

# NEWS BRIEFS

NEWSLETTER OF THE ARCHITECTURAL WOODWORK INSTITUTE

## What's Inside

- AWI News..... 2
- Green Scene..... 3
- Workforce ..... 4,5
- Business Tools ..... 6
- Learning Forum..... 7
- Industry Forum ..... 7
- Sponsor Spotlight ..... 8
- Sponsors..... 8

## AWI NewsBriefs

AWI's monthly newsletter is published as a service for members to help them improve operations and grow their businesses. *NewsBriefs* is also a resource for news and information about AWI's products, programs and publications and other membership benefits and services. •

## Coming Next Month

- Navigating the AWI Safety Portal
- AWI Education Foundation



Endorsed by AWI

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## The Year Ahead: Continuous Improvement

By Matt Lundahl, 2012 AWI President

I'm always amazed at the pace at which our AWI staff continues to keep our volunteers and entire association constantly improving. We are currently completing and making improvements on so many fronts!

The first project which is already complete is the NEW AWI Web site and database; check it out at [www.awinet.org](http://www.awinet.org). The database will make membership management significantly easier for the staff and considerably more cost efficient for our association.

What's new and coming to assist you and your business in the form of membership benefits in 2012 is exciting.



### AWI Cost Book

The final elements have been approved and a new online *Cost Book* is in the works. An overhaul and update of this backbone of our association have been long overdue. Look for a new and interactive *Cost Book* to be available by the middle of the year!

### Regional Education

Your Education Committee and seminar teams have launched a new approach to offering our education programs. Regional educational opportunities have been the longstanding desire of our membership. AWI is responding to members' needs by rolling out a program new in 2012 that enables AWI National to assist

(continued on page 2)

## Financial Management Made Easier! Get a Grip on Your Cost of Doing Business

**Discover the answers... right in front of you in your own financials.**

Gain better control of your business costs...and profit margins! Now, more than ever, during these challenging economic times, you need to understand how your costs can eat away at your profits. Discover the answers...right in front of you in your own financials.

AWI's new Financial Management Committee is pleased to announce that the annual AWI Cost of Doing Business Survey has been revamped into an all Web-based survey in 2012, Sebastien DesMarais, committee chair, reported.

### Benefits of the New CODBS

The new Web-based survey will make participation easier, faster, more useful, and more secure for all participants, with the following exciting new features:

(continued on page 6)



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**The Year Ahead: Continuous Improvement...** (continued from page 1)

chapters in bringing education to our members. We will expand upon our Web-based learning opportunities by launching regional programs. Each and every month, e-learning has grown, illustrating our members' desire for education. For example, the Shop Talk webinars and the Web-based seminar opportunities – including “Fundamentals of Estimating” and “QCP for Woodworkers – are accessible on the *AWI e-Learning: Always On* portal at [www.awinet.org](http://www.awinet.org), and “Project Management” is being developed as another Web-based offering.

**Online CODB Database**

The annual Cost of Doing Business Survey is also undergoing considerable improvement with a new online system for data entry and processing. This will ease the data entry process for you and also expedite the results. If you have not participated in this powerful financial management opportunity in the past, please revisit the survey now. Sharing and learning your competitive position in our industry is a benefit of the CODBS.

**Woodwork Standards**

The Joint Standards Committee (comprised of representatives from AWI, the Architectural Woodwork Manufacturers Association of Canada, and the Woodwork Institute) is continuing to meet and address changes to the *Architectural Woodwork Standards* (AWS). The committee's goal is to publish a second edition of the AWS by the end of the year.

“ There have been significant changes within the corporation, and some needed participant-friendly modifications have been made. ”

**Quality Certification Program**

The Quality Certification Corporation (QCC) has heard you. There have been significant changes within the corporation, and some needed participant-friendly modifications have been made to the policies for our Quality Certification Program (QCP) participants, mostly in the area of the testing and triennial inspections. AWI and the QCC intend for the QCP program to offer a positive competitive advantage for those of you who choose to have your projects certified.

**Continuous Improvement**

Along with that goal, AWI continues to strive to raise the bar for professional accountability in all that we do as architectural woodworkers.

AWI never sleeps – I am constantly surprised at the efforts and dedication of the staff and volunteers of our association. They have accomplished a lot; and in 2012 we will make significant improvements to what makes AWI so valuable to our membership and the industry. •

Mr. Lundahl has been a member of the AWI Board of Directors since 2009, has served on numerous AWI committees, and is a regular presenter of AWI's Fundamentals and Advanced Project Management courses. He also serves on the Brotherhood of Carpenters Apprenticeship Committee and the QCC board. Mr. Lundahl is Chief Operating Officer of Meyer and Lundahl, a 55,000 square foot architectural woodwork manufacturing facility in Phoenix, AZ. He grew up learning the trade of cabinet making from the master craftsmen in his family-owned business.

**AWI NEWS**

**New AWI Members**

**Manufacturing**

**AIC Millworks, LLC**  
Tampa, FL

**Arrowood Manufacturing, LLC**  
Norwood, NC

**Artisan Cabinetry and Woodworking, Inc.**  
Navarre, FL

**Baja Millworks, Inc.**  
Miami, FL

**Houston Cabinets**  
Houston, TX

**Riceland Cabinet Corporation**  
Wooster, OH

**Suppliers**

**Baillie Lumber Company**  
Cove City, NC

**Elkwood Construction Services**  
New Holland, PA

**Sun Dor**  
Warsaw, NY

Use the online Directory of AWI Manufacturing and Supplier Members at [www.awinet.org](http://www.awinet.org) for contact information and access to the Web sites of these and other AWI members. The resource is open 24/7 for use in seeking manufacturers and suppliers of architectural woodwork. •

## Supplier Member Alert: Substantiate Your “Green” Product Claims

By Rob Ziegelmeier, AWI Sustainability Resources Representative

**D**oes your company sell “green” products? In today’s building environment there are hundreds if not thousands of environmental claims on all sorts of products. Some of these claims are merely marketing hype and have little or no science to back them up. The term “greenwashing” has come into existence because of it.

### Environmental Product Declarations

EPDs or Environmental Product Declarations are voluntarily developed standardized documents that have been third party verified on a product’s environmental performance. EPDs include data on production impacts and product attributes such as climate change, energy consumption and emissions as well as many others. EPDs may soon be required in a new version of the LEED® green building rating system of the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC). If included, ALL building materials will need EPDs, not just wood-based materials.

### Three Requirements

To start developing EPDs, the third party will work with ISO protocols using Product Category Rules (PCRs). A PCR specifies allocation rules for products and co-products while defining materials, substances and impact categories that must be reported, the conclusion of which will be seen on a label known as an EPD Label.

EPDs must be based on a product’s Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) which USGBC designates as “acceptable tool measuring environmental impacts of a product or service.” LCAs measure energy use and efficiency as well as material contents and emissions.

Finally, EPD reports must be certified and signed by an outside expert.

By meeting these three requirements you have proven that the information is scientifically based and transparent with regards to the product’s environmental performance.

### Why Go through the Process?

This will allow companies offering building materials like yours to show the design and construction community that your product’s environmental attributes compete favorably over your competitors’ materials that may not have EPDs or any other material that may not have been evaluated scientifically. A brochure and vague marketing messages will no longer suffice. This will virtually eliminate the claims of “greenwashing”.

Having been used in Europe for decades, EPDs are here to stay. Companies wishing to continue to sell materials for their environmental attributes will be required to supply them sooner rather than later.

For more information regarding EPDs, see the Dovetail Partners report linked with the “Supplier Member Alert” article in the December 1, 2011 edition of *AWI e-briefs*. •



### GREEN SCENE

A brochure and vague marketing messages will no longer suffice. This will virtually eliminate the claims of “greenwashing”.

Rob Ziegelmeier’s multi-faceted AWI committee service began in 1986 and culminated in his election as AWI National President (1996-1997). He chaired the AWI LEED® Task Force from 2003 to 2007 and currently chairs the AWI Sustainability Resources Committee, serves on the AWI Education Committee, and is an AWI LEED Team Presenter and a member of the AWI Speakers Bureau. Mr. Ziegelmeier can be reached at rzig@awinet.org.

## Woodworking Industry Supports Manufacturing Students Three Ways

Three industry organizations are focused on growing the woodwork workforce of tomorrow. Their efforts support students on their career path from school to shop.

### SkillsUSA

SkillsUSA is a national nonprofit organization serving teachers and high school and college students who are

### WORKFORCE

preparing for careers in trade, technical and skilled service occupations.

More than 300,000 students and advisors join SkillsUSA annually, organized into more than 17,000 sections by trade, and 54 state and territorial associations. SkillsUSA's mission is to help its members become world-class workers, leaders and responsible American citizens.

SkillsUSA provides quality education experiences for students in leadership, teamwork, citizenship and character development. It builds and reinforces self-confidence, work attitudes and communications skills. It emphasizes total quality at work – high ethical standards, superior work skills, lifelong education, and pride in the dignity of work.

SkillsUSA students get the ready-to-work training missing from most school programs.

### WoodLINKS USA

WoodLINKS USA is the most complete educational support organization for the wood industry in the United States.

Each year over 10,000 students come to understand the personally and financially rewarding careers available

to them in the wood industry. WL USA and its group of volunteers, teachers, and students are re-igniting a passion for woodworking careers all across the country. With 64 sites in 16 states, WoodLINKS USA teachers reach thousands of students every day.

Teachers are encouraged to look carefully at the benefits WoodLINKS USA can bring to their programs, including a donation package worth over \$230,000 in software and supplies. Industry members are encouraged to become mentors, helping to advise and guide schools in their area.

Through association with the Woodwork Career Alliance of North America, WoodLINKS provides certified graduates ready to enter the workforce upon graduation.

### Woodwork Career Alliance

The three words say it all. The Woodwork Career Alliance brings together the best of SkillsUSA with the best of WoodLINKS USA. These are combined with the *Woodwork Manufacturing Skill Standards* to provide

a career path and rewards for woodworkers who demonstrate observable, measurable skills on the tools and machines of our industry.

The WCA Passport includes a voluntary assessment program that allows woodworkers to showcase their in-plant woodworking skills and document them in their personal WCA Passport. The Passport provides the woodworker with a portable permanent record of their achievements as a professional. WCA provides a menu of tools from which employers can select for their job or training needs.

Woodworkers receive Passport Tool Stamps through performance assessments that are clear and defensible. A candidate's skills and knowledge are evaluated by a WCA accredited Skill Evaluator who observes the candidate as they use a tool and then inspects the final product using WCA standards. •

### Three Way Support

When combined, all three organizations help young professionals develop the essential workplace skills for lifelong success.

- Leadership and communication skills from **SkillsUSA**.
- Industry awareness and knowledge from **WoodLINKS USA**.
- Certification and credentials from the **Woodwork Career Alliance**.



## Woodwork Career Alliance Enters 2012 on Heals of Productive Year

**An** all-volunteer board of 10 from across North America accomplished more in 2011 than most companies do in a decade, the Woodwork Career Alliance (WCA) of North America reported. It was a productive year and if the impressive accomplishments are any indication of what can be done to advance the workforce of tomorrow, we can look forward to another fruitful year in 2012.

WCA President Scott Nelson said, “For the first time, employers have a set of *Standards* on which to evaluate their workforce, and a way to *reward* the high performers. There is now a career path in woodworking.”

Here’s a short list of WCA’s accomplishments in 2011, an indication of what lies ahead in 2012:

- **Gained** support from 24 contributors – thanks to all!
- **Published** the *Woodwork Manufacturing Skill Standards, 1st Edition* – Standards for observable, measurable skills for over 50 of the most-used tools and machines in our industry, encompassing over 150 operations and outcomes.
- **Issued** the Worldwide Credentials, the first Passports, currently with 46 Passport holders in 17 States and Provinces. The Passport is a personal record of skills as a woodworker. Holders include evaluators, employers, woodworkers, and woodworking students.
- **Set** the criteria for the Five Credentials: Green, Blue, Red, Gold, and Diamond. By earning enough Tool Stamps in the Passport, and having enough time on the job, woodworkers can advance from Green to Diamond in about four years.
- **Created** combination paper and electronic assessment procedures for all the tools, machines, and operations in the *Woodwork Manufacturing Skill Standards*.
- **Established** Chief Evaluator and Skill Evaluator policies and guidelines.
- **Published** the *Handbook for Woodwork Career Alliance Skill Evaluators*.
- **Trained** and accredited 26 Skill Evaluators and Chief Evaluators across North America.
- **Issued** the first Tool Stamps in Passports at Madison Area Technical College, Madison, WI.
- **Evaluated** 68 SkillsUSA competitors at the National Skills and Leadership Conference in Kansas City, MO, for their skills in Layout and Measuring.
- **Demonstrated** Skill Evaluations on the floor of the AWFS show in Las Vegas.
- **Opened** the Woodwork Career Alliance Marketplace where woodworkers, employers, and educators enroll in the program and find everything WCA.
- **Developed** an industry partnership with Sustainable Forest Futures in New England to enhance employability and create jobs in the wood manufacturing industries in those states.
- **Targeted** Texas, North Carolina, Virginia, Kentucky, Iowa, Michigan, Indiana, Wisconsin, Arizona and California as among the first states to host regional WCA Accreditation Centers.



All of this is available to anyone who makes sawdust in North America at the Web site: [www.woodworkcareer.org](http://www.woodworkcareer.org) or by writing the WCA at Woodwork Career Alliance, P.O. Box 636, Nellysford, VA 22958-0636. •

## Financial Management... (continued from page 1)

### BUSINESS TOOLS

- **Creates** a fully secure, online database of your company's financials. If you have participated in the past three (3) years, this data will be automatically pre-populated for you into the database. In future years, the database will maintain all of your subsequent CODB survey data, giving you a powerful trend-analysis tool.
- **Replaces** the previous CD handout, allowing you to compare your results across different industry breakouts (for example, by revenue levels, profitability levels, region, etc.), as well as the ability to export and print these unique reports and trend data. Participating members will continue to receive the complimentary Cost of Doing Business Survey and Compensation Study results book.
- **Allows** multiple users to enter data, take notes for future reference, and save partially completed surveys for later completion.
- **Contains** built-in help features that will clarify most of your questions on how to enter and group your data, as well as built-in error checking to alert you of potential errors.
- **Includes** complimentary pre- and post-survey webinars to ease participation, data entry, and understanding and use of the results.

As in the past, data entered into the new online system will be kept private and will continue to be maintained independent of AWI, by the consulting firm Inverra. Neither AWI nor any other member will ever have access to your private financial data, only annualized averages of all participants.

**“ AWI is offering a “Lite” survey version for eligible new participants. ”**

#### CODBS “Lite”

In 2012, there is a financial management tool for everyone! To ease participation into the annual Cost of Doing Business Survey, AWI is offering a “Lite” survey version for eligible new participants. While all members can take the full version of the survey, eligibility for the “Lite” version will be limited to companies who either



**MAKE THE MOST Of Your AWI Membership!**

have never participated in the CODBS or have not participated in the past three years. “CODBS ‘Lite’ will be a much quicker survey to complete that will not require the detailed financial and HR breakouts that the full survey requires. It is estimated to take only 10-15 minutes to complete,” Mr. DesMarais said.

Once the 2012 CODB survey window closes, “Lite” version participants will be able to download and print the nationwide results directly from the new Web interface. The final results of the “Lite” version will be kept independent of the full version CODBS. “Lite” version participants will only receive the results of the “Lite” survey and will not receive the free full CODBS results book.

“The committee hopes that the quicker survey will allow more companies to participate and begin seeing the value in the CODBS, which hopefully will later increase participation in the full version of the survey,” Mr. DesMarais said.

#### CODBS Webinars

The committee is also adding more education value to the CODBS. Watch for announcements in *AWI e-briefs* and other association communications about online webinars that commence in February\*:

- February 1: “Who Cares about the CODBS?” **NEW**
- March 7: “How to Complete the CODB Survey” **NEW**
- April 4: “Un-encrypting the CODB Survey Results”
- Late April: “Secrets of the Upper Quartile” **NEW**

\* all webinar dates subject to change

The first two webinars will be especially helpful for all those considering participation in either the “Lite” or full version of the CODBS. Don’t miss them! The second two webinars will only be available to companies who participate in the full CODBS.

Make 2012 the year you get a better grip on your financials. •



In addition to chairing the new AWI Financial Management Committee, Sebastien DesMarais has participated in the AWI Marketing & Member Services Committee as well as the AWI Finance Committee. Mr. DesMarais is the CFO at Hollywood Woodwork, Inc. in Florida.

## New Education Outreach Program Launched

### LEARNING FORUM

The AWI Education Committee has announced a new direction for the association's education program that will support AWI chapters.

"Our members have been telling us via replies to recent surveys, attendance at recent national Professional Development Seminars and evaluations from the national programs that they want less costly, regional and local education and training opportunities," AWI Education Committee Chair Bruce Spitz reported.

In response to member demand, AWI is suspending multi-day national conferences. Instead, AWI will take education programs to the chapters at a smaller, more personal level. "We believe this new Education Outreach

**"In response to member demand, AWI is suspending multi-day national conferences. Instead, AWI will take education programs to the chapters at a smaller, more personal level."**

Program is the best response to recent member input and to our own observations regarding attendance trends at national education sessions," Mr. Spitz noted.

AWI surveys clearly state that our members want more education. The desire for education is there but at this time our members' commitment to more costly national programs is not. Therefore, AWI will initiate a regional and local approach to AWI education by offering AWI chapter level, on-demand classes.

Each AWI chapter will be given the opportunity to host a single program per year. They will be able to choose from all the programs that have been offered at the national Professional Development Seminars, like "Fundamentals of Estimating, Contracts, Advanced Project Management," etc. "This approach will help us also strengthen our chapters, which are vital to AWI as an organization," according to Mr. Spitz.

This outreach initiative offers a great opportunity for chapters to present additional substantive programs to existing and potential members as well as grow their membership. Interested chapters and members may contact AWI Education Associate Lucy Wesson at [lwesson@awinet.org](mailto:lwesson@awinet.org) for details.

"The Education Committee believes this program will meet our goals of increasing the number of members receiving education programs, while maintaining our high standards, and giving everyone the opportunity to attend these programs at a much more reasonable cost," Mr. Spitz said. •

## Executive Briefing Conference

**T**he 10th Anniversary Executive Briefing Conference hosted by Stiles Machinery will be held March 4-6, 2012 in

Charlotte, NC, adjacent to the Charlotte Motor Speedway. Given the location, the theme of the conference will focus on speed, specifically tactical ways to match the speed to market with the speed the market is changing. Visit [www.stilesmachinery.com/ebc](http://www.stilesmachinery.com/ebc) to register. AWI is an industry partner of Stiles Machinery for the 2012 EBC. •



### INDUSTRY FORUM

What Elliot Germany, Panel Specialists Inc., says about the EBC:

"The platform you've created allows woodworking industry executives the opportunity for collective, positive collaboration on important issues concerning us all; what must be done in order for our businesses not only to survive, but also thrive in a weakened global economy."

### SAVE THE DATE!

**2012 AWI Annual Convention**  
Biltmore Hotel  
Phoenix, Arizona

**October 31 - November 2**



## SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

### Solvent Borne Performance in a Green Product? We've Got It.

**S**olvent borne performance and environmental responsibility all in one package! Chemcraft, a brand of AkzoNobel, announces the launch of Airguard™ Solvent Borne Topcoat. Airguard Solvent Borne Topcoat is a pre-catalyzed topcoat that has been certified using the strict testing standards of the Greenguard® Environmental Institute and carries the Greenguard Indoor Air Quality Certification.

Indoor air pollution is one of the biggest risks to human health according to many public health agencies. So, how can a wood professional offer their customers a product that's healthier for indoor environments without sacrificing solvent-borne performance? The answer is Airguard Solvent Borne Topcoat.



#### Product Applications

Airguard Solvent Borne Topcoat is a ready-to-use, self-sealing, pre-catalyzed lacquer that's durable and light stable. This user-friendly product is recommended for office and household furniture, cabinetry, and many other wood interior applications. It has improved moisture resistance, household wear and chemical resistance. When applied, it wets the wood like oil based products and enhances the wood's natural color and beauty.

Earlier this year, the Chemcraft brand introduced, Airguard Waterborne Topcoat, a high-quality single

component, waterborne, polyurethane coating. All Airguard products proudly carry the Greenguard Indoor Air Quality Certification and meet or exceed other environmental standards.

#### Sustainable Products

These product offerings represent AkzoNobel's continued push to lead the way in top-quality sustainable products, and is reflective of the four cornerstones of the Chemcraft product commitment: innovation, quality, support and sustainability.

Chemcraft is a brand of AkzoNobel, the world's largest global paints and coatings company. AkzoNobel has a history of innovation that spans nearly three hundred years, and is also one of the world's top-rated corporations in its category for sustainability. The Dow Jones Sustainability World Indexes (DJSWI) recognized AkzoNobel as ranked second worldwide for sustainability in the Chemicals category.

For more information on the new Airguard Solvent Borne Pre-catalyzed Topcoat, a Greenguard Certified product, or any of the many other eco-premium Chemcraft products, contact your local Chemcraft brand distributor today or visit [www.Chemcraft.com](http://www.Chemcraft.com).

The GREENGUARD Indoor Air Quality Certified Mark is a registered certification mark used under license through GREENGUARD Environmental Institute. Chemcraft is a registered trademark of Akzo Nobel Coatings Inc.



### 2012 AWI Sponsors

AWI thanks these annual sponsors for their additional support in 2012. Visit [www.awinet.org](http://www.awinet.org) to contact them whenever a need arises for their services.

#### Sustaining Sponsor:



#### Major Sponsors:



#### Level 2 Sponsors:



#### Level 3 Sponsors:



#### Level 4 Sponsors:

