



**Press Release**  
**February 25<sup>th</sup> 2020**

## **CED Stone in North America wins Pinnacle Award**

***CED Stone Group is celebrating the news that its North American arm, CED North America Inc, is now the proud owner of a Natural Stone Institute – Pinnacle Award, won in the 'Public Landscapes/Parks/Memorials' category.***

The winning project, Drexel Square, is a \$3.5 billion public square development in West Philadelphia.

Hosted by the Natural Stone Institute, a trade association which represents every aspect of the natural stone industry in the United States of America, The Pinnacle Awards is open to all of its 2000 plus association members and the Landscape and Architectural design community, and is entered by stone professionals from around the world.

Established in 2017, CED Stone North America has been a member of the Natural Stone Institute since 2018, and in fact, Drexel Square was the company's very first project. Company CEO, Ruan Ellis is proud to have won the award.



He said: "What a superb achievement and major stepping stone, no pun intended, for our North American office. Working on this project has certainly taught us a great deal, and we are very proud of what we have achieved."

Conceived as an intimate space for the community to gather, Drexel Square opened to the public in June 2019. The park now serves as the gateway into University City, providing a clear transition from downtown Philadelphia's urban-grid to a lush, verdant enclave.

Taking the shape of an expansive ellipse, the 1.3-acre park completely transformed an underutilised parking lot outside Amtrak's 30th Street station. Its pathways are a projection of the earth's meridian lines, with sparkling white granite contrasting the lush green grass and 23 fully-grown Dawn Redwood trees flanking the natural stone planters along the perimeter.



A deliberate mix between plaza and park, Drexel Square is designed to be an engaging addition to the existing energy of the neighbourhood. This space is the first among a network of parks that will eventually comprise 6.5-acres of the 14-acre Schuylkill Yards neighbourhood. These green spaces will ultimately connect 6.9 million square feet of workplace and lifestyle environments as part of the developer's vision.

Ruan states: "The designers implemented a good balance between hard and soft surfaces making the plaza an inviting place to enjoy. We are excited to see how this urban jewel develops over the next coming years and are extremely happy that we played a small part in its development."

The awards ceremony took place in Las Vegas on the 28th of January, and Ruan was in attendance to accept the highly coveted award. The project received high praise from the judges, who described it as: "An urban gem - elevating the public realm experience. The stones' gentle curves and rounded



edges convey a softness that's inviting to touch. Convex granite latticework is a delight to look upon. Challenging compound curvature, executed without lippage, received high scores for stone cutting control. Overall, kudos for its contribution to the city."

Giles Heap, CED Stone Group's Managing Director, comments: "Combining the wonderfully people-centric and organic designs of West8 and ShoP Architects together with the professionalism and knowledge of our North America office, we have helped to create a stylish, yet friendly and relaxing public space right in the heart of one of America's most historic cities, Philadelphia. To be such a central part of the future history of that city was an honour, but to win such a prestigious award for our very first project in the USA is a testament to the amazing collaboration of all involved, and I thank the Natural Stone Institute for that recognition."

### **Ends**

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