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AMERICAN HOME FURNISHINGS HALL OF FAME
ACHIEVES RECOGNITION AS A CERTIFIED AUTISM CENTER IN HIGH POINT

HIGH POINT, N.C., Oct. 10, 2023 — The American Home Furnishings Hall of Fame has been designated as a Certified Autism Center by the International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards (IBCCES), a global leader in online training and certification programs.

The Certified Autism Center (CAC) designation is granted by the IBCCES to organizations whose staff have completed focused training and certification in best practices when assisting autistic individuals. By undergoing this autism-specific training, a team is better equipped to provide the highest level of service and experiences for visitors. To achieve certification, at least 80 percent of the organizations' staff must complete training through the IBCCES program and meet other criteria that show a readiness to serve this fast-growing population of special individuals.

"Attaining Certified Autism Center certification is just one way we are working to ensure that our new building is fully accessible to all of our guests," says Karen McNeill, CEO and president of the Hall of Fame Foundation Board of Directors. "We want to be robustly prepared when we open as a museum and the public walks through our doors in the Spring of 2024 when we complete Phase 2 of the exhibits."

A certification that few other U.S. facilities currently have achieved, the CAC designation supports the Hall of Fame mandate "to share the dynamic world of home furnishings with the industry as well as the public," McNeill added. "Earning the CAC designation deepens our knowledge for how to best work with autistic individuals so that they can enjoy the rich experiences the Hall of Fame offers here."

To better accommodate visitors with sensory challenges such as autism, the building, which opened to the industry in April, includes a low-sensory area that offers a peaceful and calming retreat. In addition, members of the Hall of Fame staff have completed the IBCCES training. The new building also features a convenient elevator, so physically disabled visitors have easy access to all rooms and exhibits. According to McNeill, the sensitivity and awareness training that the Hall of Fame staff has undergone makes the team better prepared to interact with all families and children of all abilities, but especially those with autism and other sensory challenges.

Located at 311 S. Hamilton St. in High Point, the new American Home Furnishings Hall of Fame building provides the home furnishings industry with its first-ever dedicated "home," a place where manufacturers, retailers and designers from across the globe can gather, honor and share ideas. The building features a variety of meeting areas, both large and small, and can also serve as a gathering spot for local businesses, community groups and celebratory events.

At the same time, the new building will offer a unique learning experience for local and visiting schoolchildren and the community at large when the second round of exhibit installations is completed next spring.

“We can’t wait to share these amazing exhibits and other many other resources in our new building with the public next April,” McNeill says. “The home furnishings industry has a direct, daily impact on all our lives but that story has largely gone untold until now.”

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The American Home Furnishings Hall of Fame Foundation, Inc., is an industry-wide organization founded to preserve its history, to celebrate exceptional individuals who have made extraordinary contributions to the U.S. home furnishings industry, to inspire the next generation of innovative leaders and to engage the community with the world of home furnishings. Our new home, which opened in April 2023, is a symbol of the Home Furnishings Capital of the World™ where the industry gathers, where we honor our leaders and tell our stories, and where we learn through exhibits, seminars and speakers. As a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, funds support our history and leadership programming. The organization is based in High Point, North Carolina, at 311 S. Hamilton St., and can be reached at 336.882.5900 or by visiting www.homefurnishingshalloffame.com.

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