



PRESS RELEASE

March 12, 2013

The International Certified Flooring Installers Association

2400 East Truman Road
Kansas City, Missouri 64127-2038
Telephone: 816.231.4646
Website: www.CFIinstallers.com
Email: CFIguy@earthlink.net

Contact: Jane Walker (816) 231.4646 or walkerjw@earthlink.net

(Kansas City, MO) **CFI Installation Training in Dalton a Huge Success!**

In Dalton, GA during the week of March 4th, over 100 flooring installers, dealers, claims analysts and industry associates participated in the CFI historic training event at the Ryman Hall. It was a continuous four days of installation training in carpet, ceramic, resilient, laminate and wood. The CFI Inspection of Installation Workshop was also conducted. Three traveled from British Columbia, Canada and others came from Washington, Colorado, Pennsylvania, Indiana, South Carolina, Tennessee and Georgia.

CFI, The International Certified Flooring Installers Association, is a non-profit trade association established to identify, train and certify flooring installers to achieve the ultimate goal; customer satisfaction. Conducting hands-on training for installers and with the participation of industry associates; the goal of the organization moves closer to reality. CFI is very appreciative of the industry support and the enthusiasm by which installation training is received.

The contributions from the manufacturers and the support of Randy Beckler of Beckler's Carpets and Scotty Faulknor in setting up the event are greatly appreciated. Barrett Hagood, Cindy Hagood, Alex Yarbrough, Andrew Smith, Dylan Gentry and Bruce Gentry came from Mohawk. Woody Bellflower, Len Daubler, James Mullins, Paul Carrell, Lemarta Faulknor, Pablo Barbosa, Todd Woodall, Chris Dalenberg, Tommy Gentry and Tonder Gentry represented Shaw. Supporters included Sharon Satterfield from N Tech Industries, Brian Medlin from Universal Technologies; Jim Burnett from J&J; Levi Nix of Godfrey Hirst; John McGrath from INSTALL; Mike Bailey of QEP; Renee Henderson from Southwind; Brittany Verloof of The Home Depot; Samson Nolder and Gabe Carrell from Signature; Debra Ramsay and Sam Hair from J&J; Steve Cox from Affordable Decors; Dave Foster of TALK FLOOR; Kenneth Miles of Clayton Miller Hospitality, Keith Brand from Atlanta Flooring Design Centers; Scott Faulknor and Justin Faulknor

from Southern Home Furnishings; Chris Sessum from ECS Floor Covering; Michael Lassetter of TRAXX, and J. D. Robinson, Thomas Brewer, Val Clark, Richie Dean, Sonny Fralix, David Green, Steven Heathcox, Keith Hendrix, Kris Higgins, Derek Holloman, Brannon Wilson and Roy Young of the Romanoff Flooring Company. Many installers attended more than one session. The delicious meals were catered by Darlene Miles of Kenny's Restaurant in Dalton.

Jerry Miller, a member of the CFI Team expressed appreciation for the manufacturers who donated product that was specific to this event were AAT, Armstrong, Clayton Miller Hospitality, Congoleum, Healthier Choice, IVC, Kool Glide, Mapei, Mohawk, Personna, Shaw and the Traxx Corporation.

Bryne Olson, Darren Olson and Michael Dyck from British Columbia representing Olson Floors committed to the organization of a CFI Chapter. This is the second CFI Chapter organized in the last few months, including the one in Santiago, Chile.

The four-day installation event in Dalton, Georgia began with the Laminate and Wood Installation Workshop taught by Bob Gillespie (MO), Tim Provence (Armstrong) and Danny Sherman (GA). The class consisted of installers and industry personnel who willingly became involved in the hands-on portion to learn more about installation. Working in groups of two in the modules, the teams tested and prepared the substrate and installed the laminate flooring followed by the installation of various types of wood flooring installed according to the manufacturer's guidelines. Points are deducted when the provided instructions are not followed. Grading is done using the point system so the installers can quickly identify areas where more work is required to pass the certification. This point system used in all training programs also allows the corporate office to provide the installer required on installation projects.

"Working closely with the National Wood Flooring Association and the Northern American Laminate Flooring Association, CFI brings the requirements of an installation to the attendees," said Bob Gillespie of Missouri and an NWFA trainer. "We want nothing short of the best training for everyone and working together promotes this. Rules are rules when it comes to installation and they must be followed. Taking shortcuts does not achieve what CFI stresses; customer satisfaction. It always amazes us that many of the critical steps in doing this have not been shared with the installers. They leave the CFI course with the desire to be the best and to do the work correctly. What makes this program great for the installers who successfully achieve the CFI Certification is the opportunity to also become NWFA, NALFA and Armstrong certified."

Danny Sherman owner of Megs Interiors of Atlanta, "Those of us who own a business understand that training is essential to our success. The lack of training can create enormous financial difficulties and we have found through working with CFI, problems are avoided. As a member of the CFI Certification Team, I can assure that when installers attend these classes, they leave with a different outlook on the manner in which the installation is performed. They not only receive the most comprehensive training available, but a desire to be the best in their field. For the owners, this computes to a business environment comparable to none. I invite anyone who thinks that training is not the key to success to attend just one CFI workshop."

In the tile workshop, Roy Lewis, owner of Eagle Interiors in Alabama and lead instructor said, “The tile workshop also conducts an installation from start to finish on the floor and on the wall. Working in a module that is designed to accomplish this, the installers and flooring associates have the opportunity to learn new ideas that make their work easier. Eyes are opened when we share something that not only increases their value, but eliminates hours of work that can be directed elsewhere. “I could not tell you how many hours so many of us have contributed to this program to make it the best in the nation for installers to become proficient in their trade. The requirement is two years of active installation experience to achieve certification. However, even when certification is not received, the installers cannot thank us enough for what they learned and assure us they will return for their certification at a later date.”

Tony Buckhardt of Carpet Cushions and Supplies, a distributor from Indiana who conducts numerous events in his area stated, “We cover every aspect of a tile installation which includes proper preparation of the floor, the substrate, concrete profiles, layout, movement, thin-set application, sequence, trammel points, layout, balancing, keying-in, proper coverage, use of the trowels, grouting procedures and much more. The course is well organized and provides continuous hands-on involvement for the installer. To my knowledge, there is no other tile training that delivers this much information in a hands-on setting. We had installers in our class that could not obtain certification because of the time requirement, but they wanted the hands-on training to improve their skills and will return later for certification. CFI training offers an opportunity for extensive hands-on training in the 2-day course. One of the manufacturers expressed that he could not believe the amount of education that the installers were receiving. He also added that this was the best tile course he had attended. Our instructors work hard to deliver the latest information in the time frame available.”

“The carpet installation workshop involved the opportunity to achieve four levels of certification, the Residential I-II and the Commercial I-II,” said Robert Varden, lead instructor. “Each level is clearly identified to assure the customer they are using the services of someone who is qualified to install their choice of merchandise. The installers are required to construct seams using various tools and methods according to the CFI Proven Methods of Installation, demonstrate the correct methods of powerstretching and trimming; upholster a stair without the use of staples, apply adhesive using the manufacturer’s recommendations; understand the terms associated with installation and the various carpet backings. It is extremely difficult for the CFI Team to keep this information current with the many changes that occur with products, but working with the manufacturers we can achieve this.

“We stress the importance of keeping updated and contacting a member of their Certification Team or the CFI National Office for assistance when they are uncertain as to how to proceed on a job,” said Tom Cartmell of Blakely’s in Indianapolis. “We know that the few minutes we talk to a trained installer helps to avoid a job disaster. Installation training and certification are a must for the customers to receive what is expected of a professional flooring installation. Events scheduled nationwide throughout the year achieve this result. We always encourage dealers to get involved and bring the programs to their areas. Training pays huge dividends.”

The CFI Resilient Installation Training Workshop was presented by Tim Provence of Armstrong, Joe Cea of Congoleum and Tony Buckhardt of CCS of Indiana. “We share the installation requirements of the

various resilient programs from the beginning of the job all the way through completion,” said Tim Provence. “We always work with the manufacturers to showcase their unique product installation requirements so the installers understand what is expected. Our installation training manuals were created by representatives of seven manufacturers to ensure that the knowledge is shared. In the two-day program, the installers work with many different products, including felt-backed, glass-backed, LVT, planks and more. We include repairs, as well as the installation techniques.”

Joe Cea of Congoleum, “In today’s world, training is a must. Manufacturers do not put hours into creating a beautiful flooring product to have the customers disappointed because it was installed incorrectly. The CFI Programs help us to provide customer satisfaction and increase sales. I can assure you that the information received at a CFI event is the latest and most comprehensive. We enjoy working with installers who have the desire to increase the knowledge and skills. We know they will not create a problem because they understand the importance of seeking assistance before the job commences. At CFI we say, “If the job doesn’t start right, it will not finish right.” That is what we always stress at the training events.”

“We will be introducing the CFI Commercial Resilient Training in a few months,” said Tony Buckhardt. “It will include seam welding, flash-coving and all aspects of a commercial installation. It takes a combined effort of the manufacturers working with the CFI Team to ensure that all aspects of this type of installation are included for the installation network. Knowledge is power and it does ensure the dealer that their customers will enjoy their installation when performed by an installer whose desire is to achieve this goal. Speaking from my many years of involvement, I can assure you that CFI installers have that desire.”

Jim Walker, who conducted the CFI Carpet Inspection Workshop said, “I really enjoy the opportunity to share installation with those who represent the carpet manufacturers. We exchange ideas that make the job easier and help them to “speak” the installation language when conversing with installers. They know if the installers are trained, just by the manner in which they address a situation over the telephone. It was great to meet so many new people involved in claims as well as work with those who have attended this course numerous times. As Tommy Gentry from Shaw stated, ‘We always learn something new that makes our job easier.’ In the sessions, we share installation techniques, correct procedures for seam construction, powerstretching, wall trimming and more. We also discuss problem solving techniques. I sincerely believe that working together we can avoid many of the very difficult situations that create customer dissatisfaction.”

The purpose of the International Certified Flooring Installers Association, CFI, is to train, identify and certify flooring installers according to skill and knowledge. By conducting installation workshops where installers can attend to display their skills and knowledge, CFI is contributing to the growth of professional flooring installation. The instructors work diligently to share the latest information and to demonstrate techniques that will enhance the value of those attending the course. CFI’s goal is that all flooring installers understand that it is not the number of years one has worked in the field, but the manner in which the installers continually participate in updating the skills and maintaining a level of knowledge by which the customer receives the finest of installations.

“We have found that by taking the programs to the installers, participation increases. We can share our enthusiasm for the trade in the local area to generate excitement and respect for the work that is performed,” stated Robert Varden, CFI Executive Director. “We thoroughly understand that installers are working daily who do not possess the skill set that is required to satisfy the customer. Sometimes this is contributed to the “who cares?” attitude, but often it is the lack of knowledge because training is not available in their areas. Dealers who drive the desire for improvement instead of the attitude of “how cheap and how fast can the work be done,” find that the industry grows because customers are satisfied and not disappointed with their purchases. CFI is all about making that difference.”

“This series of workshops in Dalton gave CFI the opportunity to showcase not only the skills of the instructors and their talents for sharing with installers and associates, but to enhance knowledge and skills that are required to increase the value of flooring installation,” said Jim Walker, CEO. “We know CFI has what it takes to make a difference and the more often we can bring this information to areas worldwide, the more customers we satisfy. The group is constantly updating the program working through the manufacturers to include the changes in products. Numerous manufacturer representatives are members of the CFI Certification Team who contribute to program updates. As the years have passed, it has become quite evident, that the CFI instructors and the training materials are number one in the industry. We have no police force to make certain that the certified installers are performing to the level they achieved, but we do have one thing that makes this work and that is the desire to be the best. Our phones ring constantly for requests from our members BEFORE the work is done to ensure that everything goes as planned. We are definitely proud of the installers who made the decision to get involved and share this with their friends as CFI continues to expand after twenty years.”

Tim Provence, Technical and Installation Services of Armstrong, added, “The unique experience of showcasing the CFI programs in Dalton was also the opportunity to work with the claims analysts and those who are responsible for avoiding and solving difficult situations. Their desire to represent their companies at the highest level of installation knowledge is to be commended. Because the manufacturers offer many products other than carpet today, those who attended found solutions to areas of concern in all of the flooring surfaces. As Chairman of the CFI Certification Committee, I am fully aware that working together achieves the results that we all seek for customer satisfaction. Because of new products and installation designs, the old methods and outdated information just do not work. Our members donate an enormous amount of time to keep the CFI programs on the cutting edge and invite everyone to participate.”



Numerous photos available