

**Media Contact:**  
Jay Hickman  
(713) 523-7900  
jhickman@mmihouston.com



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Houston Women See Manufacturing, Construction Industries Taking a Step Into the Future**

*NCI Building Systems employees receive first ever STEP Award for excellence and leadership in manufacturing*

**HOUSTON (January 16, 2013)** – Teresa Lee and Arlene Gonzalez, of Houston-based NCI Building Systems, have each been recognized by The Manufacturing Institute and partners with the inaugural Women in Manufacturing STEP (Science, Technology, Engineering and Production) Award for excellence and leadership in manufacturing. Lee and Gonzalez join select honorees from across the country, representing all levels of manufacturing from the factory floor to the C-suite. In Texas, they rose to the top.

"In an industry where there are far more men than women in leadership positions, Teresa and Arlene have both truly stood out as being highly capable and clearly worthy of recognition through both their work ethic and a superlative commitment to quality," said Tom Boal, vice president of engineering and drafting, NCI Building Systems. "They each played an integral role in launching our ExpressPlus™ program and then growing it into something that can be called a remarkable success, by any measure. It's an honor for me to see them recognized for their individual and collaborative efforts."

Following the acquisition of SteelBuilding.com in 2005, a project known as ExpressPlus was initiated in the spring of 2007 to enhance the online customer experience. Lee was then charged with evaluating the existing e-commerce business and transforming it into a profitable and efficient online business model for the NCI Buildings Division. The Web-based system was built to help configure, price and sell metal buildings. After implementing a successful new model and then serving as the production manager the first few years, Lee passed the day-to-day responsibilities to Gonzalez in 2010, who oversees all orders from the initial quote stage to customer support, continuing through delivery. From the growth perspective, Gonzalez has effectively doubled the operation each of the first two years she's had it. Both share credit for the success of ExpressPlus and remain important as the business moves into the future.

The STEP Awards are part of the larger STEP Ahead initiative launched by The Manufacturing Institute, Deloitte, University of Phoenix and the Society of Manufacturing Engineers to examine and promote the role of women in the manufacturing industry through recognition, research, and best practices for attracting, advancing and retaining strong female talent.

"These hardworking women are the faces of exciting careers in manufacturing," said Jennifer McNelly, president, The Manufacturing Institute. "We chose to honor these women because

they each made significant achievements in manufacturing through positive impact on their company and the industry as a whole.”

A 2011 survey from Deloitte and The Manufacturing Institute found that nearly 70 percent of American manufacturing companies have a moderate to severe shortage of available, qualified workers. Manufacturing companies cannot fill as many as 600,000 skilled positions, even as unemployment numbers hover at historically high levels. Additionally, labor statistics show that women are underrepresented in the manufacturing workforce and in manufacturing leadership ranks — a situation that must be reversed to preserve and grow the industry.

On February 5, The Manufacturing Institute and its STEP Ahead initiative partners will recognize Lee, Campos and other recipients of the STEP Awards at a reception in Washington, D.C. The STEP Awards program will highlight each honoree’s story, including their leadership and accomplishments in manufacturing.

View the online profiles of [Teresa Lee](#) and [Arlene Gonzalez](#).

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*NCI Building Systems is one of North America's largest integrated manufacturers of metal products for the nonresidential building industry. NCI is comprised of a family of companies operating manufacturing facilities across the United States and Mexico, with additional sales and distribution offices throughout the U.S. and Canada. NCI is committed to providing the highest standard of steel construction solutions in the world. With unparalleled offerings in the way of innovative building design, project management and specialty products, no other company is better positioned to handle unique project requirements. For more: [ncigroup.com](http://ncigroup.com)*

*[The Manufacturing Institute](http://www.themanufacturinginstitute.org) (the Institute) is the 501 (c) 3 affiliate of the National Association of Manufacturers. As a non-partisan organization, the Institute is committed to delivering leading-edge information and services to the nation's manufacturers. The Institute is the authority on the attraction, qualification, and development of world-class manufacturing talent. Visit [www.themanufacturinginstitute.org](http://www.themanufacturinginstitute.org)*