The International Masonry Institute (IMI) is making headway in the Louisville market with no signs of slowing down. On May 10, 2018, David Collins, IMI Director, was invited by the Louisville, KY chapter of the Construction Specifications Institute (CSI) Louisville to be the keynote speaker. Held at the Builder’s Exchange of Kentucky, Collins presented Workmanship to a room of architects, engineers, manufacturers, suppliers and other professionals within the construction industry. This was an opportunity IMI could not pass up as industry professionals from the Louisville market can learn about the importance of proper and effective masonry construction.

Collins began the program with an overview of who IMI and the services IMI offers. Collins mentioned IMI’s Training Center in Bowie, MD as well as IMTEF’s training programs covering the masonry crafts of brick, block, stone, restoration, tile, marble and terrazzo. This was a great opportunity to mention IMI’s new Louisville Training Center, located on 960 South 3rd Street, Louisville, KY. Dustin Reinstedler, Louisville Representative of the BAC (Bricklayers & Allied Craftworkers) Local 4 IN/KY, discussed the training center its benefits. The new 10,000 square feet training center has over 35 apprentices currently enrolled. “We train people from day one through a four-year apprenticeship until they become a journeyman or master bricklayer,” Renstedler said. The apprenticeship program is 100% funded by IMI to provide the program. Apprentices are provided with a set of tools and participate in a 6-week pre-apprenticeship class. Job
placement is offered to apprentices also. For example, if a contractor needs bricklayers for a project, the BAC can provide a contractor with trained workers.

With that being said, Collins progressed into the program, covering the designer’s tools for masonry quality assurance. This includes, but not limited to, conducting pre-installation meeting to establish masonry expectations, explore special inspections, build and inspect a sample panel and require trained masons for projects. The mason’s tools for quality control also includes, but not limited to, coordinating the designer’s drawings, writing RFI and document changes, using the installation checklist, taking photos of the installation process and know who to call for support.

Collins stressed designers should also have a clear understanding of how grouting, flashing and reinforced masonry should be installed. This is why IMI’s specification language for grouting and flashing is very important for projects. Masonry craftworkers who complete courses through IMI are trained, competent individuals who are crucial for a project’s success.

Other topics also covered, for those to be aware of on projects, include information on head joints, protecting material on-site, flashing protection, mortar joint tolerances, mortar dropping collection device, workmanship tolerances and radar imaging, and IMI’s Masonry Detailing Series.

The audience was very impressed Collins, giving him a standing ovation. Several professionals spoke with Collins and Reinstedler after the program to receive more information and assistance from IMI, plans for CSI Louisville to visit the new training center and hold programs at the training center also. Also, several Louisville suppliers, especially Kent Schmidt, from Seward Associates, plan to be a masonry supplier for the training center as well.