

**Steve Abernathy**  
Chief Operating Officer  
World Floor Covering Association  
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Dalton, GA 30721

**10 December 2024**

**To Whom It May Concern,**

It is with great enthusiasm that I write this letter of recommendation for Jim Aaron, who has served as the Executive Director of the Floor Covering Education Foundation (FCEF). In this role, Jim has shown exceptional leadership, vision, and commitment to advancing the mission of the organization, making a profound impact on both the floor covering industry and the professionals it serves.

Under Jim's guidance, the FCEF has flourished as a cornerstone of education and workforce development for the flooring industry. He has spearheaded initiatives that address critical challenges, such as the skilled labor shortage, by developing innovative training programs and fostering partnerships with educational institutions, industry leaders, and trade associations. These efforts have not only enhanced the skills of aspiring professionals but also elevated the standards of the entire industry.

Jim possesses a unique ability to unite stakeholders with diverse interests, fostering collaboration that yields tangible results. He has consistently demonstrated a keen strategic mind, exceptional communication skills, and an unwavering dedication to FCEF's mission. Whether it's advocating for the industry, securing funding, or mentoring team members, Jim leads with integrity, passion, and a results-driven approach.

One of his 's most notable achievements has been launching a nationwide technical college education program for flooring installation. This program is currently being replicated throughout the United States. Additionally, Jim and his team has secured over \$3M in federal grants to support specific educational initiatives.

Beyond his professional achievements, Jim is a person of great character. He approaches every challenge with optimism and determination, fostering an environment of collaboration and mutual respect. His ability to inspire trust and confidence in others is one of his greatest strengths.

As a board member of FCEF, I have witnessed Jim capabilities first hand, and I have no doubt that Jim will continue to excel and make significant contributions in any endeavor he pursues. It is without reservation that I give him my highest recommendation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Abernathy", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Steve Abernathy  
COO, World Floor Covering Association  
Board Member, Floor Covering Education Foundation