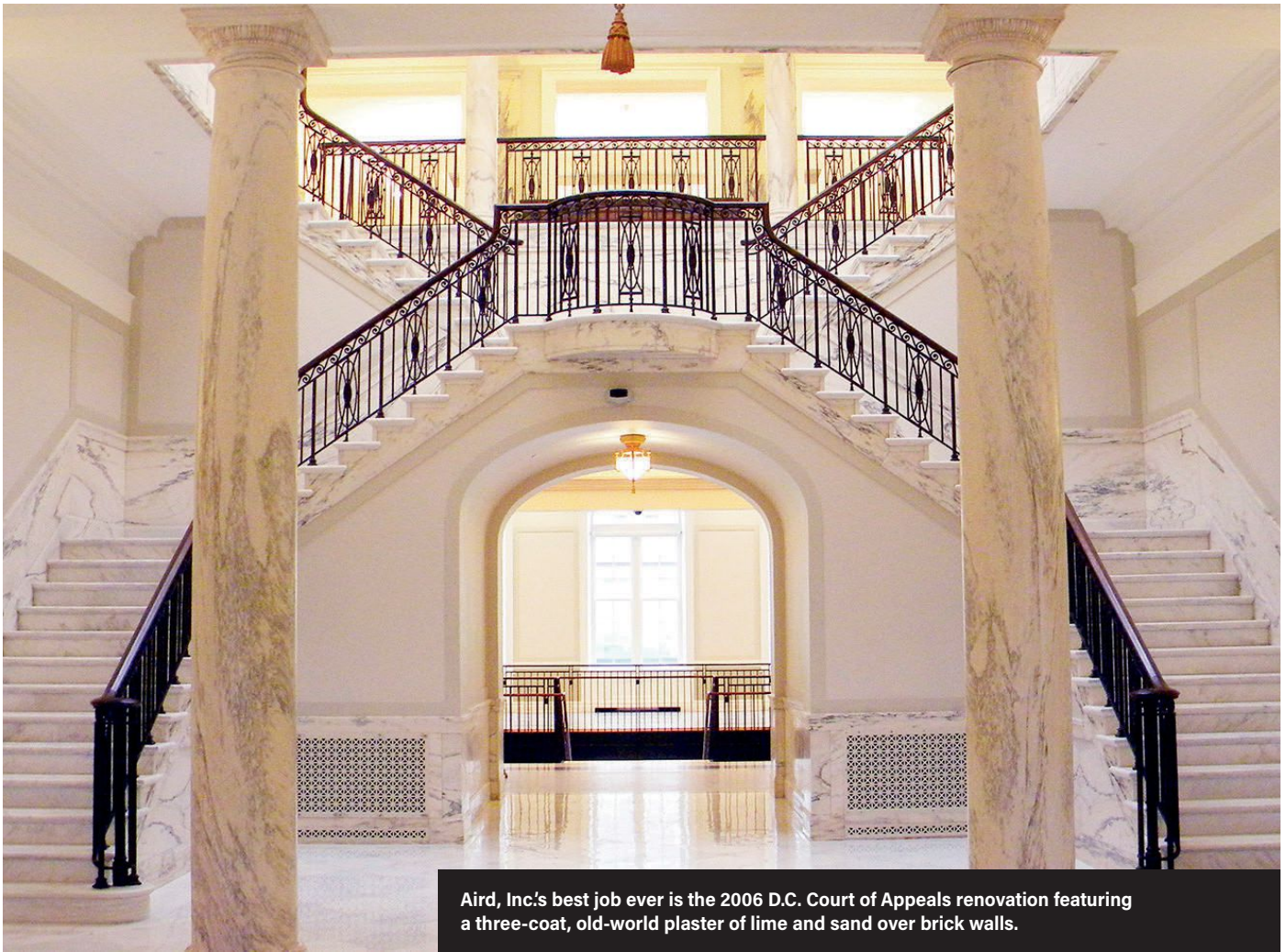
Rob Aird, president of Robert A. Aird,



The ceiling installations at Nurix Therapeutics is Marek's best job ever. Preserving the artistry evident in the architect's design proved enormously gratifying.

VER: **AWCI Contractors Reveal Their Best Work**





Aird, Inc.'s best job ever is the 2006 D.C. Court of Appeals renovation featuring a three-coat, old-world plaster of lime and sand over brick walls.

Inc., in Maryland, has a keen eye for both financial success and artistic excellence. He has overseen numerous projects throughout his career, but his most cherished to date is the 2006 plaster renovation of the D.C. Court of Appeals.

The D.C. Court of Appeals project is a standout for many reasons. The building is over 150 years old, and the project involved applying approximately \$1.5 million worth of old world gypsum plaster—“breathing new life into the structure,” Aird says.

“It was in a terrible state of deterioration,” says Aird. “What we did was pristine and artistic.”

The project team included design firm Beyer Blinder Belle Architects & Planners, which restored Grand Central Terminal and the Ellis Island Museum of Immigration. Hensel Phelps

Construction Co. was the general contractor. Aird had the contract for the exterior and interior walls and ceilings.

“Our goal with the plaster was to match the original,” said Aird in the December 2009 issue of AWCI’s Construction Dimensions. “In the early 1900s a black pitch-like material was applied to the brick, which allowed the plaster to adhere.”

The project was a master plasterer’s dream come true, the article says.

Among Aird’s other top projects was the Pentagon, which the firm helped restore after 9/11. There was also the restoration of the Franklin School in Washington, D.C., which originally opened in 1869, fell into disrepair and, between 2018 and 2020, was transformed into Planet Word, a language arts museum. Aird, Inc. was part of

the team, which included design firm Beyer Blinder Belle, general contractor Whiting-Turner and the museum’s founder Ann B. Friedman.

In the end, Aird considers his people the final judges of the firm’s best work. Treating his people well, and treating suppliers well, ensures reliable, high-quality work. The company’s values ultimately determine which projects become legacies, whether the revival of a historical gem like the D.C. Court of Appeals or working on iconic buildings like the Pentagon or Franklin School.

Ronsco: Mastering Proactive Project Management

The mark of an exceptional project is a blend of craftsmanship, collaboration and the ability to overcome challenges, says Lee Zaretsky, president of Ronsco,