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LONG BEACH

CANstruction gets crafty to end hunger

Engineers and architects answer Food Finders' donation challenge

By Christina Merino
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An assortment of canned beans and soups were stacked on the lobby floor of Long Beach's Cove Hotel, the building blocks of architects and engineers working to create sculptures to help feed the community.

The eighth annual CANstruction Long Beach event returned on Thursday with teams from local engineering and architect

firms designing and building structures made out of canned goods.

But the canned goods won't be decorative for long. The structures will remain on display until later this month, and then the cans will be donated to Food Finders, which will then distribute the cans to local agencies that help those who lack food in Long Beach, according to a press release.

The CANstruction donation will also help kick off Food

Finders' annual holiday food drive, which begins Oct. 1.

"Food Finders is excited to be the beneficiary of the eighth annual Long Beach CANstruction," Food Finders Executive Director Diana Lara said in a statement.

"Last year's event generated a 13,000-pound-plus donation of canned goods," she added, "and this unique event will continue to heighten awareness of food insecurity in our

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Critical-Structures Inc. of Long Beach was the first of three teams to complete an artistic structure made entirely of food cans. The team used cans of SpaghettiOs to mark NASA's Artemis mission of sending a woman astronaut to the moon.

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STAFF



Tuchscher Engineering Group designed the Vega Omega, aviator Amelia Earhart's plane, for the eighth annual CANstruction Long Beach event at the Cove Hotel on Thursday. The can structures will be on display at the Willow Street hotel through Sept. 25. The cans will then be donated by Food Finders to feed the hungry in Long Beach.

PHOTOS BY
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community and will play an important role in helping to feed those in need in our own backyard."

This year's theme was "Yes She CAN!" Architects and engineers demonstrated their talent and creativity by depicting women history-makers in any way they wanted.

"Our three talented teams have spent months designing their structures," said event organizer Terri Henry of Terri Henry Marketing LLC, "and are allowed only 12 hours to meticulously stack and color-coordinate their cans into ingenious feats of design."

The teams constructed their projects in a frenzy throughout the day. And slowly, the sculptures took shape, each one depicting the accomplishments of women from the past, present and future.

Critical-Structures Inc., a structural engineering and consulting firm in Long Beach, drew inspiration from NASA's Artemis mission to land the first woman astronaut on the moon by 2025.

The team even used "Star Wars"-themed Campbell's SpaghettiOs to further underscore their theme.

Critical-Structures was the first team to finish building their sculpture, using 3,876 cans.

PCL Construction Services — a general contractor that has completed projects throughout Southern California — re-created Hearst



The PCL Construction Services team re-creates Hearst Castle, honoring architect Julia Morgan, for the CANstruction Long Beach event. This year's theme is "Yes She CAN!" to honor history-making women.

Castle out of 2,740 cans. They chose the design to pay homage to the engineering and design of the castle by architect Julia Morgan.

Tuchscher Engineering Group, a boutique engineering firm in downtown Long Beach, built the Vega Omega — the plane flown by Amelia Earhart — with 4,750 cans.

Together, the three teams will donate about 11,000 cans of food to Food Finders — but that number could increase.

Visitors are encouraged to bring additional canned goods to the event. They can vote for their favorite structure by placing the cans in the Food Finders-supplied bins next to each structure, Henry said.

The one with the most votes will receive the "People's Choice" award. Additional awards include "Structural Ingenuity," "Best Use of Labels" and "Juror's Favorite," which will be chosen by a panel of local judges at the end of the exhibition.

The sculptures will be on display until Sept. 25 at The Cove Hotel, 200 E. Willow St. Visitors can arrive during the hotel's regular business hours.