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welcome you



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Dear Friends of Housing on Merit,

The first quarter of 2019 dazzles with continued interest and commitment to addressing the affordable housing crisis in California, but there also looms potential setbacks amid threatened rollbacks of HUD regulations and funding for low-income housing. Housing on Merit will not be deterred in our determination to bring about truly innovative and disruptive change to the affordable housing industry as we continue to build and preserve affordable housing and strengthen our partnerships.

Our priorities for 2019 are clear—to preserve and expand affordable housing across the Nation; to convene stakeholders interested in developing innovative solutions to increase the number of naturally occurring affordable housing units; to deliver resident services programming that significantly impacts the lives of our residents; and to eliminate homelessness among female veterans.

Thank you for your continued readership. We look forward to sharing our mission driven outcomes throughout the year!

With Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Patrick Luke'.

Patrick Luke
President
Housing on Merit Board of Directors

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jennifer Litwak'.

Jennifer Litwak, Esq.
Executive Director
Housing on Merit

At HOM

Housing on Merit's Development Portfolio Updates

Imperial Tower Senior Apartments

Housing on Merit is a co-developer of Imperial Tower Senior Apartments, an acquisition and moderate rehabilitation of an existing senior community in the heart of Sacramento, California. This transaction effectively preserved 187 units of housing for seniors aged 62 years and over, at or below 50% the area median income (AMI).

In addition to co-developing, HOM provides onsite resident services programming at this community.



Imperial Tower Apartments in Sacramento, California



Heritage Apartments Project in Chula Vista, California

Heritage Apartment Project

Housing on Merit is a co-developer of Heritage Apartments, an acquisition and renovation of two existing communities, Sunrose Apartments and Harvest Ridge, located in Chula Vista, California. The adjacent communities consist of 271 garden style units serving low-income seniors and working families.

HOM will also provide onsite resident services programming at these communities.

Housing on Merit's Resident Services Programming

Housing on Merit continues to make a significant impact in the lives of residents through our resident services programming. We highlight the following successes from our Learning Centers in quarter one.

Center for Academic Excellence: *Promotes academic achievement for residents of all ages.*

Throughout quarter one, Housing on Merit provided over 340 hours of after-school programming across our communities.

Housing on Merit recently partnered with Cal State University Fresno's Chemistry Club to incorporate their science curriculum into the weekly STEAM events at our Butterfly Grove community in Fresno, California. CSU Fresno scientists were welcomed to the Learning Center, where they introduced youth to chemistry by conducting educational and entertaining experiments that illustrate chemical reactions and how different gases interact with liquids.



CSU Fresno science professor and Butterfly Grove youth during a Chemistry Club STEAM Friday event.

Center for Health and Wellness: *Addresses restrictions of access to quality health and wellness services*

Housing on Merit has formed strong partnerships with organizations across the state in order to provide health services to our residents. At our Butterfly Grove community in Fresno, California, we recently partnered with the Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission to offer teen residents sexual health classes. Residents ages 12-19 years can participate in a four-course series entitled “Making Proud Choices,” which includes topics such as healthy relationships and how to say “no” effectively. Once participants complete the series, they receive a \$10 gift card.



Springville Senior Apartments is a newly constructed senior community in Camarillo, California, where HOM partners with Ventura County Agency on Aging to provide residents with Fall Prevention programming designed to help improve balance and reduce the risk of falls. In addition, HOM partners with the Camarillo Health Care District to bring Tai Chi classes to the community. This exercise class is very popular with residents, so a second class will start in April.

Residents at Springville Senior showing off their Tai Chi moves during class.

Beyond HOM

In this section we highlight Housing on Merit’s involvement in national discussions about innovative housing solutions and development financing.

The Affordable Housing Crisis Explored in Southern California:

Housing on Merit is committed to addressing the affordable housing crisis and we are excited to support and collaborate with innovative stakeholders who develop creative and scalable solutions. In February, Housing on Merit Board Member, Monica Ball, led a 50+ person “Innovative Housing Road Trip,” which included a stop at Potter’s Lane, a permanent supportive housing project for veterans in Orange County built using recycled shipping containers.

The tour then crossed into LA County, where the group visited the manufacturing headquarters of Crate Modular factory in Carson. Vice President of Development, Amanda Gattenby, led the group on a tour of the factory floor, where affordable shipping container-based housing units were being manufactured to be delivered to local constructions sites for final assembly.



Innovative Housing Road Trip stop at Potter’s Lane

Championing Female Leadership in Commercial Real Estate

HOM Supports Leadership Development at 2019 CREW Network Winter Summit:

HOM's Executive Director, Jennifer Litwak, has been a member of Commercial Real Estate Women's (CREW) Network since 2015, and her involvement has helped to expand HOM's nationwide exposure and our impact in the affordable housing marketplace. In February, Jennifer attended the 2019 CREW Network Winter Leadership Summit in New Orleans, where more than 345 CREW members and chapter leaders from around the world gathered to exchange ideas with leading experts about leadership skills necessary to gain a business advantage. The CREW Network brings together successful women making a significant impact in the real estate industry. Through business networking, leadership development, career outreach, and industry research, CREW has succeeded at advancing the professional achievements of women globally. CREW Network membership has grown to 11,000 worldwide and is in more than 70 major markets.



2019 CREW Network Winter Summit in New Orleans, LA

HOM Supports Women in Commercial Real Estate through CREW Network Foundation College Scholarships:

HOM Executive Director Jennifer Litwak served on CREW Network's Industry Research Committee from 2016-2018. During this time, she helped to develop white papers that examined why so few women are represented at the executive level in commercial real estate and provided industry best practices for diversity and inclusion. As part of her ongoing efforts to remove barriers and promote women leaders in the commercial real estate industry, Jennifer serves as an appointed member of the [Member Education Committee](#), which leads the selection for innovative industry programs and exceptional professional development training opportunities for CREW members and chapter leaders. Jennifer is also an appointed member of CREW Network's [Scholarship Selection Committee](#), which identifies candidates for the Network Foundation Scholarship Program, designed to support future female leaders as they pursue university-level education that will lead to careers in commercial real estate. In 2019 the CREW Network will award 20 academic scholarships totaling \$100,000.

2019 scholars will receive:

- \$5,000 USD (or CAD equivalent) for tuition and books
- Paid internship opportunity (summer of 2020)
- Complimentary CREW Network [student at-large membership](#) (18 months)
- Complimentary registration to the [2019 CREW Network Convention and Marketplace](#)

Application deadline for 2019 scholarships is April 30, 2019. Women currently enrolled as full-time junior, senior or graduate students and interested in learning more about this scholarship program are encouraged to review application guidelines at <https://crewnetwork.org/foundation/college-scholarships>.

Welcoming Our Heroes HOM

A Profile of Courage

Last year, California accounted for nearly 30% of all homeless veterans in the United States and had the highest national rate of unsheltered veterans, according to the [2018 Annual Homeless Assessment Report](#) provided to Congress. Housing on Merit remains committed to reducing the number of women veterans experiencing homelessness in California through our Awards of Merit for Housing Assistance program.

During the first quarter, Lyubov (Luba) Shtrigel became HOM's first award recipient made possible by the USS Midway Foundation's 2018 Pillars of Freedom Grant. Luba is a Marine Corps veteran and after being honorably discharged found herself homeless for 9 months as she struggled to maintain a stable income due to a disability.

In December 2018, Luba reached out to Interfaith Community Services for rental assistance and was quickly referred to HOM's Housing Assistance program. She was 8 months pregnant at the time and has since given birth to daughter Katana. HOM's staff worked closely with Luba and Interfaith to advocate for permanent housing, employment and a plan for childcare. The award has provided Luba and Katana a stable home and the ability to plan for the future.

"I am a single mother, and this grant has given me a chance to bond and care for my daughter without worrying if we will have a place to live," Luba said.

The success of HOM's Awards of Merit for Housing Assistance program is a result of strong partnerships that we have developed with a network of referring agencies that are dedicated to assisting homeless veterans, such as Courage to Call, Interfaith Community Services, and Veterans Community Service.



Awards of Merit Recipient Luba Shtrigel with her daughter, Katana.



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Your donations go a long way! Consider supporting our work by making a monetary or in-kind donation. See the various ways to give below.

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Los Angeles, CA 90067

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