



**MULTIFAMILY FLORIDA**

2021  
LEGISLATIVE  
SESSION:  
**THAT'S  
A WRAP!**

SUMMER 2021

**DIVERSITY,  
EQUITY  
IN THE  
INDUSTRY**

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**EVOLVING  
DIGITAL  
MARKETING  
TRENDS**

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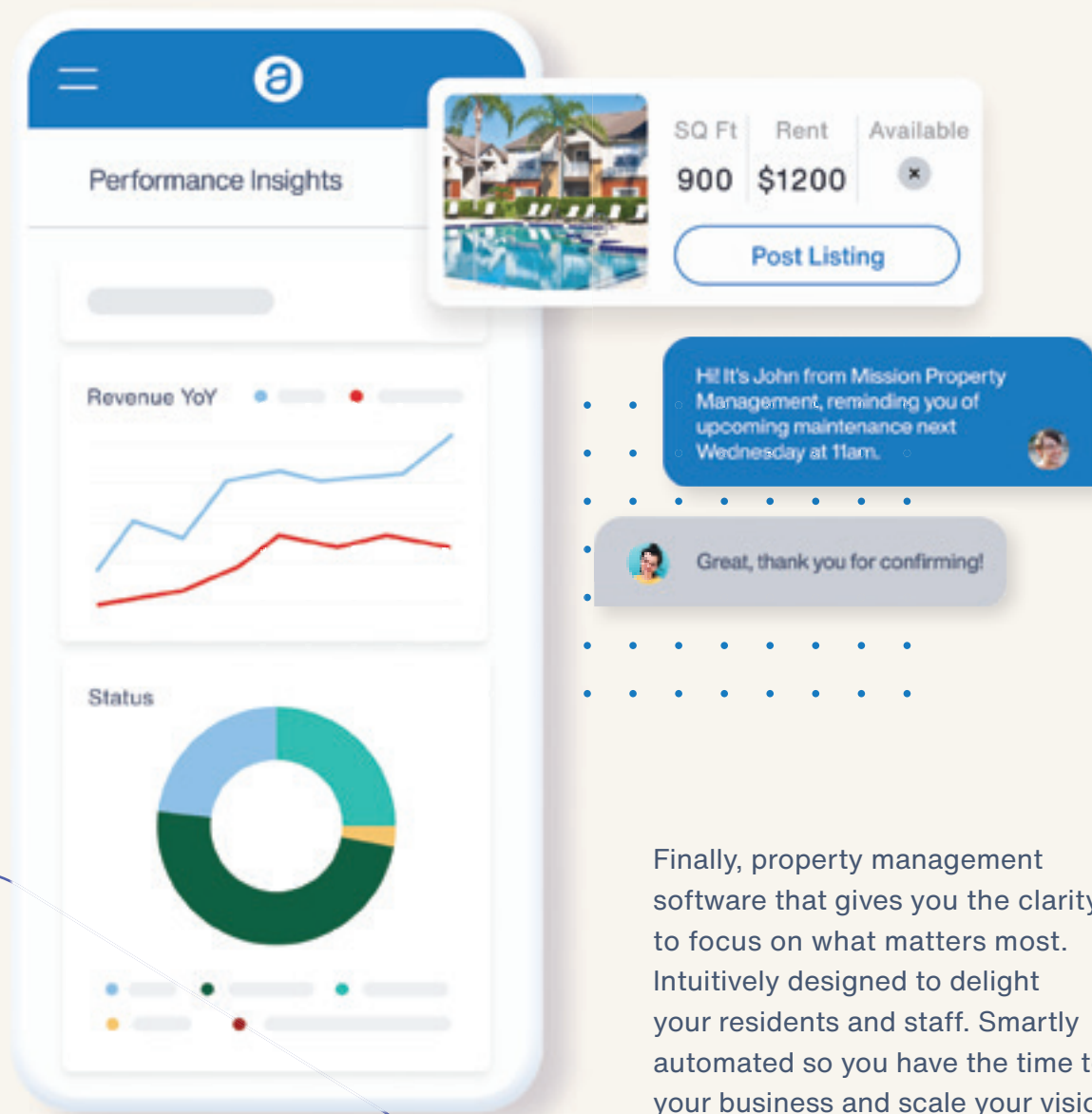
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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

# Progress, Not Perfection

BY KIMBERLY MAGGARD, CAPS, CPO | ROYAL AMERICAN MANAGEMENT INC.

**WHEN FAA MEMBERS, LEADERS,** and staff gathered in August 2019 to develop a new strategic plan, no one could have predicted that in 2020 in-person gatherings would be nonexistent as a worldwide pandemic raged. If we had possessed a crystal ball then, perhaps we would have rethought our goal to “grow conference and events.” Nonetheless, as we find ourselves halfway through the 2020-2022 Strategic Plan timeframe, FAA has made noteworthy progress toward that goal.

Early in the pandemic, FAA planned its first-ever series of educational webinars, with topics such as building community remotely, teleworking, fair housing, and steps suppliers could take during the pandemic to support their long-term success.

A few months later, the FAA Board of Directors met in person – with many COVID precautions in place – and made the gut-wrenching decision to cancel the 2020 FAA Annual Conference & Trade Show. Although no virtual event could take the place of the best conference and trade show in the multifamily industry, the board challenged FAA staff to create a suitable substitute. The resulting 2020 FAA Annual Meeting included everything that in a normal year would be showcased on the conference general session stage: a keynote presentation; speeches by the outgoing and incoming FAA presidents; the State of the Association by Josh Gold, FAA executive vice president; recognition of officers, Leadership Lyceum graduates, and major APAC investors; swearing-in of officers; and much more.

Fast forward to 2021 and slowly but surely the world is returning to in-person events, including trade shows. FAA's trade show will be the largest ever, with more exhibit booths and longer trade show hours for members to visit them. This will truly maximize the opportunities for property management professionals to connect with supplier partners who can help them do their jobs more efficiently and effectively.

The educational component of the event includes not only several recognizable

**Mission:** The Florida Apartment Association is a federation of associations representing and advocating the interests of the Florida multifamily rental housing industry.

**Vision:** To be the recognized leader of Florida's multifamily industry.

**Goal:** Increase engagement at all levels in the industry, leading to membership growth and a stronger affiliate network.

- Strengthen affiliate network
- Raise brand awareness
- Grow conference and events
- Enhance advocacy and research efforts.

industry experts but also seven panel discussions, which the FAA Conference Committee selected from 21 proposals submitted. Together, the moderators and panelists will offer a broad perspective of real-world experiences, case studies, and peer-to-peer learning.

A key element of FAA's goal to grow the conference and events is to engage members from across the industry, with all manner of job titles. The Maintenance Education Series – complimentary for up to five maintenance professionals from each affiliate – is back in 2021, with sessions that will focus on growing maintenance teams, streamlining the turn process, and inspiring success.

The Masters Session will once again provide an opportunity for senior executives in multifamily management to explore shared challenges.

This year, FAA celebrates our 50th anniversary. Marking any important milestone brings with it some retrospect and hindsight. We don't have to look back 50 years to see how far FAA has come in how it serves our members and our industry. Past presidents and other volunteer leaders built a solid base upon which we continue to grow and evolve.

Naturally, there is still work to do to accomplish the goals in our 2020-2022 Strategic Plan. At the same time, I am so very proud of how far we have come. **MF**



# Preserving a Legacy

BY JOSH GOLD, CAE, CMP | EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

**THE WORLD OF COCA-COLA** museum in Atlanta boasts a movie theater, 200 artifacts including an 1896 syrup urn, and a secret formula vault. Disney World displays original sketches, costumes, and plenty of memorabilia at Disney's Hollywood Studios and other attractions. The Levi Strauss Visitor Center in San Francisco displays a pair of jeans from 1890.

While your organization may not be an institution of American culture, it does have a history that may well be worthy of commemorating. An upcoming anniversary or another company milestone is a good opportunity to honor your legacy. Preparing to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Florida Apartment Association turned out to be a fascinating – albeit sometimes frustrating – undertaking.

As we began the planning process, we researched what other associations and organizations had done. The results ranged from publishing a couple of articles and a few photos to producing a glossy coffee-table book, from designing a new logo to launching a new product or initiative. We settled on a special insert in this magazine; a timeline to appear in the magazine insert and be displayed at the 2021 FAA Annual Conference & Trade Show; a video to present at that event; and a redesign of the FAA logo – which hasn't been updated since 2007.

Long ago, it must be  
I have a photograph  
Preserve your memories  
They're all that's left you

—'BOOKENDS,' BY SIMON & GARFUNKEL

If you have ever undertaken a large project, you will not be surprised to learn that this project grew exponentially, from a 16-page insert to a 24-page standalone piece to a 44-page perfect-bound publication. Similarly, more than two dozen videotaped interviews yielded far too many treasures to include in the brief video we are planning as part of the conference opening session. In order to include as many as possible, we'll be sharing nuggets throughout the conference as well as on social media. We've also been sharing remembrances of past presidents and others on the FAA blog at [faahq.org/news/50th-anniversary](http://faahq.org/news/50th-anniversary). Check them out, if you haven't already.

We believe we have curated a robust depiction of FAA's first half-century that will stand the test of time. It has been a team effort involving everyone on FAA

staff and then some, as well as numerous volunteer leaders, past and present. If you are considering celebrating a milestone at your company or organization, here are some lessons that may be helpful.

**Don't delay getting started.** Especially if there is a specific target date for a celebration, start sooner than you think you should. FAA staff have been talking about our 50th anniversary since not long after I became executive vice president in 2014. We had documents and board minutes that covered the entire 50 years, as well as boxes of photos, magazines, conference programs, and more. We launched the project in earnest more than a year before our target date – the 2021 FAA Annual Conference & Trade Show. We hired a historian and writer to peruse minutes and magazines, and we began scanning photos, magazine covers, and conference programs.

We are quite pleased with the resulting magazine supplement, and we're excited to finalize the video and displays for the conference. Still, we could have continued working on this project ad infinitum.

**Involve others.** We sought contributions, memories, and insights from as many past and present players as possible. We shared "Throwback Thursday" photos on social media and included a link where members could upload their own photos from the past. We contacted past presidents, hall of fame inductees, and influential members from both the management and supplier sides of the industry. Many of them shared their thoughts in writing, by telephone, or in videotaped interviews.

These memories make up the heart of FAA's history.

**Know that it will never be perfect.**

We knew from the outset that several years' worth of photos and magazines were missing, most likely having been lost or left behind during a move from one office to another. Not surprisingly for a 50-year-old organization, many past presidents are no longer with us. What was surprising: The very first president, Rolfe Duggar, is still working in St. Petersburg – at 90. He was interviewed during FAA's spring governance meetings at the Don CeSar Resort in St. Petersburg, and was able to stop by the meeting of the FAA Board of Directors – what a treat!

No doubt, we missed some significant occurrence or legislative battle, as well as individuals who were important. We continue to welcome stories and photos to be uploaded at [faahq.org/share](http://faahq.org/share), and we will share them throughout the summer and maybe even after this year's conference. We appreciate everyone who has already participated in this legacy project, whether a volunteer leader past or present, a hall of fame inductee, or an involved member. Without you and ALL of our members, not only would this 50-year celebration have been impossible, so would the very story of the Florida Apartment Association. After all, it is ultimately YOUR story and your celebration. We salute you! **MF**

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# 2021 LEGISLATIVE SESSION: THAT'S A WRAP!

BY AMANDA GILL

FAA GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS DIRECTOR

**T**he COVID-19 pandemic was raging when the cameras started rolling for the 2021 session. The Florida Capitol remained closed to visitors, COVID-19 protocols limited public testimony opportunities in committee meetings, and legislators questioned how they were going to find a way to balance the budget with the financial challenges posed by the pandemic. Thankfully, by the time session ended on April 30, 2021, a very different scene had emerged. If you missed the action, grab some popcorn, find a comfy chair, and check out the highlights from this year's jam-packed session below.

## FAA's 2021 Legislative Priorities

**Clarify fire radio system requirements (HB 587/SB 1902).** In 2016, state statutes were amended to give local governments the ability to regulate fire radio system requirements for buildings within their jurisdictions. These changes in the code were designed to ensure that firefighters can communicate effectively while inside a building in the event of an emergency. Under the initial statute, buildings are required to comply by January 1, 2025, and must apply for the appropriate permit for installation by December 31, 2022. The problem is that a building's pass/fail status



is a moving target that can be influenced by nearby construction. In addition, some local governments are trying to expand requirements to include annual inspections and are preventing new apartment communities from obtaining a certificate of occupancy until radio signal strength issues are resolved, which can take weeks or months depending on contractor availability.

In response to concern from developers and apartment operators, FAA worked to introduce HB 587 (Rep. John Snyder, R-82) and SB 1902 (Sen. Ray Rodrigues, R-27). This legislation would have clarified fire department radio signal requirements for new and existing apartment buildings and require:

- Local radio systems to meet the minimum national standard.
- A reasonable timeline for ongoing inspections.
- Local governments to provide developers with tools to determine in advance if a project will have a radio signal strength issue.
- Standards for the certificate of occupancy process.

Unfortunately, HB 587 and SB 1902 did not have a hearing. FAA is pleased to report, however, that another bill related to this issue passed both the House and Senate and was signed into law by Gov. Ron DeSantis on June 16. HB 1209 (Rep. Elizabeth Fetterhoff, R-26) extends the deadlines for existing apartment buildings to apply for the appropriate permit for the installation of this technology from December 31, 2022, to January 1, 2024. This extension will provide FAA and other industry stakeholders with additional time to work with the Legislature on this during the 2022 legislative session.

**Protect the Sadowski Affordable Housing Trust Fund and provide rent relief for residents impacted by COVID-19 (HB 13/SB 510).** Early in the session, House Speaker Chris Sprowls (R-65) and Senate President Wilton Simpson (R-10) announced a plan to address Florida infrastructure needs related to sea level rise and wastewater with resources from the Sadowski Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Under the initial proposed plan, the documentary stamp proceeds that have been earmarked to fund Florida's affordable housing programs would have been split into thirds, with only \$141.1 million for affordable housing in fiscal year 2021-2022.

After an outcry from housing industry stakeholders and others, the proposals dealing with Sadowski (SB 2512/HB 5401) were amended to increase funding for the state's affordable housing programs. SB 2512 passed the House and Senate as amended and was signed into law by the governor on June 2. This end result allocated \$146.7 million for SHIP and

\$62.5 million for SAIL and other affordable housing programs for a total of \$209.2 million in funding for FY 2021-2022.

**Permit affordable housing tax incentives (HB 563/SB 674).** This session, FAA supported HB 563 (Rep. Anthony Rodriguez, R-118) and SB 674 (Sen. Ana Maria Rodriguez, R-39), which would allow, but not require, local governments to establish property tax incentives for affordable housing. Unfortunately, HB 563 and SB 674 did not have a hearing this session. FAA plans to continue to speak to legislators in the House and Senate to encourage support for this proposal during the 2022 session. However, HB 7061 included notable positive changes related to property taxes for affordable housing that is owned entirely by a nonprofit entity that is a not-for-profit corporation, qualified as charitable under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. An amendment was adopted on the House floor, which increased the existing 50% property tax discount into a full exemption. HB 7061 was approved by the governor on May 21.

**Establish COVID-19 liability protections for housing providers (HB 7/SB 72).** FAA joined others in the business community in urging the Legislature to pass COVID-19 liability protections for business. On March 29, DeSantis signed into law SB 72 (Sen. Jeff Brandes, R-24), which establishes COVID-19 liability protections for businesses, including housing providers. Under the new law, which went into effect immediately, a business that makes a good faith effort to substantially comply with applicable COVID-19 guidance is protected from civil liability stemming from a COVID-19-related civil action.

## Other Industry Victories and Important Legislative Developments

### *Eviction Expungement*

Two bills that would allow renters to request that their eviction records be sealed passed the House. FAA was successful in preventing this harmful legislation from advancing in the Senate.

HB 1193 and HB 1995 were introduced by Rep. Vance Aloupis (R-115). Together, these bills would authorize a tenant or mobile-home owner who is a defendant in an eviction proceeding to file a motion with the court to have the records of such proceedings sealed and to have his or her name substituted with the word "tenant" on the progress docket.

FAA continued to meet with Aloupis throughout the legislative process to express the industry's concerns. As a result of FAA's advocacy, Aloupis filed an



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amendment on the House floor that would prevent an individual who has intentionally destroyed, damaged, or misused the landlord's property from seeking expungement. In addition, Aloupis' amendment would prevent unlimited expungement by prohibiting an individual with a judgment entered against him or her in two or more eviction proceedings during any 12-month period or a judgment in three or more eviction proceedings during any 24-month period from obtaining expungement. While FAA believed this amendment was a step in the right direction, FAA remained opposed to the legislation.

In preparation for the vote on the House floor, FAA members sprang into action, sending more than 450 emails to members of the Florida House asking them to oppose this legislation. Despite these strong advocacy efforts, HB 1193 and HB 1195 passed with Aloupis' amendment with only one "No" vote from Rep. Sam Killebrew (R-41) on April 15.

While the passage of this legislation in the House was very concerning, FAA was successful in preventing HB 1193 and HB 1195 or similar legislation from moving in the Senate. As a result, the legislation will have to be reintroduced during the 2022 session to receive further consideration. FAA anticipates this legislation, or a similar proposal, will be reintroduced next session. As such, the FAA government affairs team will be working to educate representatives and senators on the negative and unintended consequences posed by this proposal.

### *Impact Fees*

In the months leading up to the 2021 session, several local governments across the state sought or successfully passed measures to rapidly increase impact fees – in some cases by 200%-300%. FAA joined other housing industry stakeholders in supporting HB 337 (Rep. Nick DiCeglie, R-66) to address this important issue. HB 337 passed the House on April 21 and the Senate on April 26. This legislation was signed by DeSantis on June 4.

HB 337 will cap impact fee increases at 50% and require impact fee increases of not more than 25% to be implemented in two equal amounts, and impact fee increases between 25% and 50% of the current rate to be implemented in four equal amounts. Notably, the bill provides that impact fee limitations will operate retroactively to Jan. 1, 2021, which will invalidate some of the massive impact fee increases that were recently passed by local governments.

### *Local Licensing Requirements*

For the last few sessions, FAA has supported legislation that would prohibit local governments from imposing additional occupational licensing requirements. That bill finally cleared the finish line in the final days of this session and was sent to the governor for final approval. HB 735 (Rep. Joe Harding, R-22) prohibits local governments from requiring a license for a person whose job scope does not substantially correspond to that of a contractor or journeyman licensed by the Construction Industry Licensing Board.

FAA supported this legislation because it specifically prevents local governments from requiring a license for a variety of services that can be performed by maintenance staff, including but not limited to: painting, flooring, cabinetry, handyman services, plastering, stuccoing, and caulking.

### *Data Privacy*

After a flurry of advocacy and opposition from the business community, data privacy legislation (HB 969/SB 1734) failed to pass in the final days of the 2021 session. As introduced, this legislation would have impacted businesses with more than \$25 million in gross revenue; entities that buy, sell, receive, or share the personal information of 50,000 or more consumers, households or devices; or entities where 50% or more of revenue comes from selling or sharing personal information. Although the proposal failed to pass in 2021, the bills are likely to be reintroduced in 2022.

And as they say in the film biz, that's a wrap on the 2021 Florida legislative session! It's hard to believe, but FAA is already preparing for the 2022 legislative session. If you have any questions regarding FAA's advocacy efforts or if you have a policy idea that you'd like to see FAA pursue in the future, please contact [amanda@faahq.org](mailto:amanda@faahq.org) to get involved today. **MF**

For more about the 2021 Florida Legislative Session, please see *By the Numbers*, Page 32.

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# Black Multifamily Professionals Share Insights, Experiences



BY PAUL BERGERON

**DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION** (DEI) is a theme dominating discussions among management in most industries, and the apartment and property management field is no different.

The Apartment Association of Greater Orlando (AAGO) recently convened a panel of its members to discuss “Cultivating the Next Generation of Black Industry Leaders” in a webinar.

The event featured moderator Edwin Narain, a former Democratic member of the Florida House of Representatives, who represented District 61 from 2014 to 2016.

The panel included Jolie Whitmore, regional manager, Highmark Residential; Carl Walton, senior director of



innovation and design, RangeWater; Shana Jackson, regional manager, Epoch Residential; and Maurice Williams, regional sales director, OnCall Parking.

Narain metaphorically described DEI as follows:

Diversity is being asked to the dance; Inclusion is being asked to dance; Equity is being asked what kind of music you'd like to dance to.

His panel affirmed that and added their thoughts on African-Americans in the workforce and everyday life. Each shared their history, successes, and vulnerabilities as professionals, speaking about what it's been like during their careers when they are feeling alone, having to be "the best" at their jobs, how to be themselves in the workplace, mentorships, and the Black Lives Matter movement, among other things.

Williams, 41, said when he was 24, he worked at a finance company in New Jersey where he was surrounded by white colleagues who were in their 30s and 40s.

"If there was a crowd of about 500, I was one of only three Black men in the room," he said. "To me, the key was to just keep showing up, and to not let it get to me. Eventually, I was able to fit in by breaking the barriers between whites and Blacks."

**"To me, the key was to just keep showing up, and to not let it get to me."**

**—MAURICE WILLIAMS**

Whitmore, whose 31-year career in apartment management began in high school, said there were times when she'd see a job opening, rush to the company to apply, arrive in about 20 minutes, and was then told, "Sorry, that position has been filled."

"It was a slap in the face," Whitmore said. "But I didn't stop trying. The opportunities

for Blacks in the job market is different now. It's better, but it's not where it needs to be."

About being among the few Black people at a given company or in a given situation, Whitmore said, "You need to realize that sometimes people see you, and you don't even know they are looking at you."

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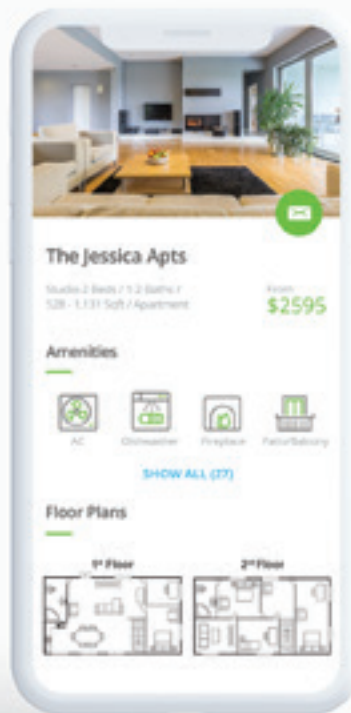
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Jackson added that people need to realize, “We’re all here for the same reasons.”

Walton said it sometimes is easy to get caught up in the “impostor syndrome” and have feelings of inadequacy. To deal with that, he said he takes inspiration from others who found themselves in similar situations. As American poet, memoirist, and civil rights activist Maya Angelou said, “I come as one, but I stand for 10,000.”

Jackson said being young, Black, and a woman creates challenges. “It can be tough,” she said. “I’ve worked at places where a customer asks to see the manager, I walk out, and the look on their face is, ‘Oh, you’re the manager.’ It can be intimidating. But lean on your friends and mentors to help you through it.”

Several panelists recalled their upbringing when a parent told them that to get the job or to just get ahead, “you have to be the best one there.”

Whitmore said she’s learned not to live by job titles. “We all bring our own skills and specialties to the job,” she said. “I learned from my mother, who realized she had to earn degrees or certifications to be hired, even though others didn’t. To her, the ultimate compliment came when she left a company and they

later told her that they needed to hire four people to do all the different things she did as one person.”

The comfort that comes with being able to “be yourself” on the job is not a given. It can take time, but it’s a wonderful feeling that the panelists said is crucial to happiness.

Jackson said that only in the past couple of years has she been able to “come out of my shell.”

“You can tell,” she said, “because it’s when you’re not afraid to voice your opinion in a group if you disagree with something.”

Walton said having to be perfect, or the very best at everything, creates a lot of pressure.

“For me, I have vision; I’m good at that,” he said. “What do you bring to the table? What’s the thing that you are best at? That’s enough. Stick with that.”

Walton credited one of his mentors, Tracy Bowers, executive managing director of RangeWater, with helping him to succeed in property management.

“She listens to my point of view, and she asks for it,” he said. “Remember: You don’t have to have a seat to have a say. It’s not good if a supervisor is making decisions without thinking about getting feedback from others. And she has a way of finding something positive



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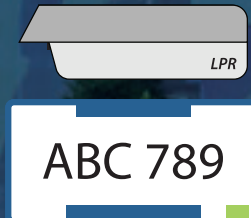
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in every bump in the road. I aspire to that, too, and I take that same approach when mentoring others.”

Adding to the challenges for African-Americans in the workplace – last year’s Black Lives Matter movement was shown daily in the news.

“When the Black Lives Matter movement was fully underway last summer, I was asked to share what I thought,” Walton said. “I spoke up. I’m 38 years old, but it wasn’t until last year that I felt comfortable enough wearing a baseball cap in public. I’m a tall man. And a tall Black man, wearing a hat, can feel threatening to some. Most of my life I dressed ‘preppy’ because I didn’t want those around me to think I was going to hurt them. Don’t judge people by what you think they are. If you don’t, a lot of times they will surprise you.”

Appearance is just one thing that Black people often have to overcome.

Jackson said some – but not all – African-Americans shy from using their given first name if it sounds like a “Black” name “because they would never get calls or call-backs. So I would use my middle name when applying for jobs. Unfortunately, people with our [ethnicity] have to think of things like that.”

All panelists said they rely on mentors and seek opportunities to serve as mentors during their careers.

“Jolie [Whitmore] was one of my mentors,” Jackson said. “I went to a meeting once and she and I were the only African-Americans in the room, and we bonded. [AAGO Executive Vice President and CEO Chip Tatum] is another who has pushed me to become more involved in AAGO.”

Whitmore said she is “always looking for the next person who says they are ready to move up, or who I think is ready to move up.”

Williams encouraged others to be mentors for colleagues – not just for those who aspire to be regional managers or higher, but people at any level in the company who just want to get better at what they do.

Williams said Black people often find allies and can benefit from them during tough times.

“For those who want to be

an ally, I suggest that they read up on what Blacks have gone through over the years,” he said. “You need to understand our plight. And be honest about not understanding it, and ask questions about what it’s like. Have an open mind and an open heart about it.”

Ricardo Alicea, AAGO Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Committee chair, closed with another Maya Angelou quote, “We all should know that diversity makes for a rich tapestry, and we must understand that all the threads of the tapestry are equal in value no matter what their color.” **MF**

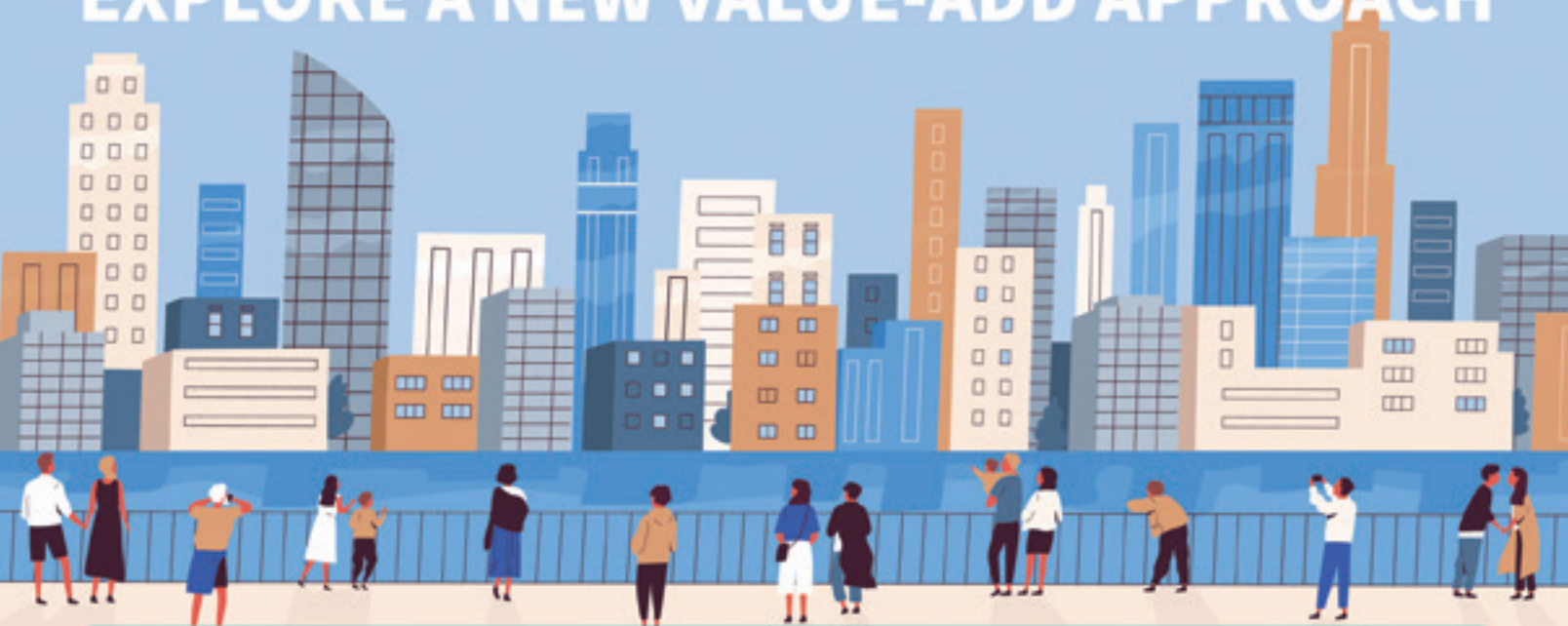
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have to have a seat to  
have a say.”

—CARL WALTON



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# DIGITAL MARKETING TRENDS TO WATCH

BY ASHLEY TYNDALL

**IN ORDER FOR MULTIFAMILY** professionals to be successful, they must approach their target residents where they are. In the past, this meant placing billboards on their routes to work or advertisements on apartment search sites. As technology has radically evolved, digital marketing has changed the way companies must work in order to keep appealing to target residents.

Digital marketing trends that apartment communities and developers should be aware of include the growth of augmented reality, live videos, increased personalization, and native advertising. A company that is willing to evolve with the development of technology will always stay ahead of the game.

Keep your strategy relevant by adopting some of these forms of digital marketing:

## Chatbots

Chatbots are the small chat windows that pop up at the bottom of a web page, offer assistance, and answer questions. Some people choose to interact with these bots, while others ignore them. But not for long. Chatbots gain intelligence with each interaction they have, making them more effective because they remember the user's needs. They also give the company time that may have been previously spent answering customers' concerns.

Chatbots are effective in marketing because they help promote your apartments, gain resident insight,

personalize your brand and community, and increase engagement. They give your web page a humanlike interaction that customers would not get otherwise.

As chatbots gain traction in the digital marketing community, they will become increasingly effective, and more customers will use them. Rather than potential and current residents having to rely solely on leasing offices and manual messaging, chatbots will be able to quickly answer questions that they have, allowing you to gather more accurate data about your residents.

## Live Videos

Did you know the video streaming market is projected to hit \$184.3 billion by 2027? Internet users watched 1.1 billion hours of live video in 2019, which means that you can reach a large portion of the market by using live videos. Videos consistently draw more engagement with followers than any other form of content. The best sites to use for live videos are Facebook and YouTube because videos can be viewed even after the live streaming has ended. Live videos are an effective and engaging way to show off resident-exclusive events, grand openings, or other celebrations that bring excitement to your brand.

Live videos invite your followers to see and be part of what you are all about, letting them get to know the faces behind the brand. And while live videos are a fun way to interact with your audience, they can also







provide information about upcoming events, specials, or new properties in the works.

### Augmented Reality & Virtual Reality

Augmented and virtual reality are technologies that are continually on the rise. From virtual tours of apartments to games such as "Pokemon Go," augmented reality has a lot of potential in increasing your brand awareness and engaging residents. Augmented reality and virtual reality offer consumers a chance to interact with the world around them without leaving the comfort of their homes, which is an idea that marketers need to capitalize on.

The idea of virtual reality was introduced to consumers through smart technology that can be brought into their home. Both of these advancements make marketing efforts more impactful, and allow the consumer to interact with your brand in exciting ways they have not been able to before.

**Live videos invite your followers to see and be part of what you are all about, letting them get to know the faces behind the brand.**

In the multifamily industry, augmented reality and virtual reality can be used to display property renderings and allow customers to interact with them before construction begins. You can create a virtual tour for people who may not live close by or are simply

browsing options, allowing them to explore floor plans and amenities without the travel. The opportunities with augmented reality and virtual reality are endless, allowing for creative digital marketing campaigns and features that appeal to target residents.

### Native Advertising

Native advertising, while considered an older method, is proving to be useful once again with the rise of technology. Although consumers may use ad blockers

and avoid everyday ads, native advertising blurs the lines between advertising and nonadvertising content, appearing less promotional and more as a casual nod to the brand and how it can benefit consumers.

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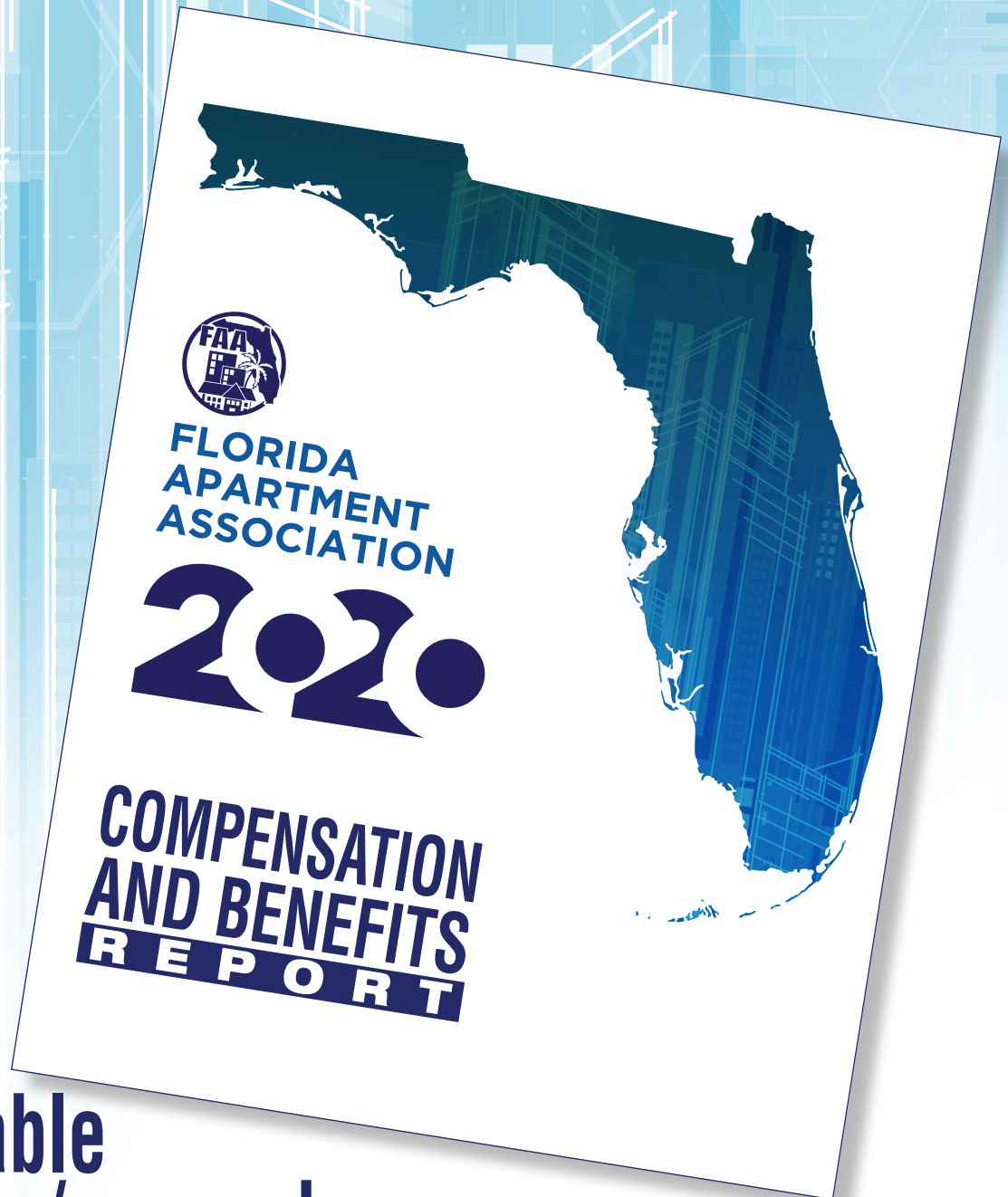
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Some examples of native advertising include sponsored ads on Facebook and Instagram or product placement. The native ad should be able to fit in with the host's media if your company's logo is removed. This strategy builds your brand's credibility and trustworthiness because you're not bombarding your target resident with promotional content. Instead, you're leading them to your site organically and building the relationship. In 2021, it will become crucial to take advantage of sponsorships on social media and other platforms in order to maintain and grow your target audience.

### Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence, or AI, is complex and advanced, making it similar to augmented reality and virtual reality. AI is redefining the customer experience, but is a concept that apartment marketers have to experiment with. Developers and properties that are willing to accept the challenge of adopting AI will see great payoffs in the future. AI can be applied in many ways, and it has been used to build websites, to segment customers, and to automate Big Data.

While AI is an expensive and time-consuming addition to your company, it has the ability to greatly improve your apartment marketing efforts and results. A strong AI strategy can lead to more cost-effective campaigns, as AI can gather and process large amounts of data quickly, allowing you to develop marketing material more easily. More effective apartment marketing will result in more leads, and eventually more customers. Your target audience will be able to relate to specific material, which will aid in building a long-term relationship with residents.

### Meet Your Residents Where They Already Are

If you are able to adopt some, or all, of these forms of digital marketing, you can expect to see greater returns on your strategy. Multifamily development is back on the rise, and great customer service is one of the main factors residents look for in a community. By using digital strategies such as chatbots, artificial intelligence, virtual and augmented reality, or live videos, you will be better positioned to reach your audience in a variety of ways.

*Ashley Tyndall is chief relationship officer at Criterion.B. MF*

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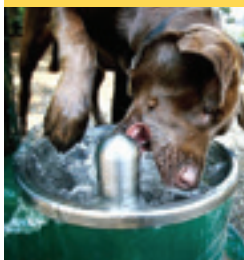
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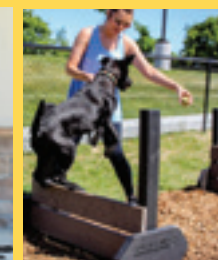
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## Finding Family at Addison Pointe

BY CAMILA CAL

**LOCATED IN THE HEART** of Melbourne, Addison Pointe is a new apartment community focused on providing residents with a seamless transition between work and leisure, and whatever else life may bring. Its central location means the community is a short drive away from Interstate 95, U.S. Highway 1, and the Beachline Expressway, offering ease and accessibility to residents who commute. Wickham Park, a popular community park in Melbourne and a favorite destination for residents, is right across the street.

“It’s awesome that residents can walk to Wickham Park,” said Lauren Hendry, the property manager at





Addison Pointe. “This was life-saving during COVID-19 when we were locked down. They had somewhere else to go and roam. There are trails, picnic areas, and a lake in there.”

Addison Pointe’s three- and four-story buildings all have elevators for residents’ convenience. Hendry described Addison Pointe’s style as modern and beachy with eye-catching blue-and-yellow buildings.

#### ► Fast Facts:

- **Number of units:** 370
- **Monthly rent:** starting at \$1,300
- **Apartment size:** ranges from 704-1,409 square feet
- **Managed by:** JMG Realty Inc.





Residents enjoy walking down the breezeway because it feels bright and colorful.

“We have six different floor plans with three different one-bedroom styles. The things that set us apart the most from our competitors are our designer kitchens that contain more cabinets than most houses do. Residents always tell us that they can’t fill them all!” Hendry said. “Most of the kitchens also have these fabulous islands that residents can use as their tables or to prep delicious meals.”

Other in-unit amenities include granite countertops, stainless steel appliances, wooden plank flooring, Nest thermostats, screened-in patios, and keyless entry. Hendry explained that almost every apartment home

has a built-in desk that is tucked away in a hallway or a separate area, which was a great feature for residents who began working remotely or homeschooling children.

“The residents’ favorite amenity would definitely be the saltwater pool and the summer kitchen right next to it. We have two huge grills out there and a Big Green Egg grill as well. It’s a comfortable space for residents to relax with TVs, a fridge, and an icemaker, too,” Hendry said.

Addison Pointe’s full-circuit fitness center is also a popular amenity and includes a state-of-the-art “fitness on demand” program where residents can simply pick their preferred workout and follow it on the TV. Residents also have the option to use the yoga and spin





room. The front of the fitness center has a garage door feature that opens to overlook the pool and pond area.

The community is almost a year old and has successfully faced the many challenges that came with COVID-19, including how to host safe community events and keep community spirit alive.



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## COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT



“Normally, we’d have pool parties, barbecues, classes, and many other different activities that we planned once a month for residents. COVID-19 was definitely challenging, but we figured out ways to host socially distanced events. Food trucks were a popular event where residents could hang out with each other, eat, and listen to music while maintaining their safety. It was a way to gather without gathering,” Hendry said. “As the pandemic hit and everything shut down, our team rolled up our sleeves, dug our heels in, and focused on what we could do to help residents stay calm, obtain new leases, and keep everything moving forward.”



Hendry emphasized that the on-site team wanted residents to know how much Addison Pointe cares about their well-being. Some of the appreciation gifts included popcorn, soda, motivational messages and tips, coffee mugs, and ice pops for the kids.

"The residents would call to tell us that the gifts were really meaningful because a lot of them were home by themselves and away from their family. We were really the only family they had. Sometimes the gift was as simple as just a card, but it reminded them that we were only a call away if they needed us. I think it went a really long way," Hendry said. **MF**



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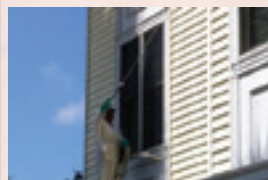


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## THE 2021 FLORIDA LEGISLATIVE SESSION

## Sadowski Affordable Housing Trust Fund

## Fiscal Year 2021-2022

**\$423.3**  
million

Gov. Ron DeSantis' proposed budget

**\$141.1**  
million

total proposed by House Speaker Chris Sprowls (R-65) and Senate President Wilton Simpson (R-10) after diverting \$282.2 million to infrastructure needs related to sea level rise and wastewater

**\$209.2**  
million

final approved budget, including

• **\$62.5 million** for the State Apartment Incentive Loan (SAIL) Program• **\$146.7 million** for the State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program (SHIP)

## Fiscal Year 1992-1993

**\$6.97**  
billion

collected through document stamp taxes on real estate transactions

**\$4.4**  
billion

appropriated for affordable housing programs

**\$2.3**  
billion

swept by the Legislature for other uses in the state budget

## Legislative Activity

Bills introduced by both House and Senate ..... **3,096**Bills that passed their first chamber ..... **468**Bills that passed both chambers ..... **275**Bills that FAA tracked ..... **104**Bills defeated ..... **19**  
(11 eviction-related bills, 2 rent control bills, 6 bills related to leasing/operations)Meetings ..... **107 meetings**  
with legislators/staff over the course of the session.

## Call to Action

449 FAA members responded to an FAA call to action and sent emails urging their representatives to oppose HB 1193 and HB 1195, which would have allowed renters to request that their eviction records be sealed. The bills passed the House but did not advance in the Senate.

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## Multifamily Florida magazine

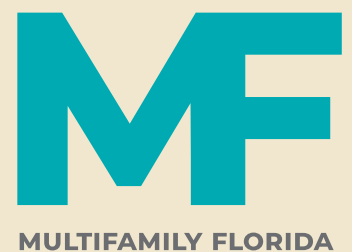
The recently redesigned *Multifamily Florida* magazine is distributed quarterly to all members. Reach all facets of the multifamily housing industry—apartment owners, management executives, developers, builders, investors, property managers, leasing consultants, maintenance personnel, suppliers, and related business professionals—throughout the state of Florida.

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**FALL 2021**  
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