



# National Apartment Careers Month Participant Toolkit February 2011



Here are some ideas to help make your day as a job shadow host a success:

## Keys for Hosting Students:

- Find out if your employer participates in job shadowing and if there are any current policies in place regarding student visitors.
- Your target contacts for local schools should be school counselors, the school career center staff or organizations such as DECA, etc.
- Find out some information about your student visitors (grade level, interests, etc.) from the school in advance, so you can plan your comments, presenters and activities accordingly. If you have young, energetic leasing, maintenance and management staff, feature them as your presenters. Try to target high school freshmen and sophomores, these groups are more likely to be interested in the experience.
- Use a check-off sheet to see if you've covered everything.
- Be patient – it's hard to do your work, answer questions and be a good host at the same time!
- Only take as many students as you can handle.
- Emphasize the positive in your conversations but always be honest and straightforward – most of all – be yourself!
- Have fun!

## Ideas for Structuring Your Day:

Start the day with an orientation & introductions, but be mindful of time. Introductions are important, but show the students what they are there for – to shadow you and your staff.

Show NAAEI's Careers in Apartment Management DVD first.

Be sure that presenters cover:

- What they (presenters) do.

- What they (presenters) like about their job and why they chose to pursue the career path.
- Tell the students “what’s in it for them”.
- Make the student(s) work for information. Try a reverse interview to encourage questions.
- Describe a “typical” day and be prepared to field questions regarding salaries, promotions, schooling, etc.

Anything you can do to “break the ice” and make the student feel welcome and at ease with you and your colleagues – this way they are more likely to ask questions.

## Give a tour

- Give the student a tour of your office or business and explain the roles of each person to which they are introduced.

**\*TIP: Have each student ask you at least one thing that they would like answered or would like to see during the visit.**

- Try to interact with your co-workers on all levels to give the student a good overview of how your company runs.
- Give an overview of what your firm/business does and how it affects the local or regional community.

## Suggested activities for your job shadow day

- Plan to allow the student to do some limited, hands-on tasks (make sure you closely supervise) and try to invoke conversation that will let he/she participate.
- Plan to review a small job with someone who reviews your work or whose work you supervise.

**\*TIP: Finishing the students’ visit by taking them to lunch or offering a snack and beverages is a great way to end the day on a positive note! Better yet, order lunch and eat in your community center or pool area (weather permitting).**

## Tips for Hosting a Successful Job Shadow Day

- Call a supplier – Either answer your phone calls while the student(s) are at your desk or set aside a phone call you need to make.
- Demo your property management programs and let the student(s) try them out.
- Help your student visitor learn as he/she observes. Don't assume that they know. Use language that the student can understand and try to avoid technical jargon.
- Answer a phone call from a resident.
- Stress the importance of promptness, attendance, appropriate personal appearance and attire and a positive work ethic.
- Walk the property and discuss “curb appeal”, noting what you look for at a property.
- Take the student(s) to lunch – Invite a co-worker to lunch along with the student(s).

### Some other ways to help you relate to students:

- Explain how your work relates to classes they might be taking in school such as math, accounting, and business courses.
- Share examples of your daily routine that incorporates skills they are learning such as communication, problem solving, computers, or writing.

**\*TIP: If you have summer jobs available, explain to students that working during the summer is a great way to try out the career. Tell them how they can apply.**

- Tell the student about yourself, where you went to school, some work and college experiences (internships, your first job, etc.) and why you chose your career.
- Explain the important aspects of your work and how they relate to other jobs within the company.
- Explain what you like about your job as well as some of the challenges you face.



4300 Wilson Blvd.  
Suite 400  
Arlington, VA 22203  
703/518-6141 703/248-8370 FAX  
education@naahq.org

The following is a listing of organizations that promote and foster connections between employers and jobseekers. Each organization has a brief description and Web address to find out more information.

## “Groundhog” Job Shadow Day

Job Shadowing is designed to give kids the unique opportunity of an up-close look at the world of work and provide the answer to the commonly asked question, “Why do I have to learn this?” Beginning with a nationwide kickoff on Groundhog Day in February, and continuing throughout the school year, students across America will “shadow” workplace mentors as they go through a normal day on the job. The program invites students to see firsthand how the skills learned in school relate to the workplace.

[www.jobshadow.org](http://www.jobshadow.org)

## DECA

DECA is the organization for high school and college students interested in careers in marketing, management and entrepreneurship.

### High school

The high school division serves more than 185,000 high school students, mostly juniors and seniors, DECA’s high school division is recognized and endorsed by all 50 state departments of education and the U.S. Department of Education. There are 5,000 chapters, located in the United States, Canada, Germany, Mexico and Puerto Rico.

Membership in the high school division is open to students with a career interest in marketing, management, hospitality, finance, entrepreneurship, and/or business administration. DECA programs are co-curricular, meaning programs complement nationally recognized curriculum standards in the classroom and then go further to incorporate realistic educational experiences not available through classroom instruction alone.

### College

DECA’s college division is called Delta Epsilon Chi. More than 13,000 students from 200 campuses participate in the organization. The institutions include community colleges, technical colleges, four-year colleges and universities.

Delta Epsilon Chi enhances the student's college experience by providing recognition and leadership activities directly related to classroom study. Delta Epsilon Chi members are at various stages in their educational lives, enabling our members to fit into a variety of employment stages.

[www.deca.org](http://www.deca.org)

## Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG)

Jobs for America's Graduates, or JAG, is a school-to-career program targeting at-risk youth implemented in 734 high schools, reaching 40,000 students. Students receive one-on-one career counseling with a JAG specialist. JAG's graduation rate is 94%.

[www.jag.org](http://www.jag.org)

## Job Corps

Job Corps is a no-cost education and vocational training program administered by the U.S. Department of Labor to help young people ages 16 through 24 improve the quality of their lives through vocational and academic training. It is the largest and most successful residential and educational workforce training program for economically disadvantaged youth in the United States. This voluntary program serves nearly 65,000 young Americans every year. To search for a Job Corps center near you, visit:

[www.jobcorps.gov/centers](http://www.jobcorps.gov/centers)

## American Association of Community Colleges (AACC)

Founded in 1920, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) has become the leading proponent and the national "voice for community colleges." Today, the association represents almost 1,200 two-year, associate degree-granting institutions and more than 12 million students, as well as a growing number of international members in Puerto Rico, Japan, Great Britain, Korea, and the United Arab Emirates -- almost half of all U.S. undergraduates. The colleges are the largest and fastest-growing sector of U.S. higher education, enrolling close to half (46 percent) of all U.S. undergraduates.

[www.aacc.nche.edu](http://www.aacc.nche.edu)

Find your local Community College  
[www.aacc.nche.edu/pages/ccfinder](http://www.aacc.nche.edu/pages/ccfinder)



4300 Wilson Blvd.  
Suite 400  
Arlington, VA 22203  
703/518-6141 703/248-8370 FAX  
[education@naahq.org](mailto:education@naahq.org)

## I have 2+ months to plan.

**Planning ahead is always a good thing; the earlier, the better. Starting your plans to participate in National Apartment Careers Month is the first step:**

1. Determine your participation level. Will you host a job shadow event at one or more of your communities? Will you plan to exhibit at a college career fair? The possibilities are endless. Explore them all!
2. Plan to work with an organization such as Job Corps, Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG), DECA, SkillsUSA or Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), now is the time to research. NAAEI can forward detailed contact information for most of these organizations.
3. Exhibiting at a technical or community college job fair? Start now! (Though the career fair may not take place in February, participating is still worth the effort.) To find your local community college, go here: [www.aacc.nche.edu/pages/ccfinder](http://www.aacc.nche.edu/pages/ccfinder)
4. Visit a local school to talk about apartment careers or host local students at an open house at your apartment community. Read NAAEI's Tips for a Successful Job Shadow Day.
5. Contact NAAEI for event marketing materials. NAAEI's award-winning apartment career marketing materials include the DVD, Careers in Apartment Management, three career track brochures detailing careers in apartment leasing, management and maintenance.

## I have less than one month to plan.

**No need to panic with less than a month to work with. Starting your plans to participate in National Apartment Careers Month is the first step:**

1. Determine your participation level. You may have limited options available, but being creative and deciding what will work best for you is key. Will you host a job shadow event at one or more of your communities? Is there a way to schedule a career center visit at a local high school or community college?
2. If you plan to work with an organization such as Job Corps, Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG), DECA, SkillsUSA or FCCLA, contact them now. Working with these organizations takes some time and coordination, so why not set up an apartment community tour or job shadow tour for Spring 2011? NAAEI has contact information for most of these organizations.

# Timeline for National Apartment Careers Month February 2011

3. If you planning to exhibit at a technical or community college job fair, start now, even if you missed the cut off date. Most schools will hold job fairs in the Spring and Fall semesters. To find your local community college, go here: [www.aacc.nche.edu/pages/ccfinder](http://www.aacc.nche.edu/pages/ccfinder)
4. Visit a local school to talk about apartment careers or host local students at an open house at your apartment community. Read NAAEI's Tips for a Successful Job Shadow Day.
5. Contact NAAEI for event marketing materials.

## I have 10 minutes.

### **Don't fret if time isn't on your side. If you have very little time to participate:**

1. Add the National Apartment Careers Month Logo, with a link to ApartmentCareerHQ.org, to your company Web site, Facebook and anywhere else you can think of. Spreading the word counts as participating.
2. Host an open house for job seekers. Coordinate with your local apartment association to host an open house for jobseekers who are switching careers or newly-graduated students. Give a tour of your community and have star employees on hand to talk about their careers and experiences in the industry. You can promote this event for free on your community/company Web site and through your local apartment association.
3. Refer anyone who contacts you to ApartmentCareerHQ.org, the National Apartment Association Education Institute's career-oriented Web site for apartment career job seekers.
4. Start planning for next year. Contact NAAEI at [info@apartmentcareerhq.org](mailto:info@apartmentcareerhq.org) and start planning for 2012.



4300 Wilson Blvd.  
Suite 400  
Arlington, VA 22203  
703/518-6141 703/248-8370 FAX  
[education@naahq.org](mailto:education@naahq.org)

In addition to the Participant Toolkit, NAAEI has several supplemental materials for participants to use in observance of National Apartment Careers Month. These materials may be found on the National Apartment Careers Month page on the NAA Web site by visiting [www.naahq.org/education/naaei/campaigns](http://www.naahq.org/education/naaei/campaigns), unless otherwise noted.

## Skill Standards

The National Apartment Association Education Institute's (NAAEI) mission is to provide broad-based education, training and recruitment programs for current and future apartment industry professionals. Consistent with this mission, NAAEI facilitated the creation of skill standards for Maintenance and Leasing Professionals, Portfolio Supervisors and Apartment Managers. To support these skill standards, NAAEI conducted job-task analysis studies in 2007 and 2008. The skill standards are based on the validated definitions of essential tasks which can be applied to apartment management careers.

The skill standards presented by NAAEI in this publication identify the knowledge and skills needed by Maintenance and Leasing Professionals, Portfolio Supervisors and Apartment Managers in high-performance environments. The standards demonstrate to employees, job seekers and students the performance capabilities they need to succeed in the apartment industry.

The skill standards were developed with input from industry experts in order to challenge and define the elements of work and skills that are common among these industries. For workers, the standards increase opportunities to transfer job skills and expand career opportunities because the standards are applicable to companies of all sizes and geographic locations. For employers, the standards provide a benchmark for evaluating and improving their work process. NAAEI invites hiring companies to integrate the skill standards into your own training, learning, and employee development programs.

The NAAEI Skill Standards can be downloaded from the National Apartment Careers Month page on the NAA Web site: [www.naahq.org/education/naaei/campaigns](http://www.naahq.org/education/naaei/campaigns)

## National Apartment Careers Month Logo

The National Apartment Careers Month logo is available to anyone who is participating in events related to the awareness month and to anyone who wishes to show their support of creating awareness about apartment careers.

The National Apartment Careers Month logo can be downloaded from the National Apartment Careers Month page on the NAA Web site: [www.naahq.org/education/naaei/campaigns](http://www.naahq.org/education/naaei/campaigns)

## Apartment Career Brochures, Career Videos

NAAEI's award-winning apartment career marketing materials include a suite of three career track brochures detailing careers in apartment leasing, management and maintenance. These brochures were designed for high school and college career days or community job fairs and may be downloaded from the NAA Web site: [www.naahq.org/education/naaei/campaigns/Pages/CareersBrochures](http://www.naahq.org/education/naaei/campaigns/Pages/CareersBrochures)

NAAEI also provides these brochures to NAA member companies and affiliates at no charge. To order brochures, please contact Julie Barden, Manager of Communications and Affiliate Relations at 703/518-6141, ext. 691 or [juliebarden@naahq.org](mailto:juliebarden@naahq.org).

Also available is the DVD, Careers in Apartment Management. This DVD contains four videos, including one eight-minute overview video and three shorter videos with real-life testimonials from apartment management, leasing and maintenance professionals. All of the career videos are available on the NAA Web site: [www.naahq.org/education/naaei/campaigns/Pages/CareersBrochures](http://www.naahq.org/education/naaei/campaigns/Pages/CareersBrochures)

To request copies of the Careers in Apartment Management DVD, contact Julie Barden.

## DECA and Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) Teacher/Chapter Lists

In partnering with DECA, JAG and several other national organizations, NAAEI has been given the teacher/chapter lists for DECA, highschool and college, and JAG. These lists are meant to be used to connect and collaborate for job shadowing experiences and for internship purposes.

Students who participate in these workforce and job preparation organizations are proven to be untapped resources for employers in the apartment industry.

These lists are available by request. Please contact Julie Barden for the lists.

## *units* Magazine Articles

As part of the promotion of National Apartment Careers Month, several industry professionals, including those who are in hiring and decision making positions, have volunteered to write articles for *units* on various subjects leading up to February 2011.

An archive of articles from 2010 are also available.

These articles are available for download here:  
[www.naahq.org/education/naaei/campaigns](http://www.naahq.org/education/naaei/campaigns)



4300 Wilson Blvd.  
Suite 400  
Arlington, VA 22203  
703/518-6141 703/248-8370 FAX  
[education@naahq.org](mailto:education@naahq.org)

Once you have determined which tradeshow(s) or career fair(s) to attend, it is important to stay organized and remember the key items that you want to bring with you to set you and your company up for success.

Here is a list of 10 ideas and tools you can use for any tradeshow or job fair.

1. **NAAEI's award-winning apartment career marketing materials** include the DVD: Careers in Apartment Management, three career track brochures detailing careers in apartment leasing, management and maintenance. These brochures were designed for high school and college career days or community job fairs and are available to NAA member companies free-of-charge. Allow at least one week for shipping. Contact NAAEI's Julie Barden at 703/518-6141, ext. 691 or [juliebarden@naahq.org](mailto:juliebarden@naahq.org).
2. **Company/property marketing and recruiting materials.** Every community or company has marketing and/or recruiting materials. Be sure to bring those materials with you as those materials may influence your visitors even after they have left your booth. By giving your visitors a tangible item about your company, you may make a connection and send a professional message about your company.
3. **Talking points.** If this show is your first, it's important to make a list of what you want to convey to any potential jobseeker, educator or counselor who may stop by your booth. Keep in mind your audience. If you are exhibiting at a community college job fair, the needs of the visitors will be different than those of a school counselor who wants to know more about apartment careers in general. The community college student could be any age and may be looking to learn more about your company's benefits. Be prepared for those questions.
4. **Candy or mints.** Something as simple as a candy dish on your table will draw people to you and it is a convenient way to start a conversation with someone.
5. **Pens with your company/community logo.** Who doesn't ever need a pen? Pens are useful marketing tools because they are relatively inexpensive to have made custom with a logo and they are portable enough for people to take with them.
6. **Office supplies.** A small shoebox with items such as Post-it™ notes, tape, scissors (for opening boxes) and paper clips are handy items to have when you least expect it.
7. **Business Cards.** Don't forget why you are exhibiting in the first place. Having plenty of business cards is a must. Without them, your contacts will likely forget you before they leave the show.

8. **Your display.** A booth, a table, a poster, whatever your event allows. Your display is the first impression that is made to anyone who will stop by your booth. Always be sure to read the exhibitor requirements. Some of the smaller fairs will only allow a small table-top display, while larger fairs require you to order items such as carpeting, electricity and even chairs. You can create a large poster quickly and inexpensively. Display it using an easel. Makesigns.com is a great resource for posters and displays that are both quick and inexpensive.

9. **Professional Business Attire.** Business dress is always preferred, but if your company requires corporate attire, it may send a nice message to your potential contacts if you (and your colleagues) are dressed as you dress for work. Another nice touch is to wear your company name badge (if applicable).

10. **Interviewing onsite?** What a great way to draw attention and find potential new employees. If space permits, set up an area in your booth to conduct onsite interviews. If the exhibit floor is too noisy, take the interview outside. If you have limited staffing at the event, offer to set up interviews with the potential employees another day.

#### Post event: Measure your results

After your event, measure your results by answering the following questions:

- How was the traffic at our booth? Heavy, light, in between?
- Did you have enough materials to hand out?
- Was the booth appropriately staffed?
- Did you meet a goal of generating \_\_\_\_\_ leads?
- If you conducted onsite interviews, how many did you conduct? Did you make any job offers?

Measuring your results and reporting your successes to your supervisor or corporate headquarters not only makes for positive news, it may also impact how your company decides to use its recruitment resources.



4300 Wilson Blvd.  
Suite 400  
Arlington, VA 22203  
703/518-6141 703/248-8370 FAX  
education@naahq.org

# NAAEI Career Materials Order Form

NAAEI's award-winning apartment career promotion materials include a suite of three career track brochures detailing careers in apartment leasing, management and maintenance and the DVD, *Careers in Apartment Management*. Also available, the Career Paths: Exploring the Apartment Industry brochure.

Please indicate the quantity of your order for each item below:



\_\_\_\_\_ quantity

Maintenance Technician Brochure



\_\_\_\_\_ quantity

Leasing Consultant Brochure



\_\_\_\_\_ quantity

Community Manager Brochure



\_\_\_\_\_ quantity

Career Paths: Exploring the Apartment Industry brochure



\_\_\_\_\_ quantity

*Careers in Apartment Management*  
DVD

**Yes!** Send me career materials for National Apartment Careers Month.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Date materials needed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Fax your completed form to NAAEI at 703/248-8370**



4300 Wilson Blvd.  
Suite 400  
Arlington, VA 22203  
703/518-6141 703/248-8370 FAX  
education@naahq.org



4300 Wilson Blvd., Suite 400  
Arlington, VA 22203  
703/518-6141 FAX 703/248-8370  
education@naahq.org  
www.naahq.org