

# SHCMs, Unite!

HAVE YOU ACHIEVED NAHMA'S Specialist in Housing Credit Management™ (SHCM) designation? If so, take a minute to pat yourself on the back for a job well done. You have:

- Successfully completed a minimum of 12 hours of housing-credit specific coursework or training;
- Successfully passed the SHCM exam;
- Demonstrated a minimum of two years of housing credit management employment experience;
- Committed to a defined code of professional conduct; and
- Met a continuing education requirement of six units of housing-credit specific course work per year to maintain your certification.

The number of SHCM property management professionals will soon exceed 1,000 skilled individuals. We are a force to be reckoned with. Let's unite in a *call to action* to continue to raise awareness and understanding that property management is a fabulous career!

## PROMOTING PROFESSIONALISM

Here are a few suggested goals that all SHCMs should adopt to continue to enhance our profession:

1. **Become a mentor** to a junior member of your staff. Make it your goal to guide him or her to appropriate training programs and to ensure that he or she is adopting excellent work habits.
2. **Keep at least 10 SHCM brochures** in your briefcase. When you are at industry events or with fellow property managers in your company, ask about their SHCM status and provide them with a brochure, along with your endorsement.
3. **If you haven't already, join your**

**local AHMA.** These regional groups of affordable housing professionals are a wealth of knowledge and information. Go to [www.nahma.org](http://www.nahma.org) and click on AHMA Local Directory for the chapter nearest you.

4. **Volunteer to be part of an interesting committee** when you attend AHMA meetings, and get involved! AHMA programs often include speakers from state and federal agencies. You will meet, greet and brainstorm with the people who create policy in your area. These are the people who shape the direction of your state's program—they want your opinions. As an SHCM, you have the knowledge and experience to provide real-life examples of issues that need to be addressed and may help influence the future of the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program in your state.

5. **Make sure your company values training** as much as you do. Have serious discussions with your supervisors about the importance of keeping up-to-date with all the latest changes in the industry. If they think that the Housing Tax Credit program is static, just refer them to Allan Pinter's article in the May/June 2007 issue of *NAHMA News*. Imagine how many state handbooks will be updated to take into account the new 8823 guide.

6. **Find the background of every new policy or procedure you learn.** Have the basis of your knowledge be the source document—not because “John or Jane told me so.”

7. **Read industry magazines** to keep on top of new and exciting innovations. When you find an article or idea that intrigues you, explore it through additional research.

8. **Be an asset to your company.** As part of an elite corps of managers, SHCMs add value to their company. You have a responsibility to ensure that the professional code of conduct that SHCMs follow is part of your company's corporate culture. This will raise the level of all aspects of property management.

9. **Think outside the box.** SHCMs must be leaders who have exciting new ideas that constantly enhance the profession. Words like *stale*, *follower* or *uninspired* should never be associated with an SHCM.

10. **Be a champion for the property management profession.** When you are with family or friends, how do you describe your work—as a job or as an exciting profession? When you hear of someone looking for a job, do you encourage him or her to consider property management? Have you supported the idea of having your company sponsor interns from local schools or colleges? This is a great way to have new talent join your company.

## SEEKING IMPACT

Imagine the impact that united SHCMs are having and will continue to have in the future. The LIHTC program is here to stay, and we are in a unique position to influence the future—which will result in a better life for our residents; a less complicated and more uniform set of rules and regulations; and an awareness of the positive contribution that this housing program makes toward fulfilling our country's housing needs. **NN**

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