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Ivester of New England Shutter Mills named 2017 president of Builders and Remodelers Association of Greater Boston (BRAGB)

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Karl Ivester, New England Shutter Mills

Lawrence, MA New England Shutter Mills founder and president Karl Ivester has been appointed 2017 president of the Builders and Remodelers Association of Greater Boston (BRAGB).

As president of BRAGB, Ivester will be responsible for growing membership and promoting BRAGB's highly skilled member professionals in the home building, home improvement and remodeling fields. He will also continue the organization's work in maintaining the highest ethical standards, while encouraging civic and environmental responsibility in the building industry.

"I'm honored to be chosen to lead the Builders and Remodelers Association of Greater Boston this year, and I'm looking forward to working hard on behalf of our members and the entire industry," Ivester said. "Working together as a team with my fellow directors, we can make BRAGB an even more dynamic organization with more and better resources and benefits for all of its members."

The Builders and Remodelers Association of Massachusetts has been the region's pre-eminent home building association since 1944. In addition to maintaining the highest standards of professional conduct for its members, BRAGB's ongoing mission is to further social interaction and business opportunities among members and community leaders, enhance the public perception of the home building industry, promote and protect the interests and policy priorities of the industry, and to provide forums for sharing information and enhancing professional development.

Ivester founded New England Shutter Mills in 1999 – and the company has grown into the region's leading provider of premier American-made interior and exterior shutters to home builders, design professionals and homeowners. Headquartered in Lawrence, Mass. - New England Shutter Mills serves all of northern and southern New England including Cape Cod and the Islands. The company has been recognized for three consecutive years by HOUZZ for its customer service, and was named Contractor of the Year in 2016 by EMNARI – the Eastern Massachusetts chapter of the National Association of the Remodeling Industry.

"New England Shutter Mills has achieved more success because of its membership in BRAGB. I want every member to have that same kind of experience and realize significant added value through their engagement with this organization," Ivester said. "Our priorities for 2017 will be to

expand our membership by demonstrating the valuable opportunities that BRAGB brings to home building professionals every day, as well as enhancing the organization's impact as a good corporate citizen."

Ivester is a strong advocate for vocational education and workforce training – two areas where he feels BRAGB and other industry trade groups can play an important role in positively influencing students and young adults as they consider various career paths. In 2016 Ivester chaired the EMNARI Youth Career Day – which brought over 500 students together with dozens of building and remodeling professionals. From 2006 to 2009, he served on the Board of the International Furnishings and Design Association (IFDA) and was recognized several times for his "Outstanding Contribution" to the organization and as a "Member of Distinction." In 2014 Ivester received the "Big Time Operator" award from Interise – a national network of small businesses, community development organizations, government agencies and business experts. He is also active in the Massachusetts Big Brothers and Sisters mentoring program, and was named 'Big Brother of the Year' in 1999.

"This industry absolutely has a place in the conversation about and, I believe, an obligation as advocates for quality vocational education. The future builders and remodelers studying and working in vocational schools need a better path to BRAGB," Ivester said. "We need to reach out to the schools and get them involved, and show students a path and mentor them. I truly believe we as professional builders have an obligation to see our industry through to the next generation."

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