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NHHLA Inspector Training School Graduates the 160th Class

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE – Commencement exercises for the 160th Class of the NHHLA Inspector Training School were held Friday, December 11, 2009. Ten students representing eight states completed the 14-week Lumber Inspection Program which was led by veteran School Instructor Rich Hascher.

Graduates were:

- Jason Bailey of New Lisbon, Wis.- White City Lumber
- Jerrod Free of Horn Lake, Miss. - J.T. Shannon Lumber Company
- Matthew Gray of Birmingham, Ala. - Bibb Hardwood
- Don Kuehl of Harrison, Mich. - Billsby Lumber Company
- Dimitri Kulp of Boscobel, Wis.
- Christopher Largent of Erin, Tenn. - Ralph Largent Sawmill, Inc.
- Jason Letts of Neosho, Mo. - Missouri Walnut, LLC
- D. Wince Lynn of Tellico Plains, Tenn. - Lynn Lumber Company
- Coy Parker of Huntsville, Ark.- Parker Wood Products
- David Pfister of Waynesville, N.C. - Oaks Unlimited

In his keynote address, Adam Taylor of Ralph Taylor Lumber Company and himself a graduate of the 125th Class, congratulated the students on their accomplishments and welcomed them into the alumni fraternity. Emphasizing the importance of the lumber grading rules as the foundation of a career in the hardwood industry, Adam encouraged the students to rely on the integrity and standards of the rules as they embark on a new career. “The NHHLA grading rules are the standards and when you get out into the field, those standards will affect everything you do, even if you one day no longer grade lumber,” stated Adam. “I am on the sales side now, but I find that I still use the rules and the standards and integrity that are behind them every day.”

Acting as Master of Ceremonies, Mark Barford, Executive Director gave the students one final reflection before beginning the presentation of certificates. “Graduating from the School doesn’t guarantee you success but it opens the door to the possibility of success,” he said. “And the doors of NHHLA are always open to you should you ever need us.”

Outstanding individual awards recipients are as follows:

- Jarrod Free - John Thomson Award for Highest Overall Average
- Matt Gray - Howard Hanlon Award for Second Highest Overall Average
- David Pfister- Westside Hardwood Club Award for Highest Board Run Average
- Christopher Largent - J.P. Hamer Award for Most Improved Student
- Don Kuehl - South Central Lumbermen’s Award for Best Attitude/Citizenship
- Dimitri Kulp – Willard Scholarship Award for Self-Sufficiency, Attitude and Effort
- D. Wince Lynn - Lumbermen’s Club of Memphis Leadership Award

The NHLA Inspector Training School has a proud and rich 60 year history; graduating more than 6,700 students since its conception. The Program teaches the rules and applications of the NHLA grading system and prepares students for a career in the hardwood industry. This unique program has earned worldwide respect, consequently attracting students from throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, Africa, South America and Asia.

Enrollment is now open for the 161st Class which begins January 6, 2010. To enroll or learn more about the program please contact Crystal Oldham, Director of Education at c.oldham@nhla.com or 901-507-0312.

The world's largest and oldest hardwood industry association, NHLA represents 1,300 companies and individuals that produce, use and sell North American hardwood lumber, or provide equipment, supplies or services to the hardwood industry. It was founded in 1898 to establish a uniform system of grading rules for the measurement and inspection of hardwood lumber. Since 1979, its headquarters have been in Memphis. To learn more about NHLA, please visit www.nhla.com.

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