



**Retail Council of Canada**  
1255 Bay Street, Suite 800, Toronto, Ontario M5R 2A9  
Telephone (416) 922-6678 Fax (416) 922-8011  
[www.retailcouncil.org](http://www.retailcouncil.org)

**Ottawa Retailer Invests in Employee Training**  
**Canadian Retail Institute (CRI) Offers Only National Professional Designation Programs**  
**For Retail Industry**

**For Immediate Release**

**OTTAWA, March 30, 2006** – Canadian Retail Institute (CRI), the education arm of Retail Council of Canada (RCC), is pleased to announce that Handi-House Limited, a specialty retailer of mobility aids under the Handi-House banner as well as Solea, its fine comfort footwear division, is the first independent retailer in Ottawa to enrol its staff in CRI's Retail Sales Associate (RSA) professional designation and training program. Six employees of Handi-House are currently working on their RSA designation and expect to take the exam in April 2006.

"Handi-House is pleased to support and build the retail careers of our employees through CRI's professional designation and training program," says Ian A. Colquhoun, President, Handi-House Limited. "This program helps to create a positive work environment and most importantly, helps ensure we provide the highest levels of customer service. This is particularly important in helping our customers choose the appropriate mobility aids and footwear."

"CRI's Retail Sales Associate professional designation and training program is unique to Canada," says Andrew Siegwart, Director of Education, Retail Council of Canada. "While the employer benefits from a cost-effective, standards-based program that can help reduce staff turnover, attract talent and develop consistent customer service, the retail sales associate earns an industry-recognized credential that provides them with the building blocks to advance their career in retail."

**About the RSA Professional Designation and Training Program**

CRI's RSA professional designation and training program benefits sales associates by enabling them to become experts in all aspects of retail sales - including customer service, sales, inventory, store appearance and communication. This standards-based approach was developed in cooperation with the retail industry across Canada.

In order to earn the RSA professional designation, sales associates must complete a workbook, pass a multiple-choice examination and in-store evaluation, as well as log 600 hours of on-the-job experience. Upon completion of the program, employees will have built a solid foundation for their career, and gained an industry-specific credential that is recognized by major retailers across the country. For more information, visit <http://www.retaileducation.ca>.

**About Canadian Retail Institute (CRI)**

Canadian Retail Institute (CRI), the education arm of Retail Council of Canada, is dedicated to promoting retail as a rewarding career by developing training programs, establishing scholarships, and creating partnerships with educational institutions that provide retail programs across Canada.

**Conseil canadien du commerce de détail**  
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### **About Retail Council of Canada (RCC)**

Retail Council of Canada ([www.retailcouncil.org](http://www.retailcouncil.org)) is the Voice of Retail. It is a not-for-profit association whose more than 9,000 members represent all retail formats, including national and regional department stores, mass merchants, specialty chains, independent stores and online merchants.

### **For more information, contact:**

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