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KAREN McNEILL HONORED WITH LEGENDARY LEADERSHIP AWARD AT 34TH ARTS AWARDS

HIGH POINT, N.C., February 28, 2024 —Karen McNeill, chairman of the board of directors and CEO of the American Home Furnishings Hall of Fame Foundation, a nonprofit public charity committed to honoring and preserving the legacy of individuals who have made significant contributions to the home furnishings industry, has received the Legendary Leadership Award given by Dallas Market Center and ART, the creative home furnishings network. The 34th annual ARTS awards took place at the Hilton Anatole Hotel in Dallas, Texas in January.

The legendary leadership award honors an individual who has not only achieved esteemed recognition from industry peers, but who has also led the home industry with passion, and whose dedication has helped hundreds of companies succeed.

“It is a privilege to present the Legendary Leadership Award to Karen,” said Cindy Morris, president and CEO of Dallas Market Center. “Her leadership has added substantial value to the home industry, and her support of the home furnishings community and history has added an immeasurable value to businesses large and small.”

Sharon Davis, executive director of ART added, “Karen is a passionate leader and fearless champion of the home industry, and she deserves special recognition this year. The Legendary Leadership Award is a way for us to recognize a true pioneer in the home industry, and Karen exemplifies the best qualities of our business.”

McNeill’s career in the home furnishing industry has spanned several decades and began with her role as director of marketing at the Southern Furniture Market Center and as director of the Design Center (now ANDMORE). Karen’s passion for empowering future generations in the home furnishings industry can be seen in her accomplishments during her tenure as president of the Board of Directors and CEO of the American Home Furnishings Hall of Fame Foundation, Inc., a nonprofit 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. She created the Leadership Initiative, which includes a keynote address at the Induction Celebration, the Paul Broyhill Future Leader Award, and the Home Furnishings Leadership Institute at High Point University.

Her most recent achievement was the opening of the Hall of Fame in High Point, North Carolina, in April of 2023. This 25,000 sq ft hall contains permanent fixtures such as Museum exhibits, the Stephen Knight Pond Library, and the Hughes Family History Center, and contains an event space, as well. By year-end, the Hall of Fame hosted nearly 100 events ranging from board meetings, design summits, and seminars to cocktail parties, fashion shows, and video and photography shoots.

McNeill's accomplishments can also be seen in the success of her full-service marketing and public relations agency, which has served industries such as home furnishings, telecommunications, tourism, and more, for over 30 years.

"I am grateful for this honor as a tribute to our noble \$150 billion industry that is committed to improve the lives of people around the globe by creating beautiful homes," said McNeill. "The unifying support across the industry has been unmatched. None of this would have been possible without the Hall of Fame team that took on every challenge with enthusiasm and commitment. The fact that the Hall of Fame was done, from the time we purchased property to opening our doors—during COVID—in less than four years is stunning but even more rewarding is seeing the building in constant use and to see the dream of our founders in 1988 come to fruition. There are no words for how exciting and fun the last four years have been and it has been my good fortune to be the one in this seat."

McNeill was also responsible for the American Home Furnishings Hall of Fame being designated as a Certified Autism Center ensuring that the new building would be fully accessible to all guests. It is a certification that few other U.S. facilities currently have achieved.

Committed to community service, McNeill has served on more than 30 nonprofit boards, including the Salvation Army Advisory Board, High Point Rotary Club, High Point Chamber of Commerce, Family Service of High Point, Furniture Fellowship and Women in the Home Industries Today (WithIt).

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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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