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THE AMERICAN HOME FURNISHINGS HALL OF FAME FOUNDATION
NAMES FIVE NEW MEMBERS TO THE HALL OF FAME;
HONOREES TO BE INDUCTED AT OCTOBER 23 CELEBRATION

HIGH POINT, N.C., June 9, 2022 — Five industry leaders will be inducted into the American Home Furnishings Hall of Fame on Oct. 23 during the High Point Market. Joining the current 126 members of the Hall of Fame are **Michael Amini**, chairman and CEO of AICO/Amini Innovations Corp.; **Michael K. Dugan**, former president and CEO of Henredon Furniture Industries; **John Gabbert**, founder of Room & Board; **Neil Goldberg**, chairman and CEO of Raymour & Flanigan Furniture; and **Stephen K. Pond**, founding publisher of *Furniture Today*.

“This year’s inductees represent a broad spectrum of enduring excellence and superior accomplishments from across the industry, including design, global sourcing, manufacturing, retail and communications,” says Caroline Hipple, president of the Foundation board of directors and president of Norwalk Furniture. “Their impact is significant and far-reaching. Each epitomizes the innovation and creativity worthy of our industry’s highest honor.”

A seven-member selection committee, composed of Hall of Fame Foundation board members and representatives from diverse segments of the industry, chooses inductees based on their contributions to the growth and development of the home furnishings industry in America. The committee uses a points-based evaluation system grounded on four foundations: enduring excellence, superior accomplishments, innovation and creativity, and philanthropic generosity.

“Our independent selection committee, which maintains the highest standards, is committed to thoughtfully and thoroughly researching candidates from across the industry,” Hipple says. “The 2022 inductees have positively impacted the industry in a multitude of ways and serve as exceptional role models for future leaders in home furnishings.”

The five new inductees are:

A master showman, Michael Amini, CEO and Founder of AICO/Amini Innovation Corp., takes a total home approach to design. The company was founded in 1988 as an occasional table importer and has grown to become a producer of designs that range from contemporary, traditional and glam to transitional, rustic and casual at multiple price points. Inspired by his world travels, fashion and a commitment to quality, the Michael Amini® brand includes case goods, upholstery, home accents, accessories, lighting, wall décor, rugs, and textiles. His showrooms in High Point and Las Vegas feature extravagant visual and audio experiences. He has established a reputation as the ever innovative, flamboyant and creative champion of the industry.

Michael K. Dugan is a savvy businessman who fostered great discussion when he authored the book, *The Furniture Wars: How America Lost a \$50 Billion Dollar Industry*. The president of Henredon Furniture Industries for 17 years and a co-founder of Jamestown Sterling, he skillfully and strategically positioned companies. Through collaborations with highly visible designers and fashion brands, Henredon became solidified as a style leader known for its fresh, original designs. A marketer at heart, he focused on reaching the consumer through the media. Later, as the Alex Lee Professor of Business at Lenoir Rhyne University, where he received an honorary Doctorate, he remained involved with educating the industry that he loves.

John Gabbert left a traditional family retail store at age 26 with the vision to create a new business model: Room & Board. The brand is known for conducting its own product development of timeless modern design, quality American craftsmanship and a commitment to environmental stewardship. Based in Minneapolis, more than 90 percent of products sold are produced by small U.S. manufacturers who practice responsible wood sourcing. Its loyal if not fanatical customer base has been established through its 17 retail stores and nationwide multi-channel business. The company introduced a non-commissioned salesforce, everyday low pricing, a By-the-Inch program for select products made to customer measurements, and a commercial furnishings program for offices, hotels, restaurants, and universities.

Neil Goldberg is Chairman of Raymour & Flannigan the largest furniture and mattress retailer in the Northeast and seventh largest nationwide. Under his leadership, the company has grown through organic expansion and acquisitions, from three stores to 145 locations in seven states. It includes a real estate portfolio of stores, shopping centers, warehouses and office buildings. Goldberg is known for creating a strong, loyal team culture with a relentless focus on operational excellence to enhance the customer shopping experience. A Great Place to Work® company, the retailer maintains a 98 percent in-stock inventory for fast delivery, seven days a week. Social responsibility is expressed through extensive community involvement and sustainability practices, including recycling 99 percent of packaging materials.

Stephen K. Pond founded *Furniture Today* in 1976 with the vision to create “the industry’s newspaper” that would inform the stakeholders and build businesses globally and throughout the home furnishings industry. During his ownership, the parent company, Communications Today, also launched *Home Textiles Today*, *Home Accents Today*, *Design Today*, *Upholstery Today*, *the Professional Upholsterer*, *Video Today* and *Manufacturing Today*. He set the highest standards for journalistic integrity: objectivity, accuracy, professionally conducted research, industry intelligence, and knowledgeable reporting across all product categories. Skilled at connecting people and building a diverse team, he has been instrumental in the creation of the Paul Broyhill Future Leaders Award and the Hall of Fame’s Home Furnishings Leadership Institute.

Sophia, the world’s first humanoid celebrity, will deliver an inspiring keynote address, as well as engage in an on-stage conversation and answer questions from the audience, during the 2022 Master the Challenge Induction Celebration. The industry’s most prestigious event will again be at the Sheraton Greensboro Four Seasons.

The Hall of Fame is supported by sponsors of the 2022 Induction Celebration:

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The American Home Furnishings Hall of Fame Foundation, Inc., is an industry-wide organization founded in 1988 to preserve the history of the home furnishings industry, to celebrate exceptional individuals who have made extraordinary contributions to the U.S. home furnishings industry, and to inspire the next generation of innovative leaders. In 2019, the organization purchased a building at 311 S. Hamilton St. in High Point. Our new home will be a symbol of the Home Furnishings Capital of the World™ where the industry gathers, where we tell our story and learn from our past, and where we inspire future generations. As a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, funds support our history and leadership programming. The organization currently is based in High Point, North Carolina, at 202 Neal Place, Suite 101, and can be reached at 336.882.5900. Watch for ongoing developments and details about the grand opening of a new permanent home at www.homefurnishingshalloffame.com, which is set for April 2023.

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