

structurally
sound

BUILDING AMERICA



THE WINNING SCULPTURE in AISC's fifth annual Steel Sculpture Competition is a symbol for the domestic structural steel industry—and it's also pretty fun.

Submitted by Universal Steel, Inc. (an AISC member and certified fabricator) in Lithonia, Ga., the sculpture, *Building America*, depicts the steel construction process, complete with a multistory structural steel frame, a fabrication shop, a crane, beams being hoisted, a staircase, an American flag and multiple construction workers—in the shop, on the ground and on the iron. (One of the figures, sporting a rather prominent moustache, was based on one of Universal's longtime ironworkers.)

"We were trying to show a small portion of what takes place daily across America on job sites and in fab shops like ours," says sculptor Johnny Dillard, Universal's shop manager. "It all begins with people working together, many different trades joining to build the beautiful buildings across this country that we get to enjoy every day."

Dillard notes that it took him and another employee approximately 25 hours to design and build the sculpture. The materials came from scrap from recently completed jobs.

"We wanted to keep adding to it," he says, "but we decided to stay focused on simply showcasing what we do at Universal: fabricating stairs, railings, structural steel and much more."

Building America was one of five finalists in this year's competition. All were on display at the recent NASCC: The Steel Conference in Orlando, where attendees voted for their favorite. The only rules for the competition each year are that entrants must be AISC full or associate members, and entries must fit into a 2-ft by 2-ft by 2-ft box and be made entirely of steel. Nine sculptures were entered into the competition this year, and you can view all of them at www.steelday.org/sculpturecompvoting. ■