

# 2013 NARI LEVEL BEST AWARDS

By Amelia Compton Wolff

*This year's Level Best Awards, a celebration of area contractors and their remodeling projects, included an array of award-worthy submissions from members of the Fox Valley chapter of the National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI). From a Japanese-inspired bathroom renovation to a wheelchair-friendly home kitchen makeover, our panel of expert judges selected the 2013 standouts.*

*A special thank you to our judges, who lent their expertise and time to the contest: Bob McKenny, interior design instructor at Fox Valley Technical College; Marge Stammer, broker associate at Coldwell Banker; Trevor Frank, senior architect at Short Elliott Hendrickson, Inc. and Pamela Van Hout, interior designer at Short Elliott Hendrickson, Inc.*



## JUDGES' CHOICE

### Winner: Timber Innovations

The owner of this home kitchen was injured in an accident which left him confined to a wheelchair and unable to work. He took over many household duties including the preparation of family meals, but his existing kitchen presented many challenges. An obtrusive island cabinet extended too far into the floor plan to clear with a wheelchair, a narrow sink alcove made its access cumbersome and a dated storage system limited access to items at the rear of cabinets.

The homeowners desired a kitchen that would be easily navigable for a wheelchair, while still being functional for the whole family. Timber Innovations of Kimberly was able to create practical solutions that freed their client of obstacles and secured them the Judges' Choice designation.

"Not that this is the most expensive project or most grandiose, but it's a really good example of how a contractor listened and put together something really valuable for the client," judge Trevor Frank says.

Timber Innovations moved the sink to a longer, adjacent wall which allowed for more uninterrupted counter space and created a more open floor plan. Rollout shelving was incorporated in the pantry and upper cabinets were kept low for reachability. Judge Pam Van Hout especially appreciated the drop down drawer front which hides a knife drawer and butcher block designed to roll out over a wheelchair.

The judges agreed that the biggest success of this project can be found in what is unseen: its accessibility for all members of the family.

"It's the best overall because it showed outstanding universal design as well as good, practical design work for all users," judge Bob McKenny says.