MULTIPLE ASSOCIATIONS DEDICATED TO FLOORING COME TOGETHER TO EFFECT POSITIVE CHANGE IN THE OVERALL INDUSTRY

Floor Covering Leadership Council Meets; Together Identify Most Critical Issues Facing Industry

Anaheim, CA – August 12, 2014 – July 29, 2014 marked the official formation and inaugural meeting of the new Floor Covering Leadership Council, an organization currently comprised of fifteen associations - all dedicated to flooring. The goal of FCLC is to address and improve some of the most pressing issues and problems faced by members of the flooring industry.

Organizations that have expressed a Council membership commitment include WFCA, National Wood Flooring Association (NWFA), National Institute of Certified Floorcovering Inspectors (NICFI), Marble Institute of America (MIA), Ceramic Tile Distributor Association (CTDA), Carpet Cushion Council (CCC), Resilient Floor Covering Institute (RFCI), Carpet & Rug Institute (CRI), National Tile Contractors Association (NTCA), Flooring Covering Installation Contractors Association (FCICA), Certified Flooring Installer (CFI), Floor Installation Association of North America (FIANA), National Association of Floor Covering Distributors (NAFCD), North American Laminate Floor Association (NALFA) and American Flooring Association (AFA.)

FCLC represents an evolution of the Floor Covering Industry Issues Council (FCIIC.) The remaining active members of FCIIC, including WFCA, voted to overhaul the organization. They adopted a new name, revised their mission statement, and plan to revitalize membership and bring about a positive impact in the industry. The exploratory meeting to determine interest in and need for what would become FCLC took place on April 16, 2014, in Nashville, TN during the National Wood Flooring Association convention.

The new purpose statement for FCLC reads:

The Floor Covering Leadership Council exists to identify issues and develop solutions that lead to the success of the floor covering industry and its professionals.

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The official first meeting took place in Orlando, FL on July 29. Seven associations were represented at this meeting and worked to identify the overall mission of FCLC as well as an ongoing agenda for the group. Members agreed the most effective way to bring about industry change was through group-focused action and cooperation. They identified the three most pressing issues affecting the flooring industry: access to training, the looming shortage of flooring installers, and the need for improved coordination between the several trade organizations that exist within the industry.

The topic deemed most important was access to efficient, effective and affordable professional training and instruction for industry members in all capacities. The FCLC organizers noted that manufacturers, associations, and colleges and schools across the country offer a vast number of training and education programs. They decided that the industry could derive great benefit from a centrally organized online portal, bringing all of those programs together and providing users with information about and links to courses in their areas of interest and their geographic locations. Ideally the information bank will also facilitate streamlining of training so organizations can avoid the costs of developing instructional programs for their employees that already exist and can be made available by today’s technology.

The second concern was in the area of flooring installation and its future. Currently the installation side of the business is facing a tremendous shortage of trained professionals across the country. This shortage has its origin in the recent economic recession, but the upturn in the US economy has had little effect on the number of people turning or returning to careers in installation. Members of FCLC voted to begin work on a campaign designed to showcase and promote the many benefits of being an installer.

The last initiative identified by the group was establishing effective and ongoing communication and cooperation between associations in the industry. The flooring sector represents a sizeable portion of the US economy as well as countless jobs. Members of associations dedicated to this industry recognize that they represent more power and influence together that each on its own. Through a concerted focus and effort the group hopes to bring the flooring community closer together, streamlining communications in order to keep everyone fully informed and capable of acting in concert to further the interests of the industry.

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At the same meeting the council also identified leaders to head up each of the three issues identified. Jim Hieb, CEO, MIA, will direct the training program. Robert Varden, Chairman, CFI, will oversee the installation and next generation initiative. And Kim Oderkirk, Executive Vice President, FCICA, will head up the communication and cooperation issue.

In addition, the group also elected Scott Humphrey, Chief Executive Officer, WFCA, to Chair FCLC and Michael Martin, President & CEO, NWFA, as the Vice Chair. Kay Wiley, Executive Administrative Assistant to Humphrey will serve as Secretary. All will serve two-year terms.

“I am thrilled to be at the helm of such a powerful and motivated organization,” said Humphrey. “By bringing these associations and their member constituencies together I have no doubt we will be able to make a positive impact in the industry from which everyone can benefit.”

“We're at a unique time in the flooring industry where a changing of the guard is taking place in many associations at the same time,” said Martin. “This group provides a forum for us to not only learn from each other, but to also develop new products and services that will have tremendous benefits to the entire industry. The spirit of collaboration is growing as we learn to see each other’s perspectives and define our goals together.”

Going forward the group plans to meet two times per year. The next meeting will take place in Miami, FL in conjunction with the International Surfaces Event on October 19, 2014. Associations focused solely on flooring are welcome to join FCLC. For more information on the Floor Covering Leadership Council or to become a member please contact Scott Humphrey by calling 800-624-6880 or via email at shumphrey@wfca.org.

ABOUT WFCA:

The World Floor Covering Association (WFCA), the official sponsor of the annual Surfaces tradeshow, is the floor covering industry's largest advocacy organization, representing floor covering retailers, contractors and allied service providers throughout North America.

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The WFCA is a recognized leader in marketing research and industry programs for flooring professionals. In addition, it publishes the only retailer-oriented trade periodical, *Premier Flooring Retailer*. On the consumer end, in addition to an ongoing consumer-focused flooring awareness public relations program, it operates the highly successful and award-winning premier consumer flooring website, WFCA.org, which provides unbiased information about every type of floor covering and connects customers to members’ retail stores. The WFCA also influences public policy affecting the floor covering industry and consumers. For more information about the WFCA, visit WFCA.org. and WFCA-PRO.org.

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