

IHFRA to honor Shoemaker, Amini at gala

Sales rep, importer/designer to get awards during market

HIGH POINT — Paula Shoemaker, a longtime sales representative, and Michael Amini, CEO of importer AICO, will be honored by the International Home Furnishings Representatives Assn. at this month's High Point Market.

Shoemaker, a former IHFRA president, will receive the group's highest honor, the Harold P. Braun Distinguished Service Award.

Amini, an innovative furniture importer and designer and a philanthropist, will be named



Amini

a Pillar of the Industry.

They will be honored at the 13th annual Furniture Industry Awards Gala the evening of Tuesday, March 27, in the



Shoemaker

International Home Furnishings Center ballroom. IHFRA and the National Home Furnishings Assn. are sponsors. Tickets are \$75 per person, or a table of eight for \$70 per person, and reservations may be made by contacting IHFRA at (336) 889-3920.

The Braun award goes to an IHFRA member who has distinguished herself on behalf

of the association and has enhanced and benefited the image of the home furnishings representative.

Shoemaker, a native of Cincinnati, began her career in the furniture industry working part-time at a local department store. She rose through the ranks to become case goods buyer for the store.

She then became a sales representative for Burlington Furniture, and joined the Columbus, Ohio, chapter of IHFRA in 1981. She has been active on a regional and national level with the association and was IHFRA's first female president in 2002.

Shoemaker has taken part in IHFRA's lobbying efforts in Washington, worked on membership recruitment and retention, served on the City of Hope Furniture Board and currently serves on the High Point Market Authority Advisory Committee. She continues to be active in the South West Ohio Chapter of IHFRA and participates in WithIt's student mentoring day.

The Pillar of the Industry Award is presented to an industry leader who has distinguished himself with creative work and effort to improve, enhance and benefit relationships among representatives and other segments of the industry. This person's actions and deeds have shown their commitment to the home furnishings industry, their community and to mankind.

Amini graduated from a California college with a degree in electrical engineering, but pursued a sales career. He was a sales rep for a furniture manufacturer before starting his own company, Amini Innovation Corp., or AICO, in 1988, with 220 square feet of warehouse space.

Today, AICO has a 400,000-square-foot facility in Pico Rivera, Calif., with 86 shipping and receiving docks, hundreds of employees in the United States, and over 20,000 employees in Asia.

Amini has received several awards. He was given the Lifetime Achievement Award in 2004 by the City of Hope. The medical center will break ground this year on the Michael Amini Transfusion Medicine Center. In 2005, Amini accepted Furniture/Today's Furniture Supplier of the Year Award on behalf of AICO.

THE MERCER COLLECTION



High Point Showroom
IHFC Design Wing, D1001

1333 VANDERBILT BLVD. HIGH POINT, N.C. 28640
Tel: 336.889.3920 www.brownstonefurniture.com



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