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“Green Painter” Alex Rossi and AJR Painting Coat Boulder with Sustainable Products

By Spenser Villwock

“If something is worth doing, it is worth doing right...and right the first time,” is the philosophy of Alex Rossi, Principal of AJR Painting, a Boulder-based ecologically-oriented painting company. Founded in 2005, AJR Painting is a paint contracting company utilizing green products and principles to deliver durable, healthy, and eco-friendly coatings to Boulder County. Alex Rossi brings together knowledge, integrity, and craftsmanship as the pillars that establish his vision for a more healthful and sustainable future with every brushstroke.

Raised in a working class town in eastern Massachusetts, Alex inherited a unique blend of understanding and compassion for the human condition, which parallels a strong work ethic offered by his family. During his childhood, his

mother became terminally ill with multiple sclerosis. Her condition amplified throughout the years to follow and she was laid to rest in 1991. Alex's father, himself a general contractor, worked tirelessly to keep the family together, teaching Alex the rewards of committed work. His father's earnest efforts in his duties both at work and at home serve as strong reminders for Alex of how one is to make their way in this world.

Alex attended college in Massachusetts and shortly after graduating, worked for four years as a therapist at emotional growth boarding school. His work took him from wilderness settings along the Appalachian Trail to the rainforests of Costa Rica, all the while, his relationship to the natural world deepening. In 2002, Alex learned of Naropa University and moved to Boulder to not only enter a graduate program, but to align himself with the progressively like-minded people of our city.

Alex was soon drawn to painting, not only as a way of putting food on the table, but also as a contemplative practice. What Alex was cultivating in his meditation classes at Naropa, he was now bringing to his work with the brush. While painting was becoming his contemplative practice, Alex was also learning much more about how conventional paints contained toxins and carcinogens that allowed them to perform as well as they did. He realized that despite their usefulness, they also inflicted "a large cost to my health and to the health and home of my clients." AJR Painting grew from this realization; Alex set out to create a livelihood that brings environmentally conscious and sustainable painting practices to the community.

Alex's holistic view on the industry is highlighted in his awareness of the lifecycle of the tools and products he selects for his business. For example, AJR's utilization of reusable lamb's wool roller covers saves hundreds of disposable nylon-based covers from the landfill each year. Alex even goes so far as to remove and recycle the paper labels on the green paint cans as part of his future goal of being a zero-waste contractor.

A member of the Boulder Green Building Guild (BGBG), the Center for ReSource Conservation (CRC), and recommended contractor of Ellie's Organic Home Center, AJR Painting is setting the bar high for green and environmentally conscious painting in Boulder. Alex and his crew, through their committed and concerted efforts, make our community a more sustainable place to live, one project at a time.

To learn more about the benefits of using environmentally safe and green paint products in your home or office, contact Alex Rossi of AJR Painting at 720-352-1354 or ajrpainting@gmail.com. For general information on actions that you can

take toward making our community more sustainable, contact the Center for ReSource Conservation, 303-999-3820, or visit www.conservationcenter.org.