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## **David Polley Named to** **World Floor Covering Association** **Hall of Fame**

### ***2015 Inductee Boasts 58-Year History (and Counting) in Flooring Industry***

January 19, 2015 - Anaheim, CA – The newest inductee to the World Floor Covering Association (WFCA) Hall of Fame was establishing himself as a “strategic thinker” before corporate America even knew what “strategic thinking” was.

Unlike some, David Polley was not “born” into the flooring industry. He came into the business armed with an undergraduate degree from the University of Pennsylvania and an MBA from Columbia University. He has seen and helped to lead the industry through its dramatic evolution from weaving to tufting, the consolidation of manufacturing, and most recently its journey through and powerful emergence from the Great Recession.

Polley has left a trail of success throughout his career. His formal induction into the Hall of Fame will take place at the Spring WFCA Board of Directors Meeting in Newport Beach, California.

David Polley entered the flooring business almost 60 years ago. He has been an industry innovator in retailing, manufacturing and marketing ever since. Polley began with Abraham and Straus, at a time when department stores were the dominant retailers in the carpet industry. There he learned the science as well as the art of running a business by the numbers.

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He quickly grasped principles that he would apply throughout his career. As the retail environment changed he moved on to Korvettes, a dominant mass merchandiser making an aggressive move into carpeting.

With the industry in a period of rapid expansion, Polley moved to the manufacturing side. He worked first for Stephen Leedom, then launched David Industries in 1972. Here he handled all sales, product development, marketing and manufacturing. The diversity of this position prepared Polley well for his next assignment, as President of Lee's Residential. He began there in 1981 and, in a market filled with imitators, took the high road and positioned Lee's as a mill that brought both style and innovation to its retail partners.

In 1991, after a decade at Lee's and then Burlington Industries Inc., Polley embarked on his greatest challenge yet. World Carpet was a pioneer in the carpet industry. From its initial rise to prominence, it had fallen on hard times as its commodity strategy became ineffectual with larger, cost-efficient competitors. Polley repositioned the core World Carpet brand while developing a new fashion strategy led by the reintroduction of Customweave and Wunda Weve. The revived brands got new life through the use of unique tufting constructions combined with extended color lines—all conceived by Polley. Through this venture the business went from a 10-year stretch of financial losses to proven profitability. Mohawk Industries eventually purchased the entity for \$175 million.

Polley stayed with Mohawk after its acquisition, overseeing all of the company's residential business. He played an integral role in developing the Mohawk brand strategy – Mohawk Makes the Room - that became the centerpiece of the company's advertising strategy and is still in place today.

Polley departed from Mohawk in 2003 to join The Dixie Group. Applying a storehouse of retail and manufacturing knowhow amassed over years in the flooring industry, he conceived and launched the Dixie Home brand. That brand exists today and enjoys annual sales in excess of \$100 million.

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Following The Dixie Group, Polley founded VSP Flooring, LLC, a polyester broadloom tufting company, where he continues to serve as president. In October 2014, at the vigorous age of 80, he launched Everstep Flooring, LLC, a new entity specializing in the hospitality industry.

Polley has lent his knowledge, talents, and labors to many in the flooring industry throughout the decades. He has been a member of the board of directors at the Carpet & Rug Institute; Chairman of the Education Market Committee; and member of the National Advertising Committee at CRI. He has also been a consistent member of the WFCA, NAFCD and RFI.

On a personal level, Polley is recognized by many as a second-to-none mentor. He has always taken the time to be a good listener and to provide sage advice. One of his disciples felt the following statement best captured David's role as a mentor – true leaders “plant the seeds for trees under whose shade they may never sit.” The industry is a better place for having been led by David Polley, and has flourished under his influence.

Polley has consistently balanced his professional life with committed service to his community. He served as co-chair of Houston Museum fundraisers, a sponsor for the Chattanooga Museum and Chattanooga's Four Bridges Art Festival, a member of the Chairman's Circle of Chattanooga's prestigious Hunter Museum of Art, chairman of the board of the 106 W. 86th Co-op Organization in New York City, and supporter of the Alopecia Foundation. He and his wife have devoted themselves to helping homeless families in the Chattanooga area where they live. They feed and house those in need through the “Family Promise” organization. They have also hosted foreign students on behalf of the Good Shepherd and Lookout Mountain Catholic Churches.

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**ABOUT WFCA:**

The World Floor Covering Association (WFCA), the official sponsor of the annual Surfaces tradeshow, is the floor covering industry's largest advocacy organization, representing floor covering retailers, contractors and allied service providers throughout North America.

The WFCA is a recognized leader in marketing research and industry programs for flooring professionals. In addition, it publishes the only retailer-oriented trade periodical, Premier Flooring Retailer. On the consumer end, in addition to an ongoing consumer-focused flooring awareness public relations program, it operates the highly successful and award-winning premier consumer flooring website, [WFCA.org](http://WFCA.org), which provides unbiased information about every type of floor covering and connects customers to members' retail stores. The WFCA also influences public policy affecting the floor covering industry and consumers. For more information about the WFCA, visit [WFCA.org](http://WFCA.org) and [WFCA-PRO.org](http://WFCA-PRO.org).

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