



IICRC
Institute of Inspection Cleaning
and Restoration Certification

IICRC Master Spotlight

New to the IICRC Today newsletter – the Master Spotlight! In each issue we will feature an IICRC Master. In this issue, we welcome Triple Master Craig Powers.

Craig Powers: Master Water Restorer, Master Fire & Smoke Restorer, Master Textile Cleaner

Corporate Director of Restoration, COIT Cleaning & Restoration / Superior Cleaning & Restoration in Seattle, WA.

What made you decide to get involved in the industry?

I had a job in college with a person that did commercial carpet cleaning at night for restaurants. After working together for several months, I eventually bought him out, started my own business and continued doing commercial carpet cleanings for a couple of years. To me, the instant gratification of cleaning carpets was oddly satisfying. I was able to make a positive impact on my clients in a very short period, so my curiosity was piqued as to what else the cleaning and restoration industry had to offer.



When and why did you become IICRC Certified?

My first restoration employer hired Dri-Eaz founder, Claude Blackburn, to come in and train our entire staff in water restoration. That process got me excited about formal industry education. Roughly, one year later I took my first formal IICRC class and received a certification. My thirst for knowledge in the industry then created an addiction for more classes and certifications. At the time (late 1980's), much of the information easily accessible today on the internet was not readily available, so I turned to trade magazines and local suppliers.



What influenced your decision to further your education to IICRC Master?

My initial exposure to instructors really piqued my interest into gaining more knowledge within our industry. This may have been before a Master designation was even offered by the IICRC; regardless I was unaware of such an achievement. Once I became aware of the Master track, it became easier for me to target my education around a broader body of knowledge, work towards the goal of becoming a Master Certified Technician and collect an arm full of patches.



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You are an IICRC Triple Master, what made you decide to attain all three?

As with many that start in this industry as cleaning specialists, my first Master was the Master Water Restorer. Cleaners frequently end up on water mitigation jobs due to the cleaning clients calling the “carpet cleaner” when the home floods, and that started me down the Master path. After I took the WRT, I found it added an additional “certification” of Journeyman to my card so that prompted me to continue down the Master certification track for all three pillars. During this venture of obtaining the Master certifications, I needed continuing education as required. At the time, one of the only options to get them was to take an IICRC course so that was a way to achieve both objectives.

Have you seen any benefits from being an IICRC Master?

Yes, it is easy to differentiate myself from others by articulating the Master certification education track to our clients. If they are shopping around comparing companies and skill sets, this now becomes one of the performance indicators to reference and judge others by. Additionally, clients come to me for expert opinion, consulting and refer jobs to me simply because of my IICRC Master designations. By elevating my industry education, skills and knowledge, I have in turn become an industry resource to others.

What is the most rewarding thing about being an IICRC Master?

Most recently, in my opinion, it has been the social media platforms that have brought these designations to the forefront. This has not only created peer recognition, but public awareness as well. It is rewarding to see; especially the young cleaners and restorers get the recognition they deserve by their peers and the public.



Do you do anything special to market yourself (or your business) now that you are an IICRC Master?

Due to the current scope of my job, the main source of marketing all three Master designations is social media. The other main marketing avenue we have is direct marketing to current and potential clients stressing the formal education. Also, most vendor programs require one or more IICRC certifications, as do some of our more educated clients that are in facilities management.

What do you like best about your job?

I really enjoy the diversity of the restoration industry and especially large loss and catastrophe response. Mitigation professionals have the unique opportunity to help our clients through what may potentially be one of the worst days in their lives. It forces a level of patience and compassion many service businesses are not used to providing. When I am in the field, most of my time is spent on large complex projects and they are the most rewarding to me when successfully completed. Each one is a learning experience and the lessons are carried on to every subsequent project regardless of size.



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What was your favorite course?

By far my favorite course was the Commercial Drying Specialist course. We had amazing instructors, the documentation used for the class was, and still is, some of the best created for our industry. I took this class very early on when it was just released to the public, so there was not much experience for the instructors in presenting the course materials. However, I will never forget this particular course, instructors or the textbook used.



What course made the biggest impact?

The course that had the most impact on me personally and professionally was the initial Carpet Inspector course I took with Carl Williams and Mike West in southern California. This course and the subsequent inspections, reports and reviews in the following months, was my first deep dive into the textile manufacturing and installation segment of our industry.

What course do you remember the most?

The Applied Microbial Remediation Technician (AMRT) course is the one course and exam that I remember the most. The hands-on portion taught good containment skills by having to build different types of containments and containment doors. The other aspect of the AMRT course that had a big impact on me is the extreme attention to detail and having to remediate what we cannot see. Currently I hold mold licenses in multiple states and every job I do or class I teach on the subject, information gained from this course is the foundation I still use today.

If you could give one piece of advice to a young professional starting out in the business, what would it be?

It is hard for me to give just one piece of advice, however, the best advice I can give young professionals is to find a mentor early on in your career and learn marketing skills. Couple that with formal industry education, and the opportunities are endless in this industry.

Are you an IICRC Triple Master? Tell us your story! E-mail us at marketing@iicrcnet.org to share your career journey and be featured in the newsletter!