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IREM President's message: Fostering diversity and inclusion in multi-family housing

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Chris Salamanis-Rivera

Increased diversity and inclusion in multi-family housing play a crucial role in the industry, impacting both the community and the overall success of housing projects.

Enhancing community cohesion and promoting social integration lie at the top of the many reasons that diversity and inclusion should be a priority. Diverse and inclusive housing fosters social integration, attracting a broader tenant base of people from varying backgrounds, cultures, and income levels.

Improved property values has been cited as an economic benefit of diversity, with one study indicating that multi-cultured neighborhoods can be more resilient to economic downturns.

And naturally, emphasizing diversity and inclusion helps ensure compliance with fair housing laws, reducing the risk of legal issues.

But beyond the above practical elements, there is an ethical equivalent to creating inclusive communities where everyone has the same access to housing opportunities – something the IREM Boston Chapter takes to heart by actively advocating for diversity and inclusion with several key initiatives.

Our Fair Housing Education program provides comprehensive training on laws to ensure property managers understand and comply with regulations that protect tenants from discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status, or disability.

The Boston chapter promotes programs that foster inclusive communities. Events and activities that celebrate cultural diversity are scheduled throughout the year. Tenant participation is encouraged, helping to build a sense of community among residents.

Our tenant support services include initiatives that offer resources to tenants from diverse backgrounds, including language assistance services, financial literacy programs, and access to social services.

We advocate for policy changes at local and national levels to promote housing opportunities by working with policymakers in support of legislation that enhances tenant rights and ensures fair treatment for all residents.

IREM Boston collaborates with local organizations that focus on housing equity and tenant advocacy. These partnerships serve to amplify our efforts and provide additional support to tenants in multi-family housing.

These efforts are part of our broader commitment to diversity and inclusion – elements of equity that not only enhance the quality of life for tenants, but also strengthens the industry as a whole.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all who attended and sponsored our IREM Annual Charity Golf Tournament on September 9th and share some pictures taken during the amazing event below!

Chris Salamanis-Rivera is the 2024 IREM Boston Chapter president and vice president of learning and development at Beacon Communities, Lynn, Mass.

Shown are Michael and Benjamin from Caliber Painting.

Shown are Chris Salamanis–Rivera and Cynthia Buckley.

Shown are Kimberly Parker and Kristin Pine.

Shown is the golf tournament winning team: Pat Casper, Reggie Reggiannini, Walter Hannon III, Michael Boucher with Tony Chiarelli and Kelley Hannon.