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Next Generation Luminares™ www.ngldc.org
Contact: Dan Sperling, 703-356-4595, dan@akoyaonline.com

Next Generation Luminares™ Design Competition Recognizes 57 Commercial LED Indoor Lighting Products

LOS ANGELES – The sixth annual Next Generation Luminares™ (NGL) Solid-State Lighting Design Competition has recognized 57 commercial LED indoor lighting products for excellence. The winners were announced today at the LED Show in Los Angeles.

Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America, and the International Association of Lighting Designers, NGL was launched in 2008 to promote excellence in the design of energy-efficient LED luminaires for general illumination in commercial lighting applications.

Reflecting the continuing improvements in LED technology, there was a marked increase in efficacy in the 2014 NGL competition, with more than half of the Recognized products achieving efficacies at least 20% above the DesignLights Consortium® minimum, and 10 products exceeding 100 lm/W. While there was a notable improvement in glare control as well as generally high ratings for color, illuminance, and light distribution, serviceability remained a serious concern for the judges. The largest number of entries came in the recessed troffer, pendant, and high-ceiling categories, and there was an increase in the number of decorative entries. Although most of the entries offered dimming as an option, constraints on time, facilities, and equipment limited the judges' evaluation of dimming performance.

The idea behind NGL is to make it easier for lighting designers and specifiers to find LED lighting products that are worthy of specification. This means recognized products have to measure up on many fronts. The 2014 NGL indoor entries were evaluated by a panel of 10 judges drawn from the architectural lighting community and were scored on color, illuminance, glare control, light distribution, serviceability, value, and appearance – with lumen maintenance and luminous efficacy ratings based on LM79, LM80, and TM21 data submitted to DOE's LED Lighting Facts® program by the manufacturers.

As LED technology and product design have improved over the past few years, NGL requirements have become increasingly demanding. "Any product that earns the recognition of the NGL judges has to be pretty special," said DOE Solid-State Lighting Program Manager Jim Brodrick. "They're a tough audience – impossible to fool and hard to please."

A total of 266 products were proposed for submission to the 2014 NGL indoor competition. Of these, 153 – an increase of more than 50% over 2013 – made it to the judging phase with market-ready samples and complete documentation (including luminaire and component specification sheets, LM-79 test reports, lumen maintenance projections, warranty statements, and marketing materials). These documents, most of them submitted through LED Lighting Facts, help make sure actual performance matches what's claimed. Using the facilities of Intelligent Lighting Creations in Arlington Heights, IL, all 153 products were judged over the course of three days in their characteristic installations, including varying mounting heights and ceiling conditions.

The judges identified 57 products as Recognized, meaning they were considered worthy of specification in the application for which they were designed. From the 57 recognized products, four were given the additional designation of Best in Class, meaning they stood out significantly above all the other indoor products entered in 2014. Four additional products – which were not yet on the market at the time of the judging and were not included among the Recognized products – were designated as Emerging, indicating that they were considered noteworthy for their possibilities. This year, special acknowledgement was given to 10 Recognized products that also demonstrated high efficacy, and to eight Recognized products that demonstrated superior serviceability.

The Best in Class winners came from four different manufacturers and covered four areas of lighting: Koncept was selected for its Mosso Pro LED desk lamp; Finelite, Inc., for its Series 11LED Micro Profile family of cove mounted luminaires; Cree, Inc., for its LS Series utility luminaire; and Acuity Brands® – Mark Architectural Lighting™, for its Slot 2 & 4 LED – Direct and Bi-Direct family of surface mounted and pendant linear luminaires.

In the Recognized category, Luminii, Intense Lighting (two fixtures), and Juno Lighting Group (five fixtures) earned praise for their accent luminaires, and seven companies received recognition for their downlights: GE Lighting, Meteor Lighting (two fixtures), Eaton's Cooper Lighting Business, Juno Lighting Group (three fixtures), USAI Lighting (two fixtures), Focal Point, and Intense Lighting.

Linear pendants were also popular, with designs by H.E. Williams Inc., Finelite Inc. (three fixtures), and Acuity Brands – Peerless® (two fixtures) all receiving recognition. Six companies were recognized for their industrial luminaires: GE Lighting, Juno Lighting Group, Advanced Energy Ideas, Horner Lighting, KMW Inc., and Eaton's Cooper Lighting Business. Juno Lighting Group, SAMJIN LND Co. Ltd. (two fixtures), Acuity Brands – Lithonia Lighting, and Focal Point earned praise for their grid ceiling luminaires (troffers).

Philips, Lumenpulse, and Tempo were recognized for their cove lighting, while Eureka Lighting (three fixtures) and Blackjack Lighting earned praise for their decorative pendants. Kenall Lighting received recognition for its ceiling-mounted utility luminaire; The Lighting Quotient, for its personal task luminaire; and Luminii, for its step lighting luminaire.

The Lighting Quotient, Juno Lighting Group, and archlit earned praise for their wall washing luminaires, with EcoSense® Lighting and LED Linear GmbH garnering recognition for their wall grazing luminaires. Visa Lighting was recognized for its family of healthcare luminaires, and Edge Lighting was recognized for its signage display luminaire.

The Next Generation Luminaires competition was created to recognize and promote excellence in the design of energy-efficient LED commercial lighting luminaires. By encouraging new designs and technologies, NGL aims to increase market acceptance and awareness of LEDs for general-illumination lighting.

For more information on this year's NGL indoor winners, including photos, please visit www.ngldc.org.

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