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**THIS OLD HOUSE AND FINE HOMEBUILDING FORM ALLIANCE TO ADVANCE THEIR EFFORTS TO ENCOURAGE AND EMPOWER A NEW WORKFORCE OF SKILLED TRADESPEOPLE**

***This new partnership will leverage each company’s charitable campaigns to bring increased attention and assets to programs designed to stem the rising deficit of skilled workers in the building trades.***

**Stamford, CT| February 6, 2019** *-- This Old House* and *Fine Homebuilding* are joining forces to create a more powerful way to address the most critical problem facing the home-building industry today: the growing shortage of skilled workers across all trades. Over the past three years, each brand has separately launched and developed successful and complementary campaigns to raise awareness of the rewarding job opportunities available in residential construction, and each has generated scholarship funds to support the training required to secure them. To date, *This Old House*'sGeneration NEXT and *Fine Homebuilding*'s#KeepCraftAlive® have raised a combined nearly $700,000 through the generosity of industry partners and trade organizations, and the brands believe their new partnership can push that total to over $1 million in the months ahead.

As the current workforce continues to age and the existing pool of tradespeople shrinks, the need for skilled workers continues to grow. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, by 2024 more than seven million jobs in the construction industry will need to be filled to replace the number of skilled workers who will reach retirement age. In an effort to close the gap, Generation NEXT and #KeepCraftAlive will employ their separate and newly shared platforms—including the award-winning cast and experts from *This Old House*, successful trade professionals celebrated by *Fine Homebuilding*, and young apprentices featured by each—to dispel myths about jobs in the skilled trades; shed light on the benefits, rewards, and opportunities that the building trades can provide; and give young people a path to pursue skill-based careers.

Generation NEXT from *This Old House* is widely acclaimed by the industry for its initiative, dedication, and impact. Passionately supported by the brand’s expert talent, it employs all of the *This Old House* assets, including its Emmy Award-winning television show~~s~~, celebrated magazine, and rapidly growing digital and OTT platforms. As a celebrated home-improvement brand, *This Old House* has worked with Congress on tackling the importance of closing the skills gap through pending legislation, while raising over $600,000 for the mikeroweWORKS Foundation and the Skilled Labor Fund (part of the National Housing Endowment).

*Fine Homebuilding*, widely recognized for its award-winning program #KeepCraftAlive, has gained significant momentum as an agent of industry change, inspiring emerging professionals and fostering a deeper sense of community. Since launching #KeepCraftAlive in 2017, *Fine Homebuilding* has supported the initiative with broad-reaching efforts through its print and video content that celebrates those who have found success and fulfillment while building homes, and through industry events for emerging professionals to network with master tradespeople. Along with industry partners, the company funds an annual scholarship through SkillsUSA to support students who are interested in the trades, and encourages them to continue their education and field training. This year, the company and its partners raised $70,000 to fund #KeepCraftAlive scholarships for students in construction-related fields for the 2018-2019 academic year, a nearly three-fold increase from the $25,000 awarded last year.

Executive Director Rob Yagid explains why the company has struck a chord with its compelling pro-focused content: “With #KeepCraftAlive, we’re changing the narrative around what it means to work with your hands. Tradeswork is not second-rate to any other profession, and often offers a better return on education investment. Building is not for everyone; it is tough and demanding. But for those who demonstrate an interest and aptitude for building, we want to show our support for them and their craft. This new narrative is carried forth throughout all #KeepCraftAlive channels, and is also conveyed through the *Fine Homebuilding* brand. An excellent example of this can be seen in the ['Why I Build'](https://www.finehomebuilding.com/blog/why-i-build) video series we launched last year.”

“The skills gap is the number-one issue facing the building trades, and together with such a well-respected brand as *Fine Homebuilding,* we are in a unique position to put a spotlight on the issue, erase misconceptions, and emphasize the value of these jobs,” says Eric Thorkilsen, Executive Chairman of This Old House Ventures, LLC, and the driving force behind Generation NEXT. “The apprentices we select to be featured across *This Old House* each year are a very effective and visible way to encourage young people to pursue the building trades and to show what we are talking about. We’re committed to continuing all these efforts.”

“This collaboration with *This Old House* takes the unique strengths of each of our platforms and allows us to work together to amplify and make a difference around an industry problem," adds Renee Jordan, Senior Vice President & Group Publisher for Home & Construction at The Taunton Press. “To solve the problem, more people need to know about the problem. We’re leveraging all of our media channels to focus attention on the skills-gap issue, and create far greater impact together.”

Beginning in February, and as part of their new alliance, the companies will also share content, distribution platforms, and promotion on their respective sites to increase engagement with the skilled-trades audience.

The two companies will also be together on February 20th at IBS in Las Vegas to co-host a special scholarship fundraising event. Conference attendees are invited to join Justin Fink and the editorial staff of Fine Homebuilding, along with Brand Ambassadors, and industry experts from This Old House, Tom Silva and Richard Trethewey, for an evening of networking, fundraising and giveaways. The event has been organized by Fine Homebuilding to generate awareness and support for #KeepCraftAlive while guests enjoy craft beer, handcrafted whisky cocktails and pub fare, swag bags and over $2,000 worth of giveaways (tool-belts, quality tools, Yeti® cooler, #KeepCraftAlive merchandise and more!).

100% of ticket sale net profits from this event will be donated to the Fine Homebuilding#KeepCraftAlive Scholarship Fund with SkillsUSA in order to help close the skills gap and support the next generation of craftsmen and women.  Fine Homebuilding will also match donations dollar-for-dollar up to $10,000.00. For more information about this event, or to register to attend, please visit: http://bit.ly/KCALasVegas

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**ABOUT FINE HOMEBUILDING**

*Fine Homebuilding* is the most trusted and authoritative resource for the residential construction and remodeling community. We uniquely source our content from the job sites and design offices of the most qualified and talented builders and designers in the industry to empower a global workforce with the ability to create the most advanced homes possible. Driven by the ethos that exceptional homes are possible, and that craftsmanship is an honorable and worthy pursuit, *Fine Homebuilding* has become the brand for skilled practitioners, deeply knowledgeable enthusiasts, industry influencers, and forward-thinking companies who are collectively committed to shaping the way we build.

**ABOUT THIS OLD HOUSE**

This Old House Ventures, LLC is America’s No. 1 multi-platform home-enthusiast brand, providing trusted information and “do it right” expert advice through its award-winning television shows, This Old Houseand Ask This Old House,its highly regarded and award-winning This Old House magazine, and its inspiration- and information-driven digital properties, [thisoldhouse.com](http://thisoldhouse.com/) and house.one. The company is headquartered in Stamford, CT, with offices in New York, Detroit, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Atlanta, Toronto, and Concord, MA.

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