

# Ceramic Tile Education Foundation

## 2017 Annual Report

### CTEF Classes and Certification Programs

The Ceramic Tile Education Foundation (CTEF) is supported by all segments of the ceramic tile industry, and for many years has emphasized education and certification of installers as its two primary objectives vital to the growth of the market. In 2017, these programs include:

- Understanding and Installing Ceramic Tile – 40 attendees
- Mortar Shower Base and Waterproofing – 17 attendees
- Ceramic Tile Inspection – 20 attendees
- Manufacturer training programs – 605 attendees

Thanks to a strong effort from leaders of the National Tile Contractors Association (NTCA) and Tile Council of North America (TCNA) to promote this to its members, the Certified Tile Installer (CTI) testing program was established to combat **poor installation**. The CTI exam includes both an online knowledge test and a physical skills assessment conducted in regional warehouses across the United States.

In 2014, the CTEF announced it had reached 1,000 certified installers who had passed the exam. That number increased to 1,150 CTIs by the end of 2015 and 1,285 CTIs by the end of 2016. CTEF is on schedule to reach **1,500 CTIs by the end of 2017**, with a realistic goal of **1,900 by the end of 2018**.

To escalate certification, we have launched the Regional Evaluator program and now have 16 Regional Evaluators located around the country. We have added host locations and developed a program with The Tile Shop locations around the country. We have also created pricing levels to encourage more CTI testing within an organization.

NTCA, TCNA, and CTEF with the leaders of the International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers (IUBAC), International Masonry Institute (IMI), and signatory contractors of the Tile Contractors Association of America (TCAA) have created the **Advanced Certifications for Tile Installers program**, known as ACT. To date, there are six specific advanced certification tests offered in the ACT Program. To qualify for ACT, installers must have either completed and passed the CTI test administered by the CTEF, or successfully completed the three-year Apprenticeship Program administered by the IUBAC.

ACT language is now included in Master Spec. With the passing of standards for gauged porcelain tile, the ACT program will gear up for certification in 2018. Initial demonstrations took place at Surfaces and Coverings in 2017.

### Coverings & Sponsors are Vital Supporters of CTEF

CTEF is a non-profit 501c 3 Foundation that utilizes all of its resources to promote the education and certification of tile installers. The Board of Directors of COVERINGS, the international tile and stone show held annually in North America, provides much needed support to the Foundation, contributing over \$1,000,000 over the past eight years toward the operation and expansion of the CTEF programs. The owners of the COVERINGS show that have generously provided this support include:

- Ceramics of Italy
- Ceramic Tile Distributors Association (CTDA)
- National Tile Contractors Association (NTCA)
- Tile Council of North America (TCNA)
- Tile of Spain

Fundraising mutually supported and promoted by the TCNA and the NTCA, with levels of sponsorship - including the new Elite Level in recognition of Coverings Support - that offer value and benefits in return for that support, further support the CTEF Mission.

On the last page of this report, we have included the list of our generous and valued sponsors. **We thank each sponsor for their unwavering support and dedication to the betterment of the tile industry.**

## New Initiatives in 2017

During 2017, CTEF continued to explore new venues for reaching tile installers and their employers to promote the CTI message. We held education and certification sessions at TISE in January. We presented at the Carpet One and Flooring America Winter Conventions. We met with WFCA and other organizations and participated with NTCA in the JLC Live NE in Rhode Island in March.

We are promoting CTEF and the benefits of Certified Tile Installers by submitting articles to Floor Covering Weekly, Floor Covering Installer Magazine, Tile Magazine, Tile Letter Magazine, Fabulous Floors Magazine and Premier Flooring.

As mentioned above, we have launched the Regional Evaluator to escalate certifications around the country.

To support these programs and promote quality tile installation to homeowners, dealers, distributors, specifiers and future CTIs, we have built new pages on the CTEF [ceramictilefoundation.org](http://ceramictilefoundation.org) website launched in May 2016 and further enhanced existing ones with offers and testimonial videos. The News Page details news about CTEF. The Dealer/Distributor Resources page offers visitors an information kit to promote the employment of CTIs. The Regional Evaluator page details the program, lists participating REs and offers an information kit for future REs. The Gallery of CTI Installations with over 30 images promotes the works of Certified Tile Installers.

Finally, the CTEF Blog which publishes articles on a weekly basis promotes best practices in tile installation and celebrates success stories, including the Coverings Installation Design Showcase projects. Regular series include Ask Scott and the Qualified Labor Series. Monthly emails recapping these emails go out to all those who have signed up on the website, ~4000 as of August 2017. Since launch, monthly visits have increased from ~2000 to ~14,000 in July 2017.

## Success in 2018 and Beyond

CTEF took over Fund Raising responsibility from TCNA in the fall of 2016 and generated record participation and donations of \$307,000. This has enabled stronger relationships with industry sponsors and increased support for programs such as the Regional Evaluator Program.

In February 2017, we began testing Google AdWords and Facebook for paid search and social ads. In July 2017, we applied to the Google Grants Program for Non-Profits and have been accepted. We expect to build our Paid Search presence across the US to drive more traffic to the CTEF CTI Zip code locator.



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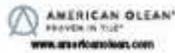
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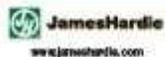
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