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New BuildStrong Academy Offers Complimentary Carpentry and Electrical Training

Charlotte, NC (May 30, 2024) – The Home Builders Institute (HBI) in partnership with the Fioretti Family Charitable Fund announced the grand opening of the BuildStrong Academy of Charlotte, a new training facility in the Charlotte region to help address the labor shortage in the residential construction industry.

In Charlotte, the skilled construction labor shortage has reached critical levels, posing significant challenges for the local economy and infrastructure development. As the demand for construction projects continues to rise, the shortage of skilled workers has led to delays, increased costs, and hindered growth opportunities. In response to this pressing need, the establishment of this free training facility will provide accessible training opportunities for individuals interested in pursuing careers in the construction industry, equipping them with the necessary skills and certifications to meet the demand for skilled workers.

The program allows participants to learn the skills needed for entry-level roles in 9-weeks at no cost to them. The training results in an industry- recognized certificate in carpentry and electrical. The first four weeks of the training provide basic construction knowledge such as reading a tape measure, using hand and power tools, and safe work practices including an OSHA 10-hour certificate. The remaining five weeks are trade- specific training. Each student completes the program with an OSHA-10 safety certification and is ready to be placed into a job when they graduate.

Ed Brady, HBI President and CEO, shared that “Older workers are retiring and not being replaced because the U.S. has not produced an adequate supply of construction labor for several generations. HBI is committed to training the next generation of skilled workers and ensuring the supply of construction labor.”

The BuildStrong Academy would not be possible without the generosity of co-sponsor and lead funder, The Fioretti Family Charitable Fund. “After several years of dedicated effort, the opening of the Charlotte academy is finally here. Our family is excited for this opportunity to serve the working community and construction industry in Charlotte,” said Peter Fioretti. “My brothers and I also believe this will be integral progress to do more for underprivileged young adults wanting education alternatives and living-wage jobs. This program is designed to be scalable and sustainable to serve many families in Charlotte.”

Other contributors to the program include The Home Depot Foundation, Truist Foundation, and DEWALT.

“The Home Depot Foundation has been proud to partner with HBI to make trades training and pathways to lucrative careers in the trades a reality for more people,” said Erin Izen, Executive Director of The Home Depot Foundation. “With more than 400,000 construction jobs open – and growing – the new Academy in Charlotte will further our joint mission to shrink the skilled labor gap and ensure a strong pipeline of qualified construction professionals for years to come.”

"DEWALT has been 'for the trades' since 1924 and is deeply committed to the needs of our pro users," said Jeff Doehne, Stanley Black & Decker's President & General Manager of The Home Depot. "Through conversations with customers and our own internal research, we know the lack of skilled labor is a significant barrier to the success of the industry. We are proud to support HBI's newest BuildStrong Academy and several others across the county to cultivate a resilient next-generation workforce."

"Aligned with our purpose to inspire and build better lives and communities, Truist is proud to support HBI's BuildStrong Academy of Charlotte," shared Erica Acie, head of retail originations. Since its inception, Truist has empowered workforce development through a variety of initiatives and partnerships that provide education-to-career pathways to diverse communities across the bank's footprint. "HBI's BuildStrong Academy demonstrates Truist's commitment to building a more inclusive and sustainable workforce by upskilling future generations and connecting organizations with highly qualified candidates."

To learn more about HBI's BuildStrong Academies, visit hbi.org.

About The Fioretti Family Charitable Fund:

The Fioretti Family Charitable Fund leverages our entrepreneurial vision, relationships, and capital, to make a massive impact on underprivileged children and young families. We promote education, living-wage jobs, affordable housing, and entrepreneurship. We also supercharge the success of emerging real estate & entrepreneurial students.

About The Home Depot Foundation

The Home Depot Foundation, the nonprofit arm of The Home Depot, works to improve the homes and lives of U.S. veterans, support communities impacted by natural disasters and train skilled tradespeople to fill the labor gap. Since 2011, the Foundation has invested more than \$500 million in veteran causes and improved more than 60,000 veteran homes and facilities. The Foundation has pledged to invest \$750 million in veteran causes by 2030 and \$50 million in training the next generation of skilled tradespeople through the Path to Pro program.

About DEWALT

DEWALT, a Stanley Black & Decker brand, celebrates 100 years in business by continuing to provide our customers with total jobsite and outdoor solutions. By applying its latest technology to the challenges of today's skilled trades, DEWALT is leading the charge for the jobsite of the future and is pioneering the next generation of tools, outdoor equipment and forward-looking technologies. DEWALT products. GUARANTEED TOUGH®. For more information, visit www.dewalt.com or follow DEWALT on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn

About Truist Foundation

Truist Foundation is committed to Truist Financial Corporation's (NYSE: TFC) purpose to inspire and build better lives and communities. The Foundation, an endowed private foundation established in 2020 whose operating budget is independent of Truist Financial Corporation, makes strategic investments in a wide variety of nonprofit organizations centered around two focus areas: building career pathways to economic mobility and strengthening small businesses to ensure all communities have an equal opportunity to thrive. Embodying these focus areas are the Foundation's leading initiatives – the Inspire Awards and Where It Starts. Learn more at Truist.com/Foundation.

About HBI

HBI trains skilled workers for the building industry. It is the nation's leading nonprofit provider of trade skills training in residential construction. Through the organization's industry-recognized curriculum, HBI trains in a variety of skills including, carpentry, electrical, plumbing, building construction technology, HVAC, and masonry. In programs across the country, HBI provides pre-apprenticeship training and certification programs in middle and high schools; community colleges, technical institutes and training academies for middle and high school students, veterans and transitioning military, unemployed and displaced workers; and low-income, at-risk and justice-involved youth and adults.

The goals for all HBI programs, regardless of the population, is to train, credential and place students in industry-related employment or post-secondary education. These metrics, however, fall within the overarching goal we have for all those we serve – to provide individuals an opportunity to take control of their lives and become productive, self-sufficient citizens.