CAI Celebrates National Women’s History Month
Spotlighting women leaders in the community association industry.

What is the best career decision you have made, and how has that impacted your career path?

Initially, my best career decision was getting into this business as “favor” to developer friends of my parents who were being forced into creating an HOA and needed someone to figure out the management model.

Later, after some years of experience and having received training and my PCAM, I set my sights on Large Scale management, where I would be the COO of a community not-for-profit corporation reporting directly to a Board of Directors. In that role, I had more autonomy without the risk of opening my own management company or seeking an executive position with a large management group.

How did you climb the ladder in your field and what was the experience like? Did you feel that there was room to negotiate and move up and if so, what was your experience like?

As I received proper training and my PCAM, I was provided with the experience and opportunities necessary to make a mark on this industry. From the connections made and relationships built, I entered Large Scale management. There, I learned the value of prioritizing education and availing yourself of every opportunity to learn. Networking within your company and the greater management community, developing relationships with other managers and community leaders, as well as key vendors in your area, and volunteering with CAI allowed for career growth and opportunity.

"When you develop a strong skill set as a community manager, opportunities exist."

Can you describe the level of support that you received from other women in our field and how did women specifically give you that support?

My first two supervisors in this field were both women and the CEO’s of their companies! They gave me the opportunity to be educated and trained in the field (which was in its infancy at the time.) Over the years I have been privileged to have developed a network of female peers, some of whom are my closest friends. I try to give back by providing support and opportunities for career development, both to my staff and in the industry, by facilitating CAI classes and mentoring newer managers.

What do you foresee as the biggest opportunity to the generation of women behind you in this field?

Community management has less of a gender bias than other career paths. This industry is growing rapidly as the first generation of community managers is growing older and coming closer to retirement age. Salaries are becoming more and more competitive. Most housing models now are within the PUD (Planned Unit Development) umbrella. As a result, there will be many opportunities to grow.

What advice would you give to aspiring young, women professionals in our field?

When you develop a strong skill set as a community manager, opportunities exist. Should you want to work part time when your children are young, more and more companies are allowing for flex schedules or have family friendly work places. Should you want to relocate, opportunities are available nationwide and increasing worldwide; the skill set is very “transferable” from market to market. If you prefer to work in a corporate environment, those opportunities are there. If you want to be a COO of a Large Scale community, that path is open, too.

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