During the June 11th AWI Friday Family Gathering, AWI President Sebastien DesMarais of Hollywood Woodwork shared his views about industry labor issues as well as a high-level look at the results of the 2021 AWI Cost of Doing Business Survey (CoDBS).

**Labor Shortages**

“We are seeing non-standard salaries coming from outside of our industry,” Sebastien said. And, we are experiencing other industries recruiting architectural woodwork personnel, such as trucking companies hiring our industry drivers. At Hollywood Woodwork, we have renewed our focus on retaining employees who have moved but who are continuing to work for us remotely.”

Sebastien said, “Automation at the machinery or software level allows us to move employees to other job areas.” He mentioned one AWI Best Practice Group member who moves his Production cell teams around monthly for cross-training purposes.

**Opening Keynote**

Claire Haidar, entrepreneur and CEO at WNDYR, is focused on redefining the future of work in the following areas: humans, technology and space. Claire is passionate about human acceleration and workplace transformation and will discuss “Chaos Theory: A Future-of-Work View.”

**Feature Presentation**

Steve Baker, VP of The Great Game of Business, will focus on “Leading the Game...Without Playing Games,” giving leaders...
**BUSINESS MATTERS**

**A SNEAK PEEK AT INDUSTRY TRENDS... (cont. from page 1)**

The AWI CoDBS Results reveal a continuation of a three-year decline of profitability and sales in our industry. But, overall, it’s not too bad.

**Business Costs**

“My fear for 2021 is that as material costs are rising, the contracts we signed one to two years ago, will require product delivery at much inflated costs to us,” Sebastien said.

“As expected, the AWI Cost of Doing Business Survey Results reveal a continuation of a three-year decline of profitability and sales in our industry. But, overall, it’s not too bad.” The average operating margin declined with losses in the bottom quartile. But the margin for high profit firms actually went up. Business sentiment is stronger across the board.

Highlights follow from the Executive Summary which members may access in the Members Only area of www.awinet.org. Survey participants received their custom results for private online slicing and dicing.

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**THE ‘AVERAGE’ INCOME STATEMENT**

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All Firms</th>
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<th>High Profit Firms</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gross Sales</td>
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<td>COGS Overhead</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cost of Goods Sold</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gross Profit</td>
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<td>12.79%</td>
<td>14.86%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Operating Income</td>
<td>5.78%</td>
<td>3.08%</td>
<td>15.46%</td>
<td>15.79%</td>
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</table>

Source: © Inverra, 2021 AWI Cost of Doing Business Survey Results, Executive Summary

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**2021 AWI PARTNERS**

AWI thanks these members listed at right and welcomes them to the new AWI Partner Program. Their additional support throughout the year helps to fund the association’s programs, publications and other services for members. AWI Manufacturing Members are encouraged to connect with these partners anytime at www.awinet.org whenever a need arises for their services. To learn more about the program for AWI members contact AWI Director of Marketing & Membership Katie Allen at kallen@awinet.org.

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**SKILLSUSA CABINETMAKING MORE CHALLENGING**

Despite all the usual challenges of the annual SkillsUSA Cabinetmaking Competition, this year the entire event was conducted virtually due to the pandemic. AWI SkillsUSA Committee Chair Kristine Cox reported that, “Twenty-four students competed (20 from secondary schools, and 4 from post-secondary schools) to earn top honors based on technical skills as well as ‘soft’ skills.” Competitors were tasked with building a hexagonal Tea Box at their school woodshop where proctors served as eyes and ears for AWI volunteers on the AWI Technical Committee who watched remotely via Zoom, and received photos with measurements sent by proctors for judging the event.

“The project was smaller in size and complexity than for a normal SkillsUSA Cabinetmaking Competition due to many unknown variables at each school, including availability of machinery/equipment and materials, supervision/safety and integrity/consistency of contents. However, the committee made the project more mentally challenging requiring students to rely on their soft skills more than ever (i.e.: critical thinking, problem solving, time management). The contest was comprised of four parts: Resume, Written Test, Cut List Test, and Project Build,” Kristine said.

The students persevered and worked hard to complete their Tea Box project in the six hours allotted. The committee used the following criteria to score each project: Technical Assessment, Written Test, Machine Skills, Safety, Neatness, Completed Project, and Finished Project.
AWI CONVENTION AIMS AT STRENGTHENING... (cont. from page 1)

Claire Haidar        Steve Baker        Connor Lokar

AWI EVENTS

four critical items that will help them reach their critical number. Known for his engaging and irreverent style, Steve is a top-rated, sought-after speaker and coach on open-book management, strategy and execution, leadership, and employee engagement.

Insight Session I
As a follow-up to the Spring Leadership Conference presentation on Big Data, we are going to look at some specific companies and instances about where data was collected, analyzed and implemented to achieve improvements.

Insight Session II
This session will use the principles of The Great Game of Business, the only sensible way to run a company. Steve Baker will explain how engaging and aligning your team around a common goal will transform your company.

Insight Session III
This moderated panel discussion, “AWI Standards and Testing,” will offer insights about their benefits and how they will impact the design community.

Closing Keynote
Connor Lokar, senior forecaster at ITR Economics, will be back to give insights about economic trends to help you prepare as the economy recovers from the nosedive it took resulting from the COVID-19 Pandemic. Plan your business strategy based on facts and statistical trends that point to the future after you hear about a Post-Pandemic Economy.

Information / Registration
Plan to join the AWI family of members for a revitalizing event as you refresh your spirit and work to strengthen your business. After a year apart from the AWI Family, it’s time to reconnect face2face with fellow members.

WE ARE AWI STRONG! 🏆
AWI Standards & Testing Move Along

The AWI Technical Committee is aggressively moving forward on multiple fronts as it advances additional new AWI Standards through the development process. What’s in progress at press time in July? What about testing methodologies?

Standards Development
- 1236 - Countertops is progressing through the ANSI process.
- 400 - Finishing and 1232 - Manufacturing Casework began the ANSI process in July.
- 0642 - A Paneling draft is complete and is undergoing further development by the Technical Committee.
- 0643 - Wood Stair, Handrail, and Guard Systems will become effective August 15. Copies are available for purchase now in the AWI Store at www.awinet.org, and access is free on the website.

Canvass Participants Sought
AWI is seeking to expand the pool of individuals interested in participating on the Canvass bodies for the Standards listed below. Timelines will be announced; some Canvass reviews will likely fall into next year. Meanwhile, interested parties may contact either CDermynre@awinet.org or hunter@awinet.org.

- 0622 - Millwork
- 0642 - Paneling
- 0646 - Wood Trim
- 0648 - Wood Door Frames
- 0817 - Integrated Door Opening Assemblies
- 1235 - Specialty Casework

Testing Related News
AWI is currently in the process of testing additional Tall Cabinet construction methods to Performance Duty Levels 3 and 4 to make available for interested parties.

DID YOU KNOW?
That AWI’s Next Generation of Standards, accredited by the American National Standards Institute, are FREE of charge and can be bookmarked for subsequent quick access at www.awinet.org? Click on “Standards” on the top menu bar and select the published AWI Standard of your choice. AWI has been developing architectural woodwork standards since its inception in 1953.