

Reaching New Heights



More than 8,000 attendees took over downtown Denver during the 2014 NAA Education Conference & Exposition June 18-21, reaching new heights with a record-breaking event. This year marks NAA's 75th Anniversary, and conference attendees proved that the association and industry are stronger than ever.

The Mile High City welcomed industry leaders from 46 states and the District of Columbia, as well as representatives from four foreign countries. With more than 50 breakout sessions across several learning areas, as well as world-renowned speakers—including actor, author and activist Michael J. Fox, ABC “Shark Tank” veterans Barbara Corcoran and Kevin Harrington, and *because I said I would* founder Alex Sheen—there was something for everyone.

The NAA Exposition also featured a record-breaking 417 companies occupying more than 950 booths—equaling the size of

four football fields—with diverse products and services for the multifamily industry. Three lucky trade show attendees took home a total of \$20,000 in cash prizes, among other giveaways.

“The 2014 NAA Education Conference & Exposition brought together apartment developers, builders, owners, property fee managers, onsite personnel and supplier partners who are working together to move innovation forward,” said NAA President & CEO Doug Culkin, CAE.

“Our event provides apartment leaders with opportunities to showcase our industry’s promise to offer real solutions to the most pressing challenges.”

Outside of the event, NAA members made the most of the breathtaking Rocky Mountains scenery, enjoying everything from Denver microbrews to the pedestrian-friendly 16th Street Mall and Colorado Rockies’ games.

But as evidenced by the Blue Bear enviously peering into the Colorado Convention Center, the most appealing action was happening inside.

In the Mile High City



The Future Is Now

Blame the DeLorean. Ever since he starred in “Back to the Future,” Keynote Speaker Michael J. Fox says he’s been seen as an expert on time. Although he doesn’t actually know the secret of time travel, Fox said he learned valuable lessons on the matter in the midst of a skyrocketing Hollywood career.

At 29, Fox woke up with an uncontrollable tremor in his pinkie finger. He was soon diagnosed with early-onset Parkinson’s Disease. His doctor told him he had 10 good years left in his career.

“You decide what you do with your time; use it wisely,” he told attendees during the Opening General Session. “Life is not based on deadlines. Einstein has a quote I love: ‘The only reason for time is so that everything doesn’t happen at once.’ For me, everything that is good in my life comes with the time I can spend with my kids and my wife.”

Equally inspiring and humorous, Fox delivered a powerful message about a purpose-driven life.

“I grew up with him during his primetime TV days,” said Cindy Dugan, Senior Property Manager for Fort Collins, Colo.’s Mission Rock Residential. “It was great to hear his whole story. It was all so encouraging.”

Also determined to make the most of her time, talent and potential is ABC “Shark Tank” veteran Barbara Corcoran. Offering a refreshing, candid and no-holds-barred perspective on business, Corcoran said she spent her early 20s often feeling like she was being dismissed and didn’t belong in the room. Then one day she decided to “rewire the insecurity tape” in her head. Her new motto can’t be repeated in the pages of this magazine, but let’s just say it’s two words and a popular Cee Lo Green song. (It was received with a lot of laughter and loud applause.)

Corcoran, now a real estate mogul, was joined by former Shark and TV infomercial pioneer Kevin Harrington. Together, they judged live business and product pitches from three finalists competing in the NAA Innovation Tank.

After several nerve-wracking minutes—“Do you want me to



tell you the truth or lie to you,” Corcoran asked one finalist—Joseph Westlake, President, SightPlan, Orlando, Fla., was named the winner. His product—a digital project management tool for property managers—earned Westlake the \$5,000 Grand Prize.

Meet Me In Denver

Denver brought together customers and colleagues alike through a variety of networking opportunities both in and out of the convention center.

With a fun-filled Festivals of Colorado theme, NAA’s Opening Party at the Denver Performing Arts Center offered attendees an incredible night of live music, microbrews, fifteen food trucks, an aerial act and chalk and caricature artists.

New this year, NAA also offered free education in the NAA Exposition in three themed Learning Zones: Green/Sustainable, Mobile Marketing and Technology. Attendees enhanced their conference experience by joining NAA exhibitors for this interactive, “lean in” learning in an intimate setting.

If anything, the biggest challenge was determining which of the NAA Exposition offerings and over 50 breakout sessions to attend.

For Thought Leader Bill Rancic, perhaps best known as season one winner of “The Apprentice,” customer service is equally important. The real estate entrepreneur said the most successful entrepreneurs are those who can adapt to customers’ ever-evolving needs, are creative, make good decisions and have a never quit, never make excuses mentality.

“When you’re an entrepreneur, you’re never satisfied,” he said. “You take an idea and make it even better. The trait I possessed from a very young age was the ability to recognize an opportunity and then seize it.”

Rancic also took a moment to answer everyone’s most pressing question: Is Donald Trump’s hair real? “It is,” Rancic said. “I’ve been in a helicopter with the man.”

We’re Family. Multifamily

For all of the learning and laughter, there were a few tears, too.

In honor of NAA’s 75th Anniversary, many of NAA’s past Chairmen of the Board were recognized on stage for their service to the industry. Having so many influential men and women on the same stage was a true testament to the “family” in multifamily.



Another touching conference moment came when the Apartment Association of Metro Denver’s Lannon Quintana, Holland Partner Group, earned the title of 2014 Maintenance Mania® National Champion. In the eighth annual competition, Quintana won with an overall time of 1 minute, 17.485 seconds.

“I’ve had the most difficult year of my life and this championship certainly helps,” said an emotional Quintana. “But the title wouldn’t mean nearly as much if it wasn’t at home in Denver.”

The other big honor was bestowed upon Edward Rose & Sons’ The Enclave. The Midlothian, Va., property was named 2014 NAA Community of the Year. Also acknowledged at the NAA Awards Celebration Breakfast were the PARAGON, Apartment Career and Education (ACE) and Anthony V. Pusateri Apartment Career Promotion award winners.

Saturday concluded with an inspirational and moving address from Alex Sheen. As Co-Founder of *because I said I would*, Sheen’s mission is to better humanity through the importance of promises made and kept. The organization is in honor of his father—always a man of his word—who passed away from

small cell lung cancer in 2012.

“When someone says this will be done and it is, I believe it speaks to something core inside of us,” he said. “If we are going to be people of honor, then we must remember what we say to others. If it means something to you, write it down.”

“It was inspirational and motivational, and Alex encouraged everyone to make a promise, stick to it and do what they say they will,” said Marcia Bollinger, President of Apartment Finder, whose company sponsored Sheen. “Alex is full of heart and spirit, and we’re going to help him keep *because I said I would* going.”

Keri Cooper, Association Executive for the Tulsa Apartment Association, said she was blown away not only by Sheen, but the entire event.

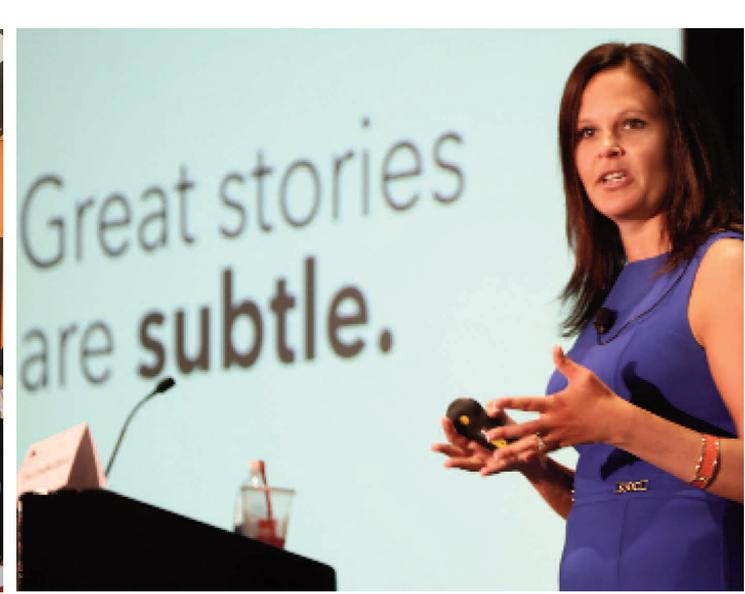
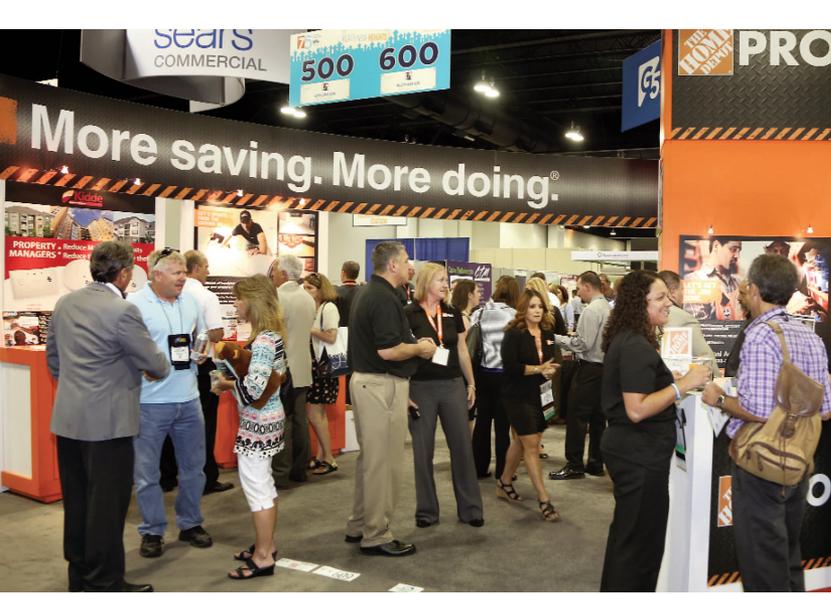
“This conference has been jam-packed full of everything,” she said. “We’ve learned, we’ve laughed, we’ve cried. It’s so hard to pick just one speaker or session because everything was awesome. This is my fifth conference and every year they continue to get better and better. It’s difficult to imagine how NAA does it, but they do.”



SCENES FROM DENVER



From Marty McFly to the Flying Ace All Stars, there was no shortage of selfie-worthy shots at the 2014 NAA Education Conference & Exposition. More than 8,000 attendees spent June 18-21 in Denver networking with industry colleagues and learning from the most innovative speakers and suppliers the rental housing industry has to offer. Visit NAA's Flickr account at bit.ly/NAAhqFlickr to see more from this and other NAA events.



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