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**CHICAGO VIP LUXURY GALA TO HOST WHO'S WHO OF DESIGN INDUSTRY AND
CELEBRATE THE 2017 MERCHANDISE MART HALL OF FAME HONOREES**

*Tickets on sale soon for this signature event during Design Chicago, the Midwest's largest
residential design conference*

CHICAGO, IL (August 17, 2017) – A who's who of the design industry will come together on the evening of Wednesday, October 4th, 2017, 5:30 PM to 8:00 PM, at the historic Merchandise Mart for the **Chicago VIP Luxury Gala**, a celebratory evening honoring the Midwest's best in architecture, interior design and residential development. Tickets for the 2017 Chicago VIP Luxury Gala will go on sale soon. For more information, visit www.designchicagoevent.com.

Leaders in the luxury design marketplace will gather to celebrate the induction of four residential design industry icons into the Merchandise Mart Hall of Fame at the start of the Chicago VIP Luxury Gala on October 4, 2017, a celebratory evening honoring the Midwest's best in architecture, interior design and residential development. The Gala is the signature event of [Design Chicago](#), the Midwest's largest residential design conference presented by [The Design Center at the Merchandise Mart](#) and [LuxeHome](#).



Honored for their achievements and contributions to design, this year's recipients are:

Lifetime Achievement:

David Sutherland, CEO, David Sutherland Showrooms

Architect:

Stuart Cohen & Julie Hacker, Partners and Co-Founders, Stuart Cohen & Julie Hacker Architects LLC

Designer:

Jessica Lagrange, Jessica Lagrange Interiors LLC

Residential Developer:

Alan D. Lev, President & CEO, Belgravia Group



Lifetime Achievement
David Sutherland



Architect
Stuart Cohen &
Julie Hacker



Designer
Jessica Lagrange



Residential Developer
Alan D. Lev

“The 2017 inductees into the Merchandise Mart Hall of Fame are recognized for their significant contributions toward the residential design industry, with immense influence in Chicago and beyond,” said Susan McCullough, Senior Vice President at theMART. “We are proud to celebrate these accomplished individuals at the Chicago VIP Luxury Gala. It promises to be a can’t-miss evening.”

Welcoming this year’s Gala attendees is a host committee comprised of more than 70 of the design industry’s movers-and-shakers, representing top luxury building, renovation and interior design brands, interior designer, architectural and building and development firms from greater Chicago and around the globe.

The 2017 Chicago VIP Luxury Gala is generously sponsored by exclusive media sponsor, *Luxe Interiors + Design*; Platinum Sponsors, Gaggenau, Thermador and Bosch; Gold Sponsors, Pella Crafted Luxury and Sherwin Williams; and Silver Sponsors, Gary Lee, Vicostone and Wood-Mode.

The Chicago VIP Luxury Gala is the keystone event of Design Chicago, the Midwest’s largest residential design conference. The two-day, not-to-be-missed event features leading interior design, architecture, and luxury custom home building professionals for programming that is both educational and innovative. To register for the event’s programming, which is complimentary to trade professionals, or to learn more, visit www.designchicagoevent.com.

About the Design Center at The Merchandise Mart (theMART)

The Design Center, located in Chicago's historic Merchandise Mart, is home to four floors constituting the world's largest and finest design center. As a leader in the \$65 billion residential home furnishings market, the Design Center offers the largest presentation of high-end, customizable, residential and outdoor home furnishings worldwide, all under one roof. Encompassing 750,000 square feet, boasting more than 125 showrooms and featuring more than 2,500 product lines, it is the ultimate resource for designers and design enthusiasts of luxury furniture, fabrics, floor coverings, wall coverings, lighting and much more. For more information, visit designcenter.com. Visit Design Center on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

About LuxeHome®

LuxeHome is the world’s largest collection of premier boutiques for home building and renovation located on the first floor of the Merchandise Mart in Chicago. With more than 125,000 square feet of showroom space featured in over 35 boutiques, LuxeHome is host to the finest products for home building and renovation from the most recognized and respected manufacturers worldwide.

LuxeHome offers discerning homeowners and trade professionals one-stop shopping convenience with access to the finest kitchen, bath, tile, lighting, cabinetry, appliances, countertops and much more. LuxeHome displays the widest selection of products to suit all upscale design styles, from modern European to classic American to traditional English. In addition to the extensive lineup of premier brands, each boutique offers knowledgeable designers who are available to assist with all phases of each design project. LuxeHome's boutiques are open for shopping Monday through Saturday. For more information, visit www.luxehome.com. Follow LuxeHome on [Facebook](#), [Houzz](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

Vornado Realty Trust, owner of the Merchandise Mart, based in New York City, is a fully integrated equity real estate investment trust. Vornado’s common shares are listed on the New York Stock Exchange and are traded under the symbol VNO. www.vno.com

Biographies of the 2017 Merchandise Mart Hall of Fame Honorees

Lifetime Achievement: David Sutherland, CEO, David Sutherland Showrooms

David Sutherland, CEO of David Sutherland Showrooms, is known for bringing a fresh point of view to design while curating the finest interior and exterior collections of luxury furniture, fabrics, rugs and accessories through his showrooms in all U.S. major markets. Based in Dallas, Texas, the company is comprised of Sutherland® Furniture, Perennials® Luxury Performance fabrics and David Sutherland Showrooms.

The company began with a single showroom operation in Houston, Texas, in 1977, and today operates three highly successful brands utilizing manufacturing partners and company owned facilities worldwide for sales of Sutherland and Perennials products. Distribution is through an international group of representative showrooms and six David Sutherland Showrooms in the nation's top design markets.

Architect: Stuart Cohen & Julie Hacker, Partners and Co-Founders, Stuart Cohen & Julie Hacker Architects LLC

Stuart Cohen and Julie hacker of Evanston are both Fellows of the American Institute of Architects. Before starting their practice, Stuart worked for Richard Meier and Philip Johnson, and Julie worked for Hammond Beeby & Babka. Practicing architecture together for the past 30 years, their work, which has been widely published, explores contemporary open planning in the context of traditional architectural forms.

Their work has been exhibited internationally and is the subject of a 2009 monograph, *Transforming the Traditional: The Work of Cohen & Hacker Architects*. Much of their work is on older homes, and Stuart is the author of three books on Chicago's historic residential architecture, including *North Shore Chicago: Houses of the Lake Front Suburbs* and *Great Houses of Chicago*, co-authored with Susan Benjamin, and in 2015, *Inventing the New American House: Howard Van Doren Shaw, Architect*. Stuart is a professor of architecture emeritus at the University of Illinois Chicago, while Julie currently serves as a Preservation Commissioner for the City of Evanston, has lectured widely, mentored young architects and served on award juries.

Designer: Jessica Lagrange, Jessica Lagrange Interiors LLC

Jessica Lagrange established her namesake, full-service interior architecture and design firm in 1998. Today, her practice is recognized for creating and executing sophisticated luxury projects that maintain the highest standards of excellence; embrace a wide range of periods and styles; and adeptly reflect the wants, needs and lifestyles of a diverse clientele. Jessica is known for her principled approach to design, which embraces collaboration, transparency and a deep commitment to personal service. A graduate of the interior architecture program at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a veteran of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, Jessica has over 30 years of experience in her field. She began her career doing commercial projects and today her practice focuses on luxury residential interiors. She is most proud of the fact that her firm does not have a signature look, but rather a signature mantra: to create warm, intimate, carefully considered homes that support and respect her clients' needs, wants, aesthetics and dreams.

Residential Developer: Alan D. Lev, President & CEO, Belgravia Group

Alan D. Lev is the President & CEO of Belgravia Group. Alan joined Belgravia Group in 1989. Mr. Lev earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Accountancy in 1982 from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He later obtained his J.D. from Loyola University of Chicago in 1985. Mr. Lev practiced real estate law from 1985-1989. He has been a CPA since 1982, an attorney since 1985, a licensed real estate broker since 1989 and a licensed insurance broker since 2012. Alan is a proud member of the Chicago Association of Realtors, is Past President of the Homebuilders Association of Greater Chicago and is Past Chairman of the Illinois Division of the American Cancer Society. He has a strong attachment to the Chicago area and the University of Illinois and has been involved in many charitable and civic organizations and with the University of Illinois by guest lecturing in the business school, funding a scholarship, participating in the business school job shadow program and serving on the Business Alumni Board and Dean's Business Council.

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