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## **Certified Floorcovering Installers Association (CFI) Announces International Partnership with The South African Flooring Industry Training Association (FiTA)**

### ***Arrangement Solidifies CFI's Footing in South Africa***

February 22, 2017 - Dallas, TX –Today Robert Varden, Vice President, CFI, announced a partnership with South African based FiTA to bring ongoing floor covering installation training classes and certification to professionals throughout the country and beyond.

Nearly 10 years ago, CFI began working with Belgotex Floorcoverings, a carpet manufacturer based in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa to help establish a formal training program and institute qualification guidelines for professional installers.

“At the time we entered this market there were no set standards and no rules governing flooring installation in the country,” Said Varden. “The lack of qualified installers in the flooring industry is a global issue. In 2013, The South African Flooring Industry Training Association was formed to address the installation crisis facing the flooring industry. Great strides have been made working with both trade and government officials to clearly define necessary schooling and hands on training requirements for installation professionals that will be overseen by the government and will be required to practice the trade.”

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CFI, together with FITA South Africa, will continue to facilitate installation training and accreditation through apprenticeship programs for entry level flooring installers who undergo comprehensive hands-on and classroom training, *'Prior Learning'* accreditation will be made available for installers who are already working and have experience.

South Africa represents a population of nearly 53 million people. "This arrangement benefits everyone in the field with set standards and guidelines that will be the same across the board," Varden stated.

To date, over 150 graduates have completed the 12-month training program and apprenticeship and now hold a ***National Certificate Installation of Floor Coverings***. This recognition is exclusively issued by the South African Government appointed Construction Education Training Authority, who facilitates and funds skill development in the construction sector. Through an additional regional partner, Belgotex Floorcoverings, CFI and FiTA have entered an arrangement with local youth endowment organizations to bring installation training to school children in grades 6<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>. Upon completion, these students will have a floor laying skill which will enable them to find a job as an entry level flooring installer upon graduation.

"Our partnership with the South African Flooring Industry Training Association is yet another step forward in achieving our goals of continuing to lead the way in installation training, increasing our global footprint and helping our industry both domestically and internationally keep pace with the ever changing business landscape," Varden said in closing.

For more information on CFI and their programs both domestically and internationally please visit the CFI website at <http://www.cfiinstallers.org>. You may also call 816-231-4646.

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**ABOUT CFI:**

The International Certified Floorcovering Installers Association, Inc. (CFI) is a division of the WFCA that is devoted to installation training and certification through a team of dedicated trainers who share their experience and knowledge to help others help themselves. The enthusiasm for doing this continues to grow.

CFI provides educational resources for the industry through inspection, installation, estimating, product knowledge, and patterned and woven carpet, hardwood, ceramic, laminate and resilient flooring training. CFI provides teams of skilled craftsmen to assist when called upon for installations by dealers and manufacturers.'

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