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## \$530,000 restoration of Worcester Academy's Warner Theatre facade Metropolitan R & W wins 1998 ICRI award for historic restoration project

**B**OSTON – Metropolitan Restoration & Waterproofing Corp. of Boston, the winner of the 1998 Concrete Repair Award for the New England Chapter of the International Concrete Repair Institute (ICRI) for its major historic restoration of Worcester Academy's Lewis J. Warner Theatre, has entered the project in the 1998 National ICRI Award competition as well as the 1998 Massachusetts Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) Excellence In Construction Award.

The \$530,000 project, completed in January of this year, entailed the complete restoration of Warner Theatre's grand facade. Built in the tradition of other early 20th century grand movie palaces, Warner Theatre was originally presented to Worcester Academy as a gift from Harry Warner, then president of the Warner Brothers Studio in memory of his son Lewis (Worcester Academy, Class of 1928). The building is replete with an elegant portico, including four 22 ft. high Corinthian columns. Application has been made for placing the building on the National Historic Register.

Metropolitan met numerous challenges during the course of the project, including the reproduction and replacement of intricately designed architectural elements to the structure – precast concrete cornices, modillions, and parapet caps, as well as various railings and step sections which



had been badly eroded. Metropolitan called upon a local sculpture/artisan to craft positive reproductions of some of the deteriorated architectural pieces and in turn created molds in-house in which to cast the new elements.

In addition, the firm replaced a new cast stone balustrade

around the tower. Since many of the reproductions were too large to be cast and transported to the jobsite, Boston-based Metropolitan created lightweight molds in-house which were then installed on the building itself and cast in place. This time-saving method has given a more uniform appearance to the exterior

structure of Warner Theatre. Metropolitan handled the project so as to meet the academic calendar requirements, with no disruption to scheduled classes, assemblies, and sports camps at the college preparatory school.

Metropolitan's project requirements also included repointing most of the existing cast stone and portions of the brick facade, the replacement of the brick paving on the terrace, as well as stripping and recoating cast stone stairs and the concrete paving at the terrace. In addition, a completely new roofing system was installed – a combination of old world slate and copper on the hip portion of the roof and EPDM membrane system on the top flat and bottom gutter sections.

Throughout the project, Metropolitan met the rigid requirements of the Cast Stone Institute specifications. The firm's field staff of 20 masons, carpenters, roofers and other skilled artisans handled the construction project. Metropolitan worked with the project's architectural firm, Roger Taylor Panek, Boston.

Metropolitan Restoration & Waterproofing Corp. is a full service restoration, waterproofing and roofing company that was founded in 1986 by Dennis Kulesza. Experienced in restoring historically significant buildings, the firm has a track record of successful historic restorations at other educational facilities, including Harvard University and Brown University.