

Happy Anniversary, SHCM!

EVERYONE KNOWS THE SAYING “time flies when you’re having fun.” Well, that is exactly what has happened over the past year with the Specialist in Housing Credit Management (SHCM) Certification Program. As we celebrate the first anniversary of SHCM, it seems only appropriate that we celebrate with an article reflecting on the success of SHCM. (For traditionalists, paper is the first-year anniversary gift.)

KUDOS FOR THE TEAM

First and foremost, the SHCM program would have never reached the success levels it has without the dedication of the SHCM Exam Development Team: Karen Newsome, Anita Moseman, Greg Proctor, Johrita Solari, Chuck Durnin, Gwen Volk and yours truly. These members gave unlimited amounts of personal time and resources to ensure that NAHMA created the most comprehensive exam possible. This is an exam designed by management professionals for management professionals involved in communities developed and operated under the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program.

Additionally, NAHMA staff has been intuitive, supportive and understanding of the lengthy process of creating the SHCM. With the assistance of NAHMA’s board of directors and staff, a strategic alliance was created, bringing together NAHMA, the National Apartment Association (NAA) and the American Association of Housing and Services for the Aging (AAHSA). Such an alliance is unheard of—three national trade associations coming together to provide the most comprehensive certification program for managers of LIHTC

communities. The only words that can be used to describe everything related to the SHCM program is GREAT SUCCESS.

From the beginning, the goal of the development team and NAHMA was to create the most complete LIHTC exam possible, focusing on the day-to-day activities related to managing a LIHTC community. Last summer, the exam development team began the process of identifying testable areas of importance related to managing a LIHTC community. Once the testable areas outline was developed, the next step was to draft 150 exam questions with answers.

CREATING A NEW TOOL

Task in hand, and with exam-writing guidance from Maggie Collins at the Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO), our third-party exam certification consultant, we rolled up our sleeves and put on our thinking caps. Within 30 days we had all of our questions and began dissecting our work to confirm that we had productive questions and, most importantly, correct answers. The question pool was reduced to 100 questions, which became the initial SHCM Exam.

The next step was to gather an audience to sit for the pilot exam. With the help of Winn Residential and Solari Enterprises, we were able to assemble two test groups of 50 people each. With the exams taken and the results in, we now were official!

In the time since the pilot exams were administered, we have had 297 additional exams, resulting in 224 SHCM candidates.

In addition to the aforementioned professionals, NAHMA created a grandfa-

thering opportunity, inviting other LIHTC industry certifications to obtain SHCM certification. The grandfathering program resulted in the addition of 535 SHCM professionals. All in all, NAHMA, NAA and AAHSA are proud to have currently a grand total of 628 SHCM professionals across the country in what is considered a very short time period by certification program standards. This speaks volumes about the integrity of the SHCM.

Currently the SHCM program is governed by an advisory committee. This committee consists of technical advisors and representatives from NAHMA, NAA and AAHSA.

THANKS TO THE FIELD

Last but definitely not least, I would be remiss to not recognize the strong and continued support from the AHMAs and local chapters of NAA and AAHSA, who have persevered to maintain the integrity of the SHCM exam.

As I prepared to write this article I recalled the steps taken by so many dedicated volunteer members and staff to create and produce a program as well-thought-out and planned as the SHCM program. Looking forward, we anticipate celebrating the 10th anniversary of the SHCM exam at the same time that the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program celebrates its 30th anniversary.

In closing, I offer my immense appreciation to everyone involved with the SHCM exam program. Here’s to looking forward to the future of the SHCM Exam Program. **NN**

Gianna Solari, NAHP-e, SHCM, is Vice President, Operations at Solari Enterprises, Inc. in Orange, Calif.