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CAI president's message: Working together - by Edmund Allcock

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Edmund Allcock

As the CAI-NE chapter president I hosted CAINE's annual awards night in early March. During the evening I had the pleasure of presenting the Award for Excellence in Public Service to my former colleague who occupied the office next to me for many years at MEEB, the honorable MaryLou Muirhead, Associate Justice of the Massachusetts Housing Court. Judge Muirhead is one of the true pioneers of our condominium industry who has toiled for years as a condominium lawyer and who has transcended the practice of the law to the bench where she now enforces and makes the law. She is the first truly dedicated Massachusetts condominium lawyer to ascend to the bench, which is a remarkable accomplishment.

Likewise I was thrilled to present Attorney Charles Perkins of the law firm Perkins & Anctil with the CAI-NE Hall of Fame Award for his 40 plus years of dedication to the practice of condominium law in Massachusetts. Perkins has been a worthy competitor, colleague and adversary and just an all-around great guy and friend over the years. Those were just two of the highlights of the evening for me personally. There were many other awards presented that evening to community associations, homeowners, professional managers, CAI business partners and chapter volunteers which will be spotlighted in the June Condo Media cover story.

Hosting such an event and seeing the dedication that all these individuals put into their volunteer roles and professional jobs got me thinking - these awe inspiring individuals, associations and companies got there not just through hard work but through collaboration and team work. That is what makes great leaders - the ability to work collaboratively with others for the ultimate good of the organization and ultimately for the benefit of the entire condominium industry.

Their success recognized on this special night made me think of a Japanese term called obyfami which describes the practice of certain shark fetuses to eat the other shark fetuses in the womb usually until there is only one or two fetuses left. In my practice as a condominium lawyer, I have often seen a practice similar to obyfami occur in condominiums at the board level and association as a whole. I have seen it occur in management companies and yes even in law firms. The CAI-NE award winners got there without having to eat their own. Obyfami is not good for condominium governance, our business partners or the industry as a whole. While avoiding this cannibalistic practice might not lead to award, I am certain it will lead to better governance all around and benefit the industry. There is room for all of us to work together so we can deal with the challenges facing our burgeoning and growing industry.

Let's support and respect each other in 2020 and leave the feeding frenzy to the real sharks lurking in our coastal waters. Let's follow the lead of our award winners to collaborate and build on our future. Congratulations to all of the award winners and thank you for your leadership in 2020 and beyond.

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