

## Sustainable commitment and innovation at the 2023 Macael Awards Gala

- *The Andalusian Marble Industry Association (AEMA by its initial in Spanish) celebrated the thirty-sixth edition of the awards this Friday, November 10, with the attendance of the President of the Andalusian Parliament, Jesús Aguirre, and the Counselor for Sustainability, Environment, and Blue Economy, Ramón Fernández-Pacheco.*
- *Among the 530 guests were also 45 future architects from the universities of Seville, Malaga, and Granada, who participated in the 'Promotion Program for the Stone Industry and Innovative Surfaces'.*

**Macael, November 10, 2023** - The event has become a global benchmark for honoring professionals in the fields of architecture, design, interior design, and construction. Their work has demonstrated excellence in the use of natural stone and innovative surfaces by transforming the architectural and design landscape globally. The Macael Awards Gala, which celebrated its thirty-sixth edition on Friday, November 10, also reaffirmed the fundamental role of sustainability and innovation as cornerstones in the industry.

The event, attended by more than 530 guests, was graced by the presence of the President of the Andalusian Parliament, Jesús Aguirre Muñoz, and the Counselor for Sustainability, Environment, and Blue Economy, Ramón Fernández-Pacheco, gathering prominent professionals from the business world, public administration, architects, designers, and sector representatives. Among them were 45 architecture students from the universities of Seville, Malaga, and Granada, who participated in the 'Promotion Program for the Stone Industry and Innovative Surfaces,' which is an initiative now in its second edition, aiming to educate future architects on the importance of using these materials in architecture. They were joined by attendees from different countries such as the United States, Colombia, France, Germany, Belgium, the United Kingdom, and the United Arab Emirates, who are influential figures who were part of the 12th International Stone Meeting organized by TRADE.

The gala was the setting for significant statements by AEMA's president, Jesús Posadas, who highlighted the advances and achievements made in recent years, expressing gratitude for the support from administrations but also noting the pending actions. He emphasized the importance of continuing the construction of the highway from Fines to Baza, as well as the completion of the Mediterranean Corridor by 2026. He highlighted a significant milestone: the recent establishment of the Collaborating Technical Office (OTC), thanks to the agreement between the Association, the Macael City Council, and the Counseling of Industry, Energy, and

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Mines, whose prompt implementation is considered essential to address challenges in the Macael.

Posadas referred to the proposal for the Financial Guarantees Order, in collaboration with the Counseling, which is expected to be approved with the allegations presented by the Andalusian Marble Industry Association. He also mentioned the approval of the 'Industry Growth Plan for Natural Stone,' urging its swift implementation to support the sector's needs. The president, who renewed his mandate in September, announced the challenges for the next four years, including the reconstruction of the courtyard of the Castle of the Vélez using materials from the Macael Marble Brand and the reactivation of the Andalusian Stone Technological Center for research, innovation, and dual vocational training. Regarding commercialization, he stressed the need for the new Entrepreneurial Agency for Transformation and Economic Development (TRADE) to support the companies' internationalization.

As a culmination, he addressed the attendees with a final reflection. "I want to ask all our political representatives present here, regardless of their political stance and field of action, to be aware of our business support and commitment to equality among all Spaniards and their companies, and our firmness in defending that equality wherever necessary," he said. "We would not like a discriminated Andalusia or relegated to having to pay the concessions looming on the horizon; we do not want being entrepreneurs to be more burdensome in some territories of Spain than in others. We advocate for equality and equity that seeks to maintain the same rights and opportunities," he added.

The occasion also served to appreciate the invaluable help and collaboration of the sponsors. The president addressed them, saying, "it is imperative to recognize and express our gratitude to the sponsors of this event and the great value they hold in this act, not only for the collaboration that makes these events possible, but for the loyalty and continuous support edition after edition and in the daily work in our companies." This year's gala was sponsored by COSENTINO, TORRECID, ANDALUCÍA GLOBAL, DIPUTACIÓN ALMERIA, TENAX, BRETON, CAJAMAR, OMAR, COLOROBIA, BANCO SANTANDER, SACMI, SMALGLASS-ITACA, BBVA, UNICAJA, NICOLAI NEST, HSBC, CAIXABANK, GMM, ITALDIAMANT, BANCA MARCH, COMANDULLI, BANKINTER, VINCENT, ABANCA, SUIMASA, TBM FOCUS PIEDRA, PEDRINI, SABADELL, OLUCARPA, UAL, SECURITAS, FUNDACION BAHÍA ALMERIPORT, JAMONES TIO EMILIO.

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