

# NAAEI Gives CAM Students a Second Chance

Everyone deserves a second chance, and the NAA Education Institute (NAAEI) and its local apartment associations hope the new “CAMnesty” program will encourage those individuals who may have started but not finished their Certified Apartment Manager (CAM) designation to give it another shot.

CAMnesty is designed for those people who since 2006 have completed all CAM requirements except for the community analysis or the exam. Through March 2014, those people can pay a fee, complete the Research, Analysis and Evaluation module of the newly revised CAM course and take the exam to complete their professional designation.

The amount of the fee varies depending on when the individual started their CAM studies. If a CAM candidate has allowed their candidacy to expire for less than two years, that person would pay \$250 to take advantage of the CAMnesty program. If more than two years have passed, then the individual would pay a \$350 fee.

That fee covers the CAM extension fee; the online Research, Analysis and Evaluation module; a Webinar tutorial; the CAM exam at a local testing center operated by Castle Worldwide (CAM exam Part I and/or Part II); CAM certificate; and pin.

“CAMnesty is a great opportunity for us to re-engage with those people who didn’t complete their CAM,” says Stephanie Puryear Helling, CAM, CAPS, Director of Education and Training for Greystar and Chair of NAAEI’s Curriculum Development Committee. “This program offers them a new solution that makes it a more attainable task for them to complete their designation. As long as they have the necessary knowledge, skills and experience, they should be able to complete the program.”

Having that professional designation is important because hiring companies look for it, she says. It also shows others that the person holding the CAM is an apartment industry professional who has made the commitment to continuing their education and staying on top of industry best practices and trends.

In recent months, NAAEI has revised the CAM course. (See page 94 of the June 2013 issue of *units* Magazine for complete details.) Helling says these changes were made in response to feedback received from students, CAM faculty and NAAEI affiliates. This feedback indicated that completing the community analysis project was a key impediment to people completing the CAM. In updating the program, NAAEI wanted to keep the rigor of the CAM course but use different solutions, such as using a scenario-based exam to test for the same skills previously needed to complete the community analysis. The revised CAM is now a

more efficient program, she says.

Former NAAEI president Jeff Lowry, CAPS, led the task force charged with revising and updating the CAM. The task force found a large number of CAM students completed the classroom portion of coursework but not the community analysis, he says. That led to the move away from the community analysis to an exam.

“CAMnesty gives people a way to finish work they have already started,” says Lowry, who is President of Operations for Lubbock, Texas-based Madera Residential.

Lowry says he hopes the CAM changes and the CAMnesty program help raise the level of professionalism in the apartment industry by boosting the number of CAM designates and giving people a sense of pride and ownership in having completed the rigorous CAM exam. He also hopes the efforts create more interest in the CAM program and provide local affiliates with opportunities to re-engage with members and provide continuing education.

Emily Hilton, Vice President of Professional Development for the Houston Apartment Association, says she hopes CAMnesty will prompt more people to become more personally invested in their careers.

“We have been hearing for years that people chose not to complete the CAM designation because of the community analysis,” she says. “Now, NAAEI has

alleviated that issue, so it will be interesting to see if those individuals take advantage of the CAMnesty program.”

The return on investment of CAMnesty is tremendous not only for individuals but for companies, she says—particularly those management firms that use the number of designates on their staffs to establish credibility among current and prospective clients.

The CAMnesty program also is great for affiliates because it gives them another opportunity to reach out to and re-engage with those members who may have lapsed or stopped participating in affiliate programs. CAMnesty gives them an extra “touch point”—even if it’s only someone calling up to learn more about CAMnesty. Hilton says that one call gives her an opening to highlight other affiliate activities in which that person might want to participate.

“We want them to keep coming back to us with whatever question or issue we can help them with,” she says.

Besides the opportunity to re-engage with lapsed members, affiliates also benefit from CAMnesty revenue sharing and from an increased demand for continuing education courses at the local level. To maintain their designation, CAM designates must earn six continuing education credits (CECs) each year.



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To learn about the CAMnesty program, please contact your local affiliate or visit NAAEI at [www.naahq.org/CAMnesty](http://www.naahq.org/CAMnesty).