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**2017 Fresh Wood Student Competition Gets Second Highest Number of Entries Yet**

*Panel of Five Industry Judges Will Determine Top 40 Finalists*

**ANAHEIM, CA** – (May 9, 2017) – A near-record 195 entries were received for the 2017 Fresh Wood student woodworking competition. The judging panel will select approximately 40 finalists to be invited to [AWFS® Fair](#) at the Las Vegas Convention Center, **Wednesday, July 19 – Saturday, July 22, 2017**.

This year's entries came from 48 different schools in the United States and Canada. Of the entries received overall, 62 were from high schools while the remaining 133 – about 68 percent -- were from post-secondary schools. Entries totaled 169 in the last Fresh Wood competition in 2015, and the record highest number of entries was 211 in 2007. “The higher number of entries can be attributed to increased promotion to schools, students and teachers and a stronger presence for the competition on social media,” says AWFS Executive Vice President Angelo Gangone. This year also was the first time the entry (and judging) process is entirely online, making it significantly easier for students and teachers to submit their entries.

Students can enter their projects into six different categories in the Fresh Wood competition: Case Goods, Seating, Design for Production, Tables, Open and Special Theme: Lighting. Entries from the High School level and the Post-Secondary level are scored separately. At the High School level, both the Tables and Open categories had the most entries with 18 each. At the Post-Secondary level, there was a record-setting 50 entries in the Tables category. Post-Secondary Chairs was also well represented with 30 entries.

The 2017 panel of judges represent distinct areas of the industry, lending a variety of perspectives to the judging process. The panel includes an esteemed furniture designer, a former Fresh Wood finalist (2007) who is now an architectural millworker, a lighting

designer, a general shop lead from Autodesk's Pier 9 makerspace, and a *Fine Woodworking* magazine editor. The judges and their associated organizations are:

**Jena Hall**, Jena Hall Designs Ltd., Elmsford, NY

**Tom McKenna**, *Fine Woodworking*, Newtown, CT

**Chris Poehlmann**, CP Lighting, Philadelphia, PA

**Mei-Yen Shipek**, Autodesk Pier 9, San Francisco, CA

**Scott Vasey**, Advanced Fixtures, Princeton, TX

Judges review entries based on the design innovation or quality of execution of a known style, craftsmanship, functionality, construction techniques, and aesthetics. Final judging will occur at AWFS®Fair. All winners of the student competition will be announced Friday, July 21 at the Student Awards Reception on the show floor Stage.

This year, AWFS®Fair exhibiting companies will sponsor the competition's special awards—the Best of Show and People's Choice. The Best of Show Award, sponsored by KCD Software, will receive not only a \$1,000 prize but also a coveted wood sculpture designed by the renowned furniture artist Garry Knox Bennett. The People's Choice Award, sponsored by Wagner Meters, will be selected by AWFS®Fair attendees and carries a \$750 prize. In addition to Best of Show and People's Choice, prizes can be awarded in each category and at each school level for First Place (\$1,000), Second Place (\$500) and Honorable Mention (\$250).

The Fresh Wood Student Competition has no fee to enter, and AWFS® covers costs to ship the entries to and from AWFS®Fair, as well as to bring the finalists and their teachers to Las Vegas. A goal of the contest is to encourage students to pursue further education and careers in woodworking and manufacturing as the industry faces shortages of skilled workers. The post secondary level includes entrants from four-year universities, trade colleges, and community colleges. It is open to students in North America.

The full-scale international AWFS®Fair, scheduled for July 19-22, 2017 in Las Vegas, has become a critical hub for international commerce. The AWFS®Fair brings together the home and commercial furnishings industry, including manufacturers and distributors of machinery, hardware, lumber, construction materials and other suppliers to the furniture,

cabinet manufacturers and custom woodworkers. For more information about AWFS®Fair, please visit: [www.awfsfair.org](http://www.awfsfair.org).

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