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WFCA HONORS IKE GULESSARIAN WITH FIRST GOLD STANDARD RETAILER OF THE YEAR AWARD

*Gulessarian Recognized For Stellar Customer Service, Unparalleled Sales Team Support,
Implementing Smart Strategies For Long-Term Success*

Anaheim, CA; February 10, 2009. The WFCA has awarded Ike Gulessarian with its first *Gold Standard Retailer of the Year Award*, which recognizes a WFCA member business that consistently exemplifies creating outstanding retail experiences for its customers. Gulessarian owns and operates eight Carpeteria-branded stores in the San Francisco Bay Area and, as the winner, he will be featured in the WFCA's trade advertising campaign and on its website. In addition, he will receive a \$5,000 prize, a trophy, plus custom-designed Gold Standard Retailer Of The Year award seals for displaying in his store entryways.

"We're always doing our best and striving to be better, so it's a tremendous honor to be recognized," said Gulessarian. "Being the first recipient of this award makes it even more meaningful, because it demonstrates that our peers are taking notice of our hard work."

Gulessarian, who opened his first store in 1973 and now maintains eight retail locations, credits a good location and excellent customer service, such as same- or next-day in-home estimates and 48-hour guaranteed installation, as keys to his success.

When asked about the current recession, Gulessarian said that this is the fifth slowdown he's seen since starting his business in 1973. His strategy has always been to take notice as early as possible and start cutting costs immediately. That may mean getting rid of marginally-performing stores and consolidating his work force, and looking at any other smart ways to cut waste without impacting the customer.

Gulessarian also considers strategic advertising and marketing efforts as crucial to his success. All marketing campaigns are specifically designed to drive traffic into his stores, and his salespeople make it a habit to respond to customer calls or emails within minutes, and not hours.

A portion of Gulessarian's store's earnings are regularly donated to Armenian charities.

(more)

“Being born in an Armenian family that escaped a major genocide of its people, we make it a point to contribute to Armenian schools and churches in the Middle East and Armenia, which recently got its independence from the Soviet Union,” he said.”

Gulesarian said that he’s proud of his employees and considers them a “close-knit family,” from sales and warehouse staff to managers and installers, many of whom have been working closely together for several years.

“To be in business for nearly 50 years and to have eight locations means that Ike is clearly doing something right, and we want to recognize his steadfast dedication and success,” D. Christopher Davis, CEO of the WFCA. “Ike has continually raised the bar on creating positive experiences for anyone that walks through his doors.”