



**Media Contact:**  
Renee Hornsby  
901-399-7560  
[r.hornsby@nhla.com](mailto:r.hornsby@nhla.com)

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### **NHLA Announces New “Partner” Membership Category**

MEMPHIS, TENN – The National Hardwood Lumber Association is pleased to announce the establishment of a new membership category, designed to increase Association participation by hardwood companies from around the world. The new “Partner” membership recognizes individual firms or corporations engaged in the manufacture, custom kiln drying, wholesaling or distribution of hardwood lumber, veneer, plywood and related products that are not headquartered in North America.

As hardwood lumber markets have become increasingly international, an NHLA International Task Force was created and after much research and discussion, the group recommended that the Association reach out to the world hardwood lumber business as a recognition of the reality that the domestic hardwood lumber industry is in a truly world market. The new membership category became official on June 1, 2010.

The embracement of a global perspective by the Association has been a work in progress. Two years ago, NHLA adopted a new tag line, “Strong Roots. Global Reach.” In January 2009, NHLA officially opened its first overseas office in Shanghai, China. The focus of the Shanghai office has been to provide inspection services including grade inquiries on specific loads and dispute resolutions and the teaching and training of US hardwood lumber grades to the growing list of consumers in China and Southeast Asia.

“The NHLA grading rules have provided the domestic hardwood industry a common language to use in specifying hardwood lumber transactions for the past 113 years. With the addition of the new Partner category, the Association has taken a step towards setting the world standard for hardwood lumber grades,” noted Mark Barford, NHLA Executive Director. “And the creation of this new Partner membership category is another step towards putting the NHLA tag line – ‘Strong Roots. Global Reach’ into action to support the North American hardwood industry.”

For more information contact Mark Barford, CAE, Executive Director at 901-377-1082 or [m.barford@nhla.com](mailto:m.barford@nhla.com).

The world’s largest and oldest hardwood industry association, NHLA represents more than 1,200 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 1980, its headquarters have been in Memphis, Tenn. To learn more about NHLA, please visit [www.nhla.com](http://www.nhla.com) or [www.nhlaconvention.com](http://www.nhlaconvention.com).

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