

# NAAEI Strengthens Future Talent Pool With Apartment Careers Initiatives

Funding, Grants, Focus Groups Help NAAEI to Improve, Expand Efforts

During the past several months, the NAA Education Institute (NAAEI) has been conducting research and developing a website to promote careers in residential property management to new audiences.

Weidner Apartment Homes recently invested \$1 million in our NAAEI NOW Capital Campaign, bringing the campaign's total to \$4.2 million, which is more than halfway to the goal of \$7.5 million. Weidner and other early investors are making it possible for the apartment industry to build the infrastructure it needs to generate new pipelines of qualified talent.

## Focus Groups Reveal 'Career' Preferences

NAAEI conducted five focus groups nationwide to determine apartment industry career awareness among college students and recent college graduates. NAAEI also probed how this key audience searches for jobs and learned what they are looking for in a career.



(Left to right) Brad Setser, Yardi; Frances Nolan, Equity; Amber Miller, Lowes ProServices; Mike Clow, Greystar; Brad Williams, Lincoln Property Company; NAAEI Board President, Diana Pittro; NAA CEO Doug Culkin; Dean Weidner, Weidner Apartment Homes; Rick Graf, Pinnacle; Charles Stroud, Appliance Warehouse; Chris Thompson, Wilmar; Michael Clark, TAA; Bill Wollinger, WinnResidential; and Joe Stackhouse, AUM

**\$4.2 million**

Current total of  
NAAEI NOW  
Capital Campaign

The insights gained from these focus groups will shape NAAEI's marketing strategy as it builds industry awareness among young people and attracts them to careers in residential property management (RPM).

Key findings include:

- Focus group participants showed an overwhelming preference for the term "residential property management" over "apartment industry" or "apartment careers."
- Whether online or in person, participants want to connect with people, network and have a social experience when seeking a career. Participants are skeptical of the veracity of employee testimonials found on websites and want to connect with an

industry professional through LinkedIn or email and have their questions answered.



- Participants shared an overwhelming desire to find a career that would allow them to "make a difference" and "help people." Residential property management careers should be positioned as opportunities to make a difference in people's lives every single day.

- Participants also want a website that allows them to review job descriptions, salary information, career path information, education requirements and find available jobs.

## CAMT Workforce Training Gains Grant

The ACT Foundation has awarded NAAEI a \$50,000 grant to support its efforts to create pipelines of new talent for apartment maintenance careers.

The Certificate for Apartment Industry Technicians (CAMT) program was designed for people currently working in the apartment industry. With this grant, NAAEI will be able to add videos and online content to enhance the CAMT curriculum and provide more industry information and context for people who are earning CAMT to pursue a career in apartment maintenance. To date, CAMT has been offered at over 25 community colleges as a workforce development initiative.

## NAAEI Earns National Award

The American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) has recognized NAAEI with a 2014 "Power of A" Silver Award for our partnership with Montgomery College (Md.) to offer a pilot program that includes CAMT and MI-BEST (Maryland Integrated Basic English Skills Training).

This program features joint instruction conducted by both technical and English language/basic skills faculty members. NAAEI is honored to be a part of this program, which provides low-income adults with low English literacy the opportunity to acquire the apartment maintenance skills and credentials they need to advance their careers and wages in Maryland and the Washington, D.C., region.

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