

NeoCon®

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEOCON® OFFERS ATTENDEES SPECIAL EVENTS THROUGHOUT SHOW

CHICAGO (April 13, 2011) – The 43rd annual NeoCon, at Chicago’s Merchandise Mart, provides show attendees a full calendar of special events for networking and unwinding after navigating the largest contract furnishings show in North America. Following is a summary of scheduled special events and attractions around and throughout the trade show:

SPECIAL EVENTS:

23rd Annual Believe 2011 RocknGala

6:30 p.m., June 11

Chicago Marriott Downtown

Designers, architects and design industry leaders will show their support and continue the fight towards a future without AIDS at the 23rd Annual Believe 2011 RocknGala. DIFFA/Chicago invites attendees to wear their hottest rock star outfit or creative black tie and dance the night away with live music. For more information, please visit <http://diffachicago.org/believe>.

Surviving NeoCon: Plan Your Success

Kay Sargent, IIDA, CID, LEED® AP, Principal, IA INTERIOR ARCHITECTS

1:30 p.m., June 12

Kay Sargent will divulge the tips and techniques of navigating one of the world’s largest tradeshow. Gain insight into the best methods of getting around the one million square-foot of showrooms, exhibit space and seminar rooms. This is a must –attend program for first time attendees or those returning to NeoCon.

COOL, IIDA Black Tie Awards Celebration

7 p.m., June 12

Westin Chicago River North Hotel

Attendees will kick off NeoCon with an elegant evening of cocktails, awards, dinner and dancing at the 2011 IIDA black-tie awards gala, celebrating the winning projects and design firms of the 38th Annual Interior Design Competition and 19th Annual Will Ching Design Competition. Also, by popular demand, the return of a special showcase of one-of-a kind fashions created by IIDA Chapters. For details and ticket information visit www.iida.org/content.cfm/iida-cool-gala

2011 OFDA Dealer’s Choice Awards

9 a.m., June 13

Market Suites, The Merchandise Mart

Office Furniture Dealers Alliance (OFDA), the association for office furniture dealers and their key business partners, honors the six winning companies of its annual Dealers’ Choice Awards. Based on the association’s 2011 OFDA Dealer Manufacturer Satisfaction Index survey, a dealer poll designed to recognize best of class performance and topics of concern for the dealer community, the awards are given to office furniture manufacturers who exemplify their commitment and outreach to the dealer channel.

IIDA Student and Emerging Professionals Design Charrette

9a.m., June 13

**Collaboration between IIDA and Design Collaboratives and Gridwerk Architecture
Sponsored by Haworth Inc.**

Teams of design students and recent graduates will be given the opportunity to design a raw space on a prominent, commercial floor in The Merchandise Mart during NeoCon 2011. The objective of the competition is to cross-pollinate program philosophies, individual skills and thought processes through team collaboration. Each team will be required to provide a design in three hours. No computers will be allowed as this challenge is to inspire hand drawing, teamwork and communication skills. All final solutions will be critiqued by a jury of prominent designers, architects and industry leaders and will be on display for the duration of NeoCon, when attendees may vote for their favorite project.

Canadian Panel Presentation

The Business Case for Beauty: Design's Most Potent Weapon

Moderator Arlene Gould, MBA, RGD, FRSA

Panelists: Paul Filek, managing partner at Burdifilek; Siamak Hariri, founding partner of Hariri Pontirini Architects; Helen Kerr is principal of Kerr and Company; Janet Rosenberg, founding principal of Janet Rosenberg + Associates

3 p.m., June 13

Holiday Inn Mart Plaza, 14th Floor, Sauganash Ballroom

This special Canadian event at NeoCon 2011, organized by Ontario's Design Industry Advisory Committee, will bring together an all-star, cross-disciplinary panel of Canadian design leaders. They will explore the economic, social and sustainability impacts of beautiful design and its defining role in 21st-century innovation.

Showroom Parties

5 p.m., June 13

The Merchandise Mart floors 3, 10 and 11

The momentum of NeoCon will be in full swing on Monday night. Attendees will showroom-hop on floors 3, 10 and 11 to see fabulous products, network, wine and dine with all your colleagues and friends from the industry in select showrooms.

FIRSTnight – ASID Toasts Design

7 p.m., June 13

Museum of Contemporary Art

Directly following the Celebration – the ASID Awards, join your colleagues and industry insiders for an evening of fun to kick off NeoCon® at FIRSTnight, the conference's premiere ASID social event. This chic evening unites luxurious interiors with industry VIPs—all under one roof in one of the most extraordinary venues in Chicago, the Museum of Contemporary Art. FIRSTnight will feature dancing, hors d'oeuvres, tasty beverages and some of the most stunning views of Chicago. Cocktail attire is suggested and space is limited. For details and ticket information, visit www.asidatneocon.com.

Behind the Scenes of the Best of NeoCon

Eileen McMorrow, director, the Best of NeoCon, editor of McMorrowReport.com

Danine Alati, managing editor, *Contract Magazine*.

2:30 p.m., June 14

Merchandise Mart 8th Floor, Room 8A

Just hours after the winners are announced, a panel discussion will take place among select members of the Best of NeoCon jury. Representing interior designers, architects and facilities managers, jurors will reveal their "must see" products, detail unique aspects of this year's competition and comment on the level of creativity apparent in new products.

Green Drinks-Business Edition: The Business of Creating Sustainable Communities

Featuring Doug Farr, AIA

5:30 p.m., June 14

Haworth Showroom, 312 Merchandise Mart

With the launch of his groundbreaking book, *Sustainable Design: Urban Design With Nature*, Doug Farr, one of the country's leading green architects and urban planners, issued a challenge: end urban sprawl by 2030. At this special NeoCon Green Drinks, attendees will explore with Farr

the necessity of looking beyond green buildings to the larger systems in which they exist.. Green Drinks-Business Edition is *the* place to connect with Chicago's forward-looking enterprises.

BIFMA International's Annual Membership Meeting

7:15 a.m., June 15

Holiday Inn Mart Plaza, Wolf Point Ballroom

Members of the Business and Institutional Furniture Manufacturers Association (BIFMA International) and invited guests are encouraged to attend this year's breakfast meeting to hear BIFMA's annual state-of-the-industry and state-of-the-association reports. Pre-registration required. For more information, contact BIFMA at (616) 285-3963

Meet the President's Day

10 a.m., June 15

Company presidents will be in their showrooms to share their expertise and insight about their products and companies.

For more information and to register for special events visit www.neocon.com.

The 43rd annual NeoCon[®], the National Exposition of Contract Furnishings, is North America's largest exhibition of contract furnishings for the design and management of the built environment. NeoCon features the latest trends, products, and concepts in office, healthcare, hospitality, residential, institutional and government environments from more than 700 exhibitors. Approximately 40,000 trade professionals are expected to attend.

NeoCon attendees are encouraged to pre-register by June 6 to save time and money. As part of a new effort to increase online pre-registration, attendees who register at www.neocon.com by June 6 will be admitted into the show at no charge. Attendees who wait to register on-site will be charged \$25 for a show badge.

For more information about NeoCon, visit the www.neocon.com or call (800) 677-6278 (MART). Outside of the United States call (312) 527-7600. NeoCon is only open to trade professionals with proper credentials.

NeoCon[®] is a registered trademark of MMPI.

MMPI is the world's leading owner and operator of showroom buildings and trade show facilities, bringing buyers and sellers together in more than 300 market events, trade and consumer shows and conferences each year.

MMPI manages The Merchandise Mart and 350 West Mart Center in Chicago; the Architects & Designers Building, 7 W New York, and Piers 92/94 in New York City; the Boston Design Center in Boston; the L.A. Mart in Los Angeles; the Washington Design Center in Washington DC; and Cleveland Medical Mart & Convention Center in Cleveland.

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