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**The National Candle Association Announces 2017 Directors and Officers,
Recognizes Industry Leaders, and Focuses on Priorities for Coming Year**

WASHINGTON, DC, June 8, 2017 --- Consumer candle safety and fair trade policies are top priorities for the National Candle Association (NCA), which hosted its 2017 Conference & Expo recently in St. Petersburg, FL. Nearly 400 industry professionals gathered for the association's 43rd annual meeting and exposition.

Among the orders of business at the meeting was the election of the following directors and officers for the 2017-2018 fiscal year:

- Kathy LaVanier of [Renegade Candles](#) was elected NCA President;
- Bob Nelson of [Yankee Candle](#) will continue to serve as Vice President/President Elect;
- George Pappas II of [Lumi-Lite Candle Company](#) will resume his position as 1st Vice President;
- Tom Donnelly of [Alene Candles](#) will serve as 2nd Vice President;
- Chris Rakyta of [Candle-Lite Company](#) will assume the role of Treasurer.

NCA also seized the occasion of the annual assembly to pay tribute to those whose work has made a significant contribution to the industry or community. NCA's Hall of Fame Award was bestowed upon two deserving industry leaders in recognition of the lasting impact of their professional dedication:

Jeb Head, president of [Atkins & Pierce](#), a seventh generation family-owned company which has served as a supplier to candle makers for 200 years; and John Witham, head of research and development at [Candle-Lite](#), an American candle company founded in 1840.

NCA also recognized [ScentsAbility](#), a nonprofit organization that helps individuals with special needs learn job skills and become independent through making and selling candles.

"Those of us in the US candle sector take great pride in our work and in advancing industry innovation while embracing the heritage of candle making in America," said Kathy LaVanier, NCA president. "We're delighted to recognize the achievements of Jeb Head and John Witham, two noted industry leaders, and we applaud the work of ScentsAbility for using candles to help individuals develop life-long skills."

In addition to the leadership elections and awards, the NCA conference agenda included trend sessions, research presentations, board and committee meetings, and the annual business meeting. Association priorities for the coming year include its ongoing commitment to candle safety and consumer education about safe candle use, and sustaining fair trade policies to maintain a balanced and competitive market in the US for American candle companies.

The National Candle Association Annual Conference & Expo is a focal point for issues and innovations in the candle industry and attracts manufacturers and industry suppliers from around the world. NCA extends a special thank you to all sponsors who helped make the 2017 event a success. For a full list of sponsors, please visit <https://www.eiseverywhere.com/ehome/210857/472900/>.

National Candle Association (NCA) is the trade association representing U.S. candle manufacturers and their suppliers. It is widely recognized as the leading technical authority on candle manufacturing, science and safety. For additional information, visit www.candles.org.

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