



Universal Forest Products Announces Partnership With Large Framer in the Northeast

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GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., Apr 9, 2004 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX/ -- Universal Forest Products, Inc. (Nasdaq: UFPI) today announced an investment in the largest framer of multi-family structures in the Massachusetts area, Shawnlee Construction, LLC. Universal has purchased a 50% stake in the company.

Universal and Shawnlee expect to satisfy customer requests in the New England market for turnkey construction packages. Universal will be able to supply material from its component plants throughout the Northeast and combine it with framing services through Shawnlee Construction, LLC.

Based in Plainville, Massachusetts, Shawnlee draws on a management team and infrastructure that have more than 30 years of experience in the framing business and that completed more than \$55 million in projects over the past three years. Shawnlee has approximately 280 employees. Annual labor sales for 2004 are expected to be approximately \$20 million.

"Our partners in Shawnlee bring to the table a top-notch organization with strong leadership and a reputation for excellence in everything they do," said William G. Currie, Universal CEO and vice chairman. "Our philosophies and business practices are closely aligned; we both set a high bar for performance. We're excited about this opportunity and believe the partnership will be a dynamic one."

Key management personnel for the joint venture include John Adams, Shawnlee managing partner and CEO, and Shawnlee President Jerry Simmer, who will maintain responsibility for day-to-day operations.

"We're excited to be in business with a company as successful as Universal Forest Products," Adams said. "They're a leading manufacturer and a supplier with unparalleled customer service, and we're proud to be affiliated with them. We believe their quality products coupled with our framing expertise and skilled employees will create a powerful team."

Universal Forest Products markets, manufactures, and engineers wood and wood-alternative products for D-I-Y retail home centers, structural lumber products for the manufactured housing industry, engineered wood components for the site-built construction market and specialty wood packaging for various industries. The company is based in Grand Rapids, Michigan and has 96 facilities and more than 8,600 employees throughout the United States, Canada and Mexico and sales of \$1.9 billion in 2003. Among the Universal's newest and fastest-growing ventures are framing and installation services for the site-built and retail sectors. In conjunction with its customers, Universal uses its engineering and manufacturing expertise, coupled with highly skilled employees, to design and construct buildings and decks. For information about Universal Forest Products on the Internet, please visit the Company's web site at www.ufpi.com, or call 888-Buy-UFPI.

SOURCE Universal Forest Products, Inc.

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