

ALABAMA homebuilder

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Handling the Headlines

Housing news that will
reassure your clients

10 Savvy Marketing Tips

Inside a Guesthouse Remodel

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It's Your Business



Extra Credit: Higher Education

Gain expertise and credibility by earning a professional designation.

In today's competitive housing market, an extra credential or two—along with a full arsenal of fresh business ideas and current techniques—can help set you apart from the rest. The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) founded its University of Housing to provide builders, remodelers, and others the chance to earn advancements in their field, such as Graduate Master Builder (GMB) and Certified Graduate Remodeler (CGR).

Courses present new ideas on maximizing profits, increasing productivity, and raising standards. "There has never been a class [in which] I haven't learned something," says Mike Kane of Kane Building, LLC, who is a member of the Tallapoosa County Home Builders Association. "In these classes, you get to see a different way and learn the national standard."

Any continuing education will help you stand out as a professional who is up-to-date on building innovations. And remember, designations can be added to your letterhead, Web site, or other branding material.

Along with an even more dazzling resume, you will walk away with the practical knowledge and cutting-edge business practices utilized by specialists in your trade. "There are elements you may not have known, or things you may have thought about but never had the confidence to act on," Kane explains. "When you hear it from a professional, you get the assurance to try it."

The Home Builders Association of Alabama (HBAA) holds continuing education classes throughout the year. For dates, locations, and more information, contact Billy McQueen or Kory Boling at 1-800-745-4222, or visit www.hbaa.org. Alyse Harral

DEFINING DESIGNATIONS

The NAHB University of Housing currently offers 16 courses. Several are available through HBAA, as denoted below with asterisks. Your local HBA may offer more. For information, visit www.nahb.org.

Certified Active Adult Specialist in Housing (CAASH) Focuses on design considerations for homeowners age 50 and over

Certified Aging-In-Place Specialist (CAPS)* Teaches technical and customer-service aspects of residential remodeling for clients planning to stay in their homes as they age

Certified Graduate Associate (CGA)* Provides practical lessons from builders and remodelers with years of field experience

Certified Graduate Builder (CGB)* Focuses on maximizing profits as well as strengthening business management skills

Certified Graduate Remodeler (CGR)* Emphasizes business management skills as the key to a strong remodeling business

Certified Leasing Professional (CLP) Provides an overview of multifamily leasing and sales skills

Certified New Home Marketing Professional (CMP) A mid-level designation for Institute of Residential Marketing students

Certified New Home Sales Professional (CSP) Teaches proper business conduct and sales knowledge through the Institute of Residential Marketing

Graduate Master Builder (GMB)* Provides in-depth instruction for experienced building professionals

Graduate Master Remodeler (GMR) Fulfills the master level of the current CGR

Housing Credit Certified Professional (HCCP) Offers training for those building for or working in the affordable-housing industry

Master Certified New Home Sales Professional (Master CSP) Builds on education for new-home sales professionals

Member, Institute of Residential Marketing (MIRM) Signifies the top-level achievement for professionals in new-home marketing

Registered in Apartment Management (RAM) Serves as the credential of distinction for property managers

Advanced RAM Offers property managers a curriculum that includes operations, legal issues, personnel management, and more

Residential Construction Superintendent (RCS) Gives assistant personnel the requisite skills to be confident field superintendents