Looking back to January 2020 when business was buzzing and normal life was a luxury, it’s hard to believe that as of April 29, globally over 3.2 million cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed and nearly 219,000 have died due to the coronavirus. Confirmed cases in the US have skyrocketed to 1,015,289 and over 54,000 have died since the first case of COVID-19 was reported in the US on Jan. 22, 2020.

Despite uncertainty about exactly when the country will reopen, massive federal government funding of small businesses has allowed many to operate. From furloughing employees to subsidizing payrolls during these uncertain times, members of our AWI community have tapped into emergency funding, the Payroll Protection Plan, and more from the first $2 trillion stimulus package of funds signed into law on March 27.

AWI members will have an opportunity to apply for new loans as a result of the additional $484 billion coronavirus relief package that was signed into law on April 24. The new package includes $310 billion for the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP).

How have AWI members been affected and how have they weathered the COVID-19 storm?

Members Gain Relief
Those members who have participated in AWI’s weekly Town Hall Forums learned the processes from two attorneys who were guest

AWI Appoints New Technical Director
AWI is pleased to announce the appointment of Hunter Morrison, a wood and science technology engineer, as the association’s Technical Director. Hunter joined the staff on April 13, 2020.

AWI Responsibilities
“He will be responsible for overseeing execution of ANSI / AWI Standards development, leading the National Testing Center team in Americus, GA, providing technical support for our industry, and fulfilling his duty of AWI Senior Staff member,” said AWI Executive VP Doug Hague. “Hunter’s education and experience will be a great asset to the AWI team. His skillset and professionalism will be inherent in all of his work and will translate into tremendous member value.”

Source: AWI Town Hall Forum polls

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**Work Experience**
Prior to joining the AWI team, he worked for an architectural woodworking manufacturer, Boulder Mills, Inc., in Lafayette, CO. He was the firm’s project engineer, with a broad scope of work and responsibilities.

Hunter’s experience also includes learning another aspect of our industry at High Country Millwork, a high-end retail store fixture company in Longmont, CO. His responsibilities evolved from an initial position as drafting engineer to lead engineer.

**Education & Interests**
Hunter earned his undergraduate degree in Wood Technology at Pittsburg State University (PSU) in Pittsburg, KS. Furthermore, he continued his studies at PSU and earned a master’s graduate degree in Science & Technology.

Ohio Valley Chapter Meets Virtually
*Your Chapter Can Too!*

The agenda was set, the topics researched, the presenters prepared, the members registered—just like any other Chapter meeting. The only difference was that members participated through a single pane of glass in the Ohio Valley Chapter’s (OVC) first virtual membership meeting via Zoom. The COVID-19 social distancing decree wasn’t going to deter the Chapter from connecting with its members! They got creative.

**Discussion Topics**
Approximately 30 participants logged in to the meeting to discuss topics such as, the new woodwork Standards, AWI Testing Facility, safety and security, pandemic resources, upcoming and past webinars via AWI Weekly Town Hall Forums, working from home, project flow, managing projects virtually, COVID-19 impacts and shutdowns, supply chain issues and more.

**Insights / Feedback**
Ideas were shared so other Chapter members could benefit from the experiences and successes of others. “NOW is a VERY important time to be active in your AWI Chapter,” said OVC President Tim Gifford of Mock Woodworking in Zanesville, OH. “I don’t know how else we’d get and share this industry-specific information that has been so helpful to keep our businesses going in the right direction during this challenging time. Hearing others’ experiences and being able to apply it to our own business to keep us all on track is highly valuable.”

AWI Board of Directors Member Bob Krejci of Riverside Construction Services relayed, “Tim led the meeting with some inspiring and thought-provoking discussion of our current situation.” In a follow-up email, a northern Ohio manufacturer stated on his survey, “My AWI membership is an asset and I hope others feel the same!”

Hunter earned a master’s graduate degree in Science & Technology.
Keeping Connected
While a virtual meeting is no substitute for a face-to-face meeting, having the ability to stay connected in our quarantined world is mentally strengthening as we all adapt to new operating methods for the time being. The OVC will meet online through Zoom for its next meeting. Face-to-face events and meetings are being planned for a few months from now.

Congratulations to the Ohio Valley Chapter for using technology to creatively “network” and support your members. Keep up the good work!

GO WISCONSIN!
Chicago Chapter Board Member Kim Alsup says that the AWI Chicago Chapter is excited to see Scott Fletcher reinvent the Wisconsin Chapter.

UPCOMING CHAPTER EVENTS
The following events, with many dates yet to be determined for the balance of year, have been reported to AWI. Check your Chapter’s website or president, accessible at www.awinet.org.

CAROLINAS CHAPTER
- September Spotlight
- AWI National Financial Management Seminar, Social & Tour

CHICAGO CHAPTER
- Annual Golf Outing
- Tabletop Networking Event

GREAT LAKES CHAPTER
- Habitat for Humanity Work Day
- Annual Meeting, Networking, Dinner, Tours, Golf
- Stiles Machinery Tour / Demos, AWI National Contracts Seminar, Networking Dinner & Federated Insurance Risk Management Presentation
- Joint Session with MI Contractors & Architects on New AWI Standards

OHIO VALLEY CHAPTER
- Membership Meeting & Tour
- Sporting Clays Event
- Fall Membership Meeting

WASHINGTON CHAPTER
- Tacoma Rainiers Game / Networking Night
- AWI National Financial Management Seminar
- Shop Open House / Tour at R. Gleason Finishing
- Annual Supplier Tabletop Night

Make AWI’s powerful Digital Learning Portal (DLP) at www.awinet.org your “go to” resource for education resources, AWI Standards, AWI member woodwork specializations, AWI publications and other resources, and shared industry and technical information from AWI Communities.

Enter the “Members Only” area of the website by signing in with your membership access codes at the top right corner of the home page. This gives you the full power of the search engine not available to visitors to the public home page of the website.

In the search window in the middle of the screen, enter “Drawer Construction.” The search reveals 93 results that include AWI Community discussions, Standards, Education, General and Glossary.

Sample Results Sources:
- Drawer Testing
- Drawer Lock
- Balanced Construction
- Insert Overlay
- Box Joint Drawer Boxes
- Material List
- And much more.

Get the facts from the DLP and make it your “go to” resource for a wealth of information never before available—or possible—from AWI.
speakers on Zoom discussions. Those who seized the opportunity to tap into loans from the Small Business Administration earlier have been successful in supporting their employees and businesses during these unprecedented times. Some are still waiting, however, because of the drain on federal agencies and banks whose systems and staff have been overwhelmed.

AWI’s Town Hall polls have revealed that as of April 9, 3% (out of a pool of 60) had received funds. The flow of funds improved over time...with the poll on April 24 revealing that 72% of those participating have applied for and received PPP funds.

Polls taken during each of the six forums to date, indicate that as of April 24, 72% (34 responses) of woodwork facilities are operating “normal” production hours compared with 81% (59 responses) on March 20. On April 24, 25% of respondents said that 10% of their jobsites have been closed, while 18% said 75% of their jobsites have been closed. (See infographic.)

Forum participants on April 24 exhibited more positive outlooks. Earlier, this industry was deemed “essential” so that manufacturing operations could occur. Although many jobsites remain closed by state decrees, woodworkers are stockpiling products for projects that were suspended. One AWI Board of Directors member reported that he had secured 12 tractor trailers which they fully loaded with finished products waiting on his property for jobsites to open.

However, questions remain about best practices and loan forgiveness criteria which at press time are still uncertain until the Small Business Administration issues requirements, which by law must be released by May 26. It is particularly confusing given the fact that PPP funds must be used immediately and the guidelines are somewhat vague. Members participating in the most recent forum recommended adherence to known criteria at this time.

Reopening Phases
While reopening decisions are left with each state, the White House and Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) have issued three-phase criteria for reopening the economy. Those guidelines were discussed and are available on the AWI website in the “Members Only” section where you may access “COVID-19 Resources.”

AWI EVP Doug Hague walked Town Hall Forum participants through the document on April 24. A few highlights follow:

Proposed Phased Approach based on up-to-date data and readiness:
- Mitigates risk of resurgence
- Protects the most vulnerable
- Is implementable on statewide or county-by-county basis at Governors’ discretion
The Quality Certification Program (QCP) is reaching out to licensees by phone asking how they are faring during the current COVID-19 outbreak. QCP is learning how folks are dealing with challenges in their markets and across the country. Many firms are practicing social distancing and using teleworking for some company functions. A number of licensees report that projects in their area have limited access or have shut down depending on the state and type of project.

“QCP is working with firms to support and help during these trying times by utilizing conference call software as well as video software for project inspections. Proof of correction and re-inspection costs have been suspended during this pandemic,” notes AWI QCC Executive Director Randy Estabrook.

“Please let us know how we can help.”

• Randy Estabrook, Executive Director - restabrook@awiqcp.org
• Tricia Roberts, Sr. Director of Operations - troberts@awiqcp.org
• Greg Parham, Director of Inspections - gparham@awiqcp.org

Incorporated in early 2007, the AWI Quality Certification Corporation (QCC) is an autonomous organization which administers the AWI Quality Certification Program (QCP). The AWI Quality Certification Program (QCP) is a valuable quality assurance tool for interior architectural woodwork, one of the most highly visible aspects of many construction projects. QCP assesses whether the millwork provided meets the project’s specifications and industry standards. The American Subcontractors Association and the Construction Specifications Institute endorse the QCP. www.awiqcp.org

General Guidelines for All Phases: Employers

- Develop and implement appropriate policies, in accordance with Federal, State, and local regulations and guidance, and informed by industry best practices, regarding:
  - Social distancing and protective equipment
  - Temperature checks
  - Testing, isolating, and contact tracing
  - Sanitation
  - Use and disinfection of common and high-traffic areas
  - Business travel

- Monitor workforce for indicative symptoms. Do not allow symptomatic people to physically return to work until cleared by a medical provider.

- Develop and implement policies and procedures for workforce contact tracing following employee COVID+ test.

In the Opening Up America Again document, you will find guidelines for employers in Phase One, Two and Three. Sign in to www.awinet.org, using your member access codes and go to the drop-down “Members Only” menu at the top for access to “COVID-19 Resources.” You will find this document and much more.

1 Center for Systems Science & Engineering, Johns Hopkins University & Medicine, April 29, 2020, https://coronavirus.jhu.edu

AWI QCP Adapts Project Inspections during Pandemic

ABOUT QCP

In the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) table, the pie charts show the distribution of responses for each phase:

- April 9 (60 respondents): 3% Not applied, 18% Applied, 53% Applied, SBA #
- April 17 (59 respondents): 5% Not applied, 25% Applied, 72% Applied, SBA #, funds granted
- April 24 (43 respondents): 9% Not applied, 9% Applied, 72% Applied, SBA #, funds granted, funds received

Source: AWI Town Hall Forum polls

In the Opening Up America Again document, you will find guidelines for employers in Phase One, Two and Three. Sign in to www.awinet.org, using your member access codes and go to the drop-down “Members Only” menu at the top for access to “COVID-19 Resources.” You will find this document and much more.

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Paycheck Protection Program (PPP)

Download the table from the source: AWI Town Hall Forum polls

1 Center for Systems Science & Engineering, Johns Hopkins University & Medicine, April 29, 2020, https://coronavirus.jhu.edu
AWI began conducting online Town Hall Forums on March 20, 2020 to assist members in responding to the effects of COVID-19. Members in various states report work stoppages and loss of business during the pandemic and are turning to AWI for assistance to adapt to the crisis. The Town Hall Forums include a growing number of participating AWI members who also share tips that are helping them not only protect their employees but also maintain the viability of their businesses.

The Crisis Resource Center is accessible in the password-protected members area of www.awinet.org. Click on the “Members Only” drop-down menu for “COVID-19 Resources.”

Not only will you find recordings of each Town Hall Forum, but also links to other vital resources that offer guidance for all US residents but also for small businesses.

**AWI Town Hall Forums – Recording Library**
- COVID-19 Industry Impact (March 20, 2020)
- COVID-19 Stimulus Part I (March 27, 2020)
- COVID-19 Stimulus Part II (April 3, 2020)
- COVID-19 Impact on the Economy Part I (April 9, 2020)
- COVID-19 Impact on the Economy Part II (April 17, 2020)
- COVID-19 Impact & Member Connections (April 24, 2020)
- COVID-19 Updates (May 1, 2020)

Recordings of these 60- to 90-minute forums are accessible for a wealth of information about the impact of COVID-19.

**Other Resources – Link Library**

Find useful links to documents and agencies that help you adapt to and tap into resources for surviving the COVID-19 impact on you, your employees and your business.

- Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) | CDC
- Insperity Infectious Disease Toolkit
- Family First Coronavirus Response Act
- CISA Memorandum on Identification of Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers During COVID-19 Response
- Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19
- US Small Business Administration Disaster Loan Assistance
- Actions to Consider
- Coronavirus Small Business Guide, US Chamber of Commerce
- Coronavirus Emergency Loans, Small Business Guide and Checklist
- Interim Final Rule - Business Loan Program Temporary Changes; Paycheck Protection Program
- Paycheck Protection Program - Borrower Application Form
- Guidelines for Opening Up America Again

**Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL)**

Source: AWI Town Hall Forum polls
On April 3, the US Department of Labor’s Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) issued interim enforcement guidance to help combat supply shortages of disposable N95 filtering face piece respirators (N95 FFRs). The action marks the department’s latest step to ensure the availability of respirators and follows President Donald J. Trump’s Memorandum on Making General Use Respirators Available.

Due to the impact on workplace conditions caused by limited supplies of N95 FFRs, employers should reassess their engineering controls, work practices and administrative controls to identify any changes they can make to decrease the need for N95 respirators.

If respiratory protection must be used, employers may consider use of alternative classes of respirators that provide equal or greater protection compared to an N95 FFR, such as National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)-approved, non-disposable, elastomeric respirators or powered, air-purifying respirators.

When these alternatives are not available, or where their use creates additional safety or health hazards, employers may consider the extended use or reuse of N95 FFRs, or use of N95 FFRs that were approved but have since passed the manufacturer’s recommended shelf life, under specified conditions.

This interim guidance became effective immediately and will remain in effect until further notice. This guidance is intended to be time-limited to the current public health crisis. Visit OSHA’s Coronavirus webpage (www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/) regularly for updates.


New AWI Members

MANUFACTURERS
- Harbor Industries
  Grand Haven, MI
- MFI, LLC
  Winterset, IA
- Notch & Nail, LLC
  West Des Moines, IA

SUPPLIER
- Dovetail Recruiting
  Bozeman, MT

Note: These new members joined AWI in March 2020.

Best Practice Groups

ELEVATE YOUR BUSINESS PRACTICES, AND MAKE THEM BEST PRACTICES!

Since the launch of this program in 2005, Best Practice Groups have fulfilled a need among many senior Manufacturing Members, who turn to each other for support and ideas in a confidential, trusted environment. Since then the program has grown to 10 active groups and a total of 64 active members.

Typically, each BPG is comprised of 8-10 executive level participants who meet three times a year at the facility of a rotating host. The members form the agenda for each meeting, at which members discuss common challenges and share perspectives, thus serving as peer mentors.

Those participating in Best Practice Groups have said it is the most valuable benefit they have received from their AWI membership.

For details about the BPGs, login to the Members Only area of www.awinet.org and select “Best Practice Groups” from the drop-down menu. Interested AWI Manufacturing Members can learn more about the new Virtual BPG under development by contacting AWI BPG liaison Taylor Shaughnessy at tshaughnessy@awinet.org.

OSHA Issues Interim Guidance: On Range of Employer/Worker Issues

According to data received from a Freedom of Information Act request by The Washington Post on April 17, from January through early April there were more than 3,000 complaints to the agency relating to COVID-19.

Various announcements and interim enforcement plan documents have been issued by the US Dept. of Labor’s Occupational Safety & Health Administration, including the following:

- Enforcement Response Plan to Protect Workers during the Pandemic
- Consideration of Employer’s Good Faith Efforts When Enforcing Compliance during the Pandemic
- Reminder that Employers Cannot Retaliate Against Workers Reporting Unsafe Conditions during the Pandemic
- Recordkeeping Requirements Relating to COVID-19 Cases relating to Workers

For announcements see the April 23 edition of AWI e-briefs, located in the “Publications” area of www.awinet.org. Also stay abreast of OSHA issues at www.osha.gov.

These are difficult times... for workers, employers and federal agencies.

8 The Architectural Woodwork Institute / AWINET.ORG

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