

# Georgia Commons

A Publication of Community Associations Institute of Georgia, Inc.

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Duties of Directors**

**Keeping Up the  
Standards of the  
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**Validating Owner  
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*...and more!*



**GREAT  
EXPECTATIONS**

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# From the Chapter President



*“CAI Georgia embraced its expectations, not with mere hope, but with intention and heart.”*

Dear CAI Georgia Members,

As we enter the fourth quarter of the year, our theme, “Great Expectations” calls to mind not only our ambitions for our communities and organization but also the classic tale by Charles Dickens. In *Great Expectations*, the journey of young Pip reminds us that growth, while often unexpected and challenging, is shaped by the people we surround ourselves with and the values we hold onto through change. Like Pip, we too are part of a greater narrative, one where aspirations are not only born, but tested, refined and, with courage and character, fulfilled.

Our members, board members, and communities embraced this theme by setting ambitious goals, championing best practices, and creating impactful events that serve our diverse communities. Whether you are a manager, business partner, or homeowner leader, your role is vital. Together, we are shaping the future of community living not only in our state, but our country and around the world.

As our Chapter continues to evolve, driven by the shared commitment of our managers, business partners, and community association volunteers, we continue to navigate through transitions and opportunities, and like Pip, we are discovering the strength that comes from perseverance, education and partnership.

CAI Georgia embraced its expectations, not with mere hope, but with intention and heart. We established the Past Presidents Advisory Council, honoring those who have come before us and ensuring that their wisdom and leadership continue to guide our path forward. In doing so, we affirm that legacy is not a weight we carry, it is a compass we follow. The enduring legacy of our first Executive Director, Rita Kennedy, who worked so tirelessly for our Chapter even in the midst of her battle with cancer, continues to lead us today.

We also established the Emerging Leaders Young Professionals Mentorship Program, designed to cultivate the next generation of leaders by pairing emerging leaders with our Past Presidents. Through this Program, we will foster professional growth, leadership development and industry engagement to ensure the continued growth and success of our Chapter. Like Pip’s own benefactors, we seek to lift others not for reward, but because we believe in the transformative power of support, knowledge, and shared experience.

Most moving of all, we came together once again to support our communities by partnering with Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta to provide and assemble activity and meal kits as well as blankets to bring comfort and care to pediatric cancer patients and their families. Moreover, just as we did ten years ago when our Chapter built the Habitat for Humanity house for the Thang Men family, we joined hands again to make major improvements for their home. In a world that often

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# PLATINUM SPONSORS



Access Management Group is proud of the strong legacy of consistent, successful community management around the Atlanta Metro area. Having long term relationships with our communities, employees and vendors enable us to excel for the betterment of over 275 Homeowner, Townhome and Condominium Associations. We pride ourselves in being

experts of governing documents, covenants, bylaws, board and annual meetings, operating budgets, financial statements, assessment collections and much, much more. Our proven practices deliver first-class customer service to all residents. We work hand-in-hand with boards and homeowners to make your community a place you're proud to call home. Our goal is to protect and raise property values while building a trusted community.



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bank along with the flexibility, commitment and superior service of a more specialized institution that is dedicated to the community association industry nationwide. Increasing Efficiencies Through Integrations and Technology - We understand that technology and software integration is key to your operational efficiencies and success, and ultimately helps you keep your clients and homeowners satisfied. Contact us today at 888-734-4567.



Ameristar, is full-service roofing company with over a decade of experience. Installing a variety of single-ply, shingles, modified bitumen, and metal roof systems, and roof coatings, Ameristar can meet your most difficult requirements. Rated in the TOP 2% Nationally for quality of roof installation workmanship, by GAF, the largest manufacturer of roofing products in the U.S., you are assured you will receive an exceptional installation. Ameristar offers full roof replacements, gutter installations and repairs, maintenance programs, emergency repair services, and assistance with insurance claims due to storm damage. We provide, quality products, outstanding customer service, superior workmanship, and extensive warranties on our installations.



Arboguard Tree Specialists has been providing Georgia with quality Tree Care since 1981. Working with property managers, community associations and homeowners, our team of ISA certified arborists is equipped to handle all aspects of your property's Tree Care needs including proper pruning practices, removals, hazard mitigation, tree healthcare including soil remediation, insect and disease management, consultation services, and many other tree related needs. Call us today to see how we can help improve your assets!"



Association Management Advisory Group, Inc. is community management at its finest. Homeowner Associations are our specialty. We provide tiered levels of service from financial only to full service, or customized Homeowner Association Management. Our licensed, professional community association managers and accounting staff are ready to partner with your Board of Directors to meet HOA challenges. Whether it is financial or full service we manage it all. Professional accounting assures your community's financial resources are managed and utilized to maximize community benefits. Customized financial services, cash management, accounting and detailed reports provide up to date information. AMAG will make a positive difference in your community.



As one of the top community association management companies in the south, Atlanta Community Services (ACS) will provide the services and support to build a strong and stable community association. Our professional and personal approach will help improve the lives of families in your neighborhood. Our services include Accounting and Administrative as well as Property Management and Facility Maintenance. Our experts will help your community stay on top of Covenant Violations and Modification Requests. We will tailor our services to fit your needs! Tell us how we can work for you! [www.atlantacommunityservices.com](http://www.atlantacommunityservices.com) 770-904-5270



Since 1983, AQUA DOC Lake & Pond Management has been keeping lakes and ponds beautiful for individual homeowners, associations, businesses, and state agencies. AQUA DOC is staffed with biologists, licensed aquatic specialists, and experts in fountain and aeration technology. Furthermore, AQUA DOC values continuing education for our staff and provides internal training through a series of classes called AQUA DOC University, as well as outside training through manufacturers and industry leaders. Contact us for a FREE CONSULTATION for your lake, pond, fountain, aeration, dock or stormwater needs. If you have a lake or pond problem, AQUA DOC is the solution.



Atlanta Landscape Group is a Commercial Landscape Contractor specializing in offering Landscape Services for Master Planned Communities in Metro Atlanta (including HOAs, Multi Family, Townhome, and Condo Communities). The ALG Staff offers a Century of Experience, with Quality Services, Communication, and Proactive Management (that is second to none)!!!



Atlanta Painting Company is a trusted partner for property managers in the painting industry, delivering exceptional service tailored to the unique needs of managed properties. With years of expertise, the company excels in handling diverse projects, from apartment complexes to commercial buildings, ensuring quality and efficiency.

Their team understands the challenges property managers face, such as maintaining tenant satisfaction and adhering to budgets and timelines. Offering premium materials and skilled craftsmanship, Atlanta Painting Company provides lasting results that enhance property value. Committed to clear communication and reliability, they are a go-to resource for property managers seeking excellence in the painting industry.



Beacon Management has been ranked by the Atlanta Business Chronicle as one of Georgia's leading management companies for the past eight years. We deliver added value, quality service, competitive pricing, and robust expertise to oversee a property of any size or complexity. Our professional team has dealt with virtually every facet of real estate, giving us the experience that will materially improve your property.

## Comprehensive Services:

- Sited and portfolio management for residential, commercial, and multifamily
- Five-star property staffing, and front desk/front gate services
- Mobile maintenance personnel and fully equipped maintenance vans
- State of the art, user-friendly technology



Blueprint Painting & Renovations believes in providing the highest quality painting, staining services, siding, roofing and maintenance to our clients throughout the Atlanta area. Our professional renovation specialists incorporate expert customer service and communication to ensure that our clients are completely satisfied, and consistently exceed our client's expectations. Our renovation specialists and knowledgeable project managers work closely with condominium, townhome, and HOA community property owners and managers to ensure every project is completed quickly and to the highest standards. We are your partner for capital improvement solutions.



Bouvier Insurance is a family-owned, full service independent insurance agency established in 1959, specializing in community association master policies. We provide unparalleled service to our clients and communities as the insurance partner to more than 2,000 community associations. With locations in Georgia, Tennessee, Connecticut, and Rhode Island, we have developed and partnered with the country's leading habitational insurance carriers to offer unsurpassed value, commitment, and exemplary customer service. Above all else, our agency will continue to stand by our outstanding reputation and founding values of ethics, integrity, and honesty. For more information call 877-817-1747 or visit [binsurance.com](http://binsurance.com).



BrightView, the nation's leading landscape services provider, brings 80 years innovation & professional cultivation of eye-catching grounds in a sustainable and environmentally correct manner. We have maintained metro Atlanta and Georgia properties since 1979. We bring your property a team of experts: horticulturists, irrigation techs, designers, and arborists, who offer unmatched experience. We have developed cutting-edge tools: BrightView HOA Connect - an online portal for communicating with our community association customers; our Quality Site Assessment (QSA) reports - combines a punch list with images of the issues being addressed. Reach out to our team members in metro Atlanta & Savannah for details.



Brown & Brown, established in 1939, is the fifth largest insurance brokerage in the nation and the largest Property & Casualty broker in Atlanta. Our Atlanta office has an entire division dedicated to community associations. We truly differentiate ourselves by remaining independent with our management company partners and the 40+ insurance companies that we represent. We are fully equipped to build the most effective insurance program specifically designed for each association. For a free consultation and program evaluation, please visit [bbinsurance.com](http://bbinsurance.com) or call 770-952-7725 to speak with one of our licensed agents.



Cobb, Olson & Andrlé, LLC is a full-service litigation and real estate law firm focusing on the needs of homeowner's associations in the Atlanta area and all of Georgia. We represent boards of directors with covenant drafting, amendments and enforcement. Our firm is passionate about collections! Recognizing that assessments are the lifeblood of an association, we aggressively work to secure judgments and use custom collection tools to hunt for assets and foreclose on association liens if necessary. Retainer clients receive discounted collection packages, news alerts and complimentary board training provided by our attorneys. [www.coalegal.com](http://www.coalegal.com)

# PLATINUM SPONSORS



As a locally owned and operated business headquartered in Atlanta, GA, Colony Roofers' team are experts in providing affordable roofs and great customer service. Our employees are hand-picked for their experience, hard work, and integrity. We specialize in residential and commercial roofing systems, and work tirelessly to provide customers exceptional quality and value. Our attention to detail is among the best of Atlanta roofers, and we stand by the quality of our work by offering rock solid workmanship. We offer assistance with roof replacement, repair, and gutter services.



For more than thirty years Community Management Associates has provided professional association management services throughout Alabama, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, and Tennessee. We bring many assets to every association we manage including first-class customer service, proactive, experienced management, and cutting-edge technology.

Whether your association is large or small, a mid-rise or high-rise condominium, co-op, master planned community, or a commercial association office complex, CMA delivers professional, effective, and cost-efficient management—customized to your association's requirements at a price you can afford.



Commercial Asphalt and Concrete Services, Inc provides important asphalt paving and concrete repair solutions for HOA's, apartment complexes, shopping centers and industrial parks in metro-Atlanta and the Tri-State area. We have also completed FAA airport projects on-time and on-budget. In addition, we have performed detailed sinkhole repairs and complex stormwater drainage replacement projects. Commercial Asphalt and Concrete Services, Inc has helped maintain and improve parking lots in Georgia for over 15 years using high-quality materials and expert craftsmanship. Feel free to email the Owner directly anytime at [davidwood001@comcast.net](mailto:davidwood001@comcast.net) or you can text him directly at 770-655-6027.



We are Community Pet Waste Specialists (CoPS for short and we're always on Doody). We're proud to be the first pet waste management company in the country focused solely on serving communities, apartment complexes, and local government properties. At CoPS on Doody, we recognize the environmental impact of our industry and are committed to leading positive change. That's why we use dog waste bags and can liners made with 38% bio-based material, certified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. By integrating more sustainable solutions, we help reduce plastic waste and lessen your community's environmental footprint.



Coulter & Sierra, LLC specializes in real estate law and our practice areas include community association law, real estate development. Our attorneys are active on both the local and national level with the Community Associations Institute. We provide hands-on service and practical advice to build a long-term relationship with our clients. Our knowledgeable staff has years of experience dealing with a variety of real estate related issues. Learn more at [www.coultersierra.com](http://www.coultersierra.com)



Crabapple LandscapExperts is a full-service commercial landscape company founded 30 years ago by Georgia native, Bill Coleman. Originally a garden center in the early 70's, Coleman bought Crabapple in 1992 and targeted commercial landscape maintenance efforts toward community associations.

This rings true today as community association landscape maintenance has become cornerstone for the Crabapple brand. Over the last 17 years, Crabapple has expanded its landscape maintenance portfolio into business parks, retail/mixed-use, hospital campuses and industrial parks. Our services include landscape maintenance, lawn care, build/design, irrigation, floriculture and landscape enhancements. Crabapple is one of the few locally owned commercial landscape companies that has remained on Atlanta's Business Chronicle's top 10 list for the last 19 years



Dorough & Dorough, LLC offers a wide range of real estate related legal services: from serving successful national and regional builders and developers of planned communities to representing hundreds of community associations across Georgia with assessment collection, contract review and covenant revision, enforcement, and interpretation services. We do not charge an annual retainer fee. We simply bill for services as they are requested as we believe it results in personalized service, mutual respect, and long-term relationships. Our straightforward business model allows us to promptly return emails and phone calls. Call us at (404) 687-9977 or visit our website at [www.Dorough.com](http://www.Dorough.com).



DREHER INSURANCE

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION AGENTS

Dreher Insurance is an Independent Insurance Agency dedicated to providing exemplary service and education to our clients. Our focus on community associations has provided us access to unique industry carriers; enabling us to match our clients to policies according to their specific needs. The Agency is family owned ~ operated (for 22 years), with a supportive licensed staff to patiently serve our clients. Agents are available to board members, and association managers; setting up virtual meetings, or presenting to the entire community pertinent insurance content. Our goal remains to deliver each client the best value and service for their insurance dollar.



DYNAMIC  
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"We are a top-rated national renovation, roofing and general contracting company that extends our personal values into our professional ones. We strive to provide the best in what we do, building trust, communication, and integrity into our products and services. Specializing in large multifamily, commercial, and industrial projects, we've completed \$70M of repairs and replacements in the last 12 months. Our maintenance program ensures the validity of the manufacturer's warranty and extends building life. Dynamic's Preventative Maintenance Program includes biannual inspections and minor repairs, saving money and preventing leaks, while freeing up valuable time for owners and staff."



Epic. is your dedicated disaster preparedness, response and recovery crew. We partner with businesses and communities across the southeast, offering a suite of services from assessments and training, to full restoration and construction. With a watchful eye and forward thinking solutions, our team is always a step ahead of what's next and committed to safeguarding people and rebuilding lives. We can't predict disaster, but we can be prepared, bring everything we've got and bring it fast.



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Property management is a balancing act. Every decision is an important decision, and everything happens at once. Juggling it all can seem complex. But it rarely feels that way to our residents and board members. With FirstService Residential, they can rest assured we get ahead of the days' to-do lists, and we're behind them when they need us. Because we want all residents to enjoy life – on their terms, in the communities they've chosen, and at ease. So, we don't stop until all those complications become starkly uncomplicated. Say hello to life, simplified.



Five Star CAM specializes in bespoke management solutions for POAs, HOAs, condominiums, high-rises, and master-planned communities. We are your partner in building vibrant, thriving associations. Our mission is to provide five-star associations with the care they deserve. We prioritize personalized care, ensuring every owner in

your association feels uniquely valued. Join us on a journey to redefine community association management by making every owner feel valued, understood, and cared for.



The GCM Difference is our people-friendly approach and culture of "care" that is integrated into everything we do. Our staff is friendly, knowledgeable and our technology is top notch. We drive through your neighborhood in a GCM wrapped vehicle, so your homeowners have "peace of mind". Our commitment to our Associations is also demonstrated by our simplified contract terms including a 30-day cancellation with or without cause. GCM achieved the Accredited Association Management Company designation from CAI and received the Trustdale certification. For over a decade we have been honored to serve HOA and Condo Associations throughout Georgia making Association living simple and enjoyable! 770.554.1236 | [www.gcmg.com](http://www.gcmg.com)



Go Painting of North Georgia is a veteran owned commercial painting contractor built to service the HOA and multifamily sector. Occupied properties are our specialty. We have invested into the tech and tools for open and transparent communication among all stakeholders, saving time and diminishing headaches for everyone. Go Painting's tried and true project management has been refined over the last 18 years to deliver on time and on budget for our clients. We believe few things are more important than doing what you said you would, and delivering for those who count on you. At Go Painting of North Georgia we will help you protect and beautify your community, so...LET'S GO!

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# PLATINUM SPONSORS



Established in 1977 and part of the Associa management company network since 2010, Homeside Properties, An Associa® Company, has served metro Atlanta for almost five decades. Our 75+ team members lead the industry in professional certifications and designations and have helped hundreds of local associations achieve their vision. We proudly serve the Metro-Atlanta area and surrounding cities with a dedicated team of community management experts. From comprehensive HOA and commercial property management to secure financial services and on-demand maintenance, our full suite of services can help your association thrive.



Homeowner Management Services, Inc. has been committed to serving Community Associations since 1993. HMS is locally owned and operated and has again been named Best of Forsyth and a Top Ten Management Company by the Atlanta Business Chronicle. As an Accredited Association Management (AAMC) staffed by accredited management professionals, HMS managers are given the support of an administrative and accounting team so they can focus on managing your community. We offer cutting edge technology and services to our clients. By providing a full menu selection of management services, associations can customize services to suit community needs. Call on HMS for Respected, Responsive, and Reliable services.



Horizon Painting & Renovations is your contractor for all your CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT projects! We provide quality commercial and HOA exterior and interior painting, pressurewashing, carpentry and renovation services. We have dedicated project managers who maintain strict work schedules, including material and manpower procurement, and handle quality control issues. Our promise to you is to improve upon the quality and timeliness of service in your projects, avoid many of the mistakes that other contractors make and maintain competitive prices and excellent communication with you throughout the entire project.



Hotwire Communications has been the leader in fiber-optic technology, delivering advanced fiber-based solutions since 2002. With a nationwide footprint, we cater our broadband, TV, and voice products to single and multi-family communities that are seeking an enduring technology partner. With up to 10-Gigabit symmetrical speeds, we ensure a future-proof network with end-to-end management. Experience Hotwire Communications' unparalleled concierge-style approach to customer service through our dedicated account managers, 100% U.S.-based call centers, and engaged senior leadership to deliver an unmatched service experience.



Huckleberry Enterprises is a team of passionate industry professionals. Founded by Jason Coulas and Brandon Baxter and managed as a team with a century of experience! We view your landscape from a holistic perspective. From the trees to the turf, we want to help protect your investment as we want to partner with you to create beautiful spaces that meet and exceed your expectations. Our program is designed to maximize the impact of your trees, shrubs, groundcovers, turf, and flowering annuals and perennials. With a culture of collaboration, we believe that we can create an environment that everyone can be proud of.



Lazega & Johanson is the premier law firm specializing exclusively in the representation of condominium and homeowner associations throughout Georgia. Our team of experienced attorneys and paralegals are problem solvers who focus on proactive, practical and cost effective approaches for our clients. We also offer unmatched assessment collection results, with two exclusive programs which make assessment collection economical for every community. Our Free Collections Program has absolutely no cost for initial collections, and our Contingency Collections Program offers a no-risk collection option. Let us help your community today! [www.LJLaw.com](http://www.LJLaw.com).



Since 1995, LOUD Security Systems Inc. has worked closely with Property Managers, Home Associations and Board Directors to provide communities with customized solutions for security, video and controlled access. With 30 years of trusted experience, LOUD Security knows how to navigate the increasing challenges facing property managers. Smart video analytics and managed access control to pools, tennis courts, and clubhouses keep managers and association boards aware and in control, reducing potential costs and liability. LOUD Security's 24/7 live tech support and an experienced in-house service team, give property managers a committed team of security experts, ready to meet every need.



Lueder, Larkin & Hunter has specialized in community association law since inception. Our practice team structure, leveraging the benefits of technology, makes it possible to marshal all the resources our clients require to advance even their most ambitious legal objective. We offer multiple billing arrangements because each community association is unique, and the simple fact is that there is not one approach that works best for all communities. Our goal is to provide unparalleled legal services with the rate structure that works best for your association. We know community associations. We invite you to get to know us.



MillerDodson Associates, Inc. has specialized for 30 years in providing reserve studies to Community Associations, Religious and Educational Facilities, Resort Communities, Golf Courses, and Country Clubs. Whether your organization is looking to assess its current financial structure or develop a sustainable funding strategy for the future, MillerDodson provides the necessary insight to help make the most informed decisions. MillerDodson reserve study reports are intuitive, easy to read, and detailed. Headquartered in Annapolis, Maryland, the firm provides expert professional services through its Maryland headquarters and through its network of reserve analysts and specialists located throughout the United States.



Thermacell LIV is a mosquito repellent system that can provide your family with ongoing mosquito control that is environmentally friendly, effective, and technology-integrated. The repellent system works by releasing minuscule amounts of metofluthrin into the air to repel mosquitoes from where you spend the most time outside. Whether you have a deck, patio, pool, gazebo, or all the above, MR. Mister can provide significant relief from mosquito bites with our professional repellent system. Call us for your mosquito control needs. (404) 471-3747



National Cooperative Bank (NCB) provides banking solutions for housing communities nationwide. With over 40 years of experience, NCB offers a full suite of banking products and services uniquely tailored to the housing market - including cash management, investments, and financing options. Currently, NCB has more than 3,000 relationships with housing communities and their respective property management companies. Call or text us today at 559-HOA-LOAN or visit [www.ncbassociation-banking.coop](http://www.ncbassociation-banking.coop).



Naturescapes delivers commercial landscape services across the greater Atlanta and north Georgia region specializing in homeowner association communities, commercial buildings and shopping centers. Since 1983, our teams wake everyday with an unmatched commitment to deliver the highest quality landscaping service in the industry.

As one of Georgia's top landscaping companies, we have cultivated long-lasting relationships with HOA boards, property managers, and property owners. Now, as a part of the yardnique family of landscape companies, we have enhanced our capabilities and look forward to creating new relationships. Ready for quality landscape service from Naturescapes? Give us a call today 770-923-7023.



Newman Certified Public Accountant PC ("HOACPA") provides consulting, audit and review, tax planning and tax return services to associations in multiple states, including master planned, mixed use, age restricted, large scale, golf/amenity, and high-rise condominiums. Newman CPA has developed into a national firm that exclusively services the community association industry. Our education program for boards and managers (HOACPA EDU), includes several CAI continuing education-approved courses. Jeremy Newman, CPA presents educational programs throughout the country, authors articles for and events as a speaker and sponsor. Our website, [www.HOACPA.com](http://www.HOACPA.com) offers topical articles, blogs and tools.



NGLM is a full-service landscape firm in Atlanta. We offer award winning design/build services for residential and commercial clients. We also offer complete landscape and grounds management programs to commercial clients. NGLM has the capacity to take any project from inception, through construction, and into completion – and then maintain the property for years after. NGLM's turnkey landscape design/build and management services are offered to you using our award-winning crews and designers. Our job is to make the life of our clients easy. We aim to take as much off of your plate as possible. Your satisfaction is our success!



Northwest Exterminating is a family owned and operated pest control company that was established in 1951 by L.A. Phillips and his wife, Emma Lene Phillips. The company was founded on the values of honesty, integrity, and excellence. Today these values remain the core of Northwest Exterminating as we have grown from a family of 2 to a family of hundreds of team members and multiple service centers throughout Georgia and Tennessee. Our Community Association Team specializes in customized and effective termite control, pest control, mosquito control, wildlife services, lawn care, insulation, and HVAC services for your properties.

# PLATINUM SPONSORS



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#### **OUR MISSION:**

The Georgia Chapter of CAI is the voice of the community association industry in the state. Our purpose is to facilitate the professional creation and operation of community associations through the delivery of high quality education for our multidisciplinary membership. We are committed to building cohesion, integrity and respect.

\*\*\*

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#### **Mission Statement:**

**CAI-GA Mission Statement:**  
Developing professionalism in the community association industry through education, advocacy and business networking.

#### **Vision Statement:**

To be the voice of community associations throughout the state of Georgia.

## **Past, Present and Future of CAI's Government and Public Affairs Efforts**

By Phoebe E. Neseth, Esq., Vice President, Government Relations, Public Affairs, & Legal,  
*CAI National*

**A**dvocacy and government affairs were a core function of CAI from the start. Fifty years ago, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, along with other stakeholders and CAI's founders, recognized the uniqueness and potential of the community association housing model. CAI recently celebrated its 50th anniversary and the importance of advocacy and public affairs is more significant and notable than ever.

For the last several decades, CAI and its legislative action committees (LACs) and advocates tracked thousands of pieces of federal, state, and local legislation, to secure significant legislative victories and defeat bills detrimental to community associations across the United States. To date in 2025, CAI tracked more than 2,300 state and 100 local bills impacting the community association housing model in the U.S. The first CAI LAC was formed in 1986 in California, with the Georgia LAC following in 1995, being instrumental in navigating community association legislative and regulatory discussions since.

Through our legislative and regulatory efforts, CAI supports the development of healthy and strong communities, knowledgeable and effective boards, and a cadre of trained professionals who serve and support them. Key legislative and regulatory topics over the years include, but are not limited to, condominium safety, building maintenance and structural integrity, affordable housing, energy efficiency infrastructure and needs, reserve studies and funding, board member education, and the regulation of community association managers.

CAI currently has nearly 500 volunteers serving on LACs in 36 states, including Georgia. These LACs work to monitor state legislation, educate lawmakers, and protect the interests of those living and working in community associations. Each committee is comprised of a diverse group of homeowner leaders, community managers, and business partners who graciously volunteer their time and ensure each aspect of the industry is considered during advocacy efforts. These volunteer advocates lead conversations with state legislators and other stakeholders to ensure the community association industry's voice is heard in each state capitol and positive new laws are established across the country.

To assist LACs, we create public policies that articulate our position on issues of importance to the community association housing model. The first set of policies was approved by the CAI Board of Trustees in 1983. Community associations are subject to state laws that control how they are established, governed, and managed. State regulatory framework is successful in promoting healthy, vibrant communities because it is founded on the principle of local control over land use and real estate decisions. Public policies serve as statements of what CAI supports or opposes in regulation and legislation.

CAI supports effective state regulation that ensures the community association housing model is developed, maintained, governed, and managed with sound public policy objectives and standards that protect homeowners, volunteer board members, management companies, and the community. In addition, CAI advocates for the adoption of the UCIOA. In those states where it is not possible to adopt the act in its entirety, CAI supports and recommends consideration of appropriate portions of this framework.

Today, there are policies on 47 topics, including collection of assessments, electric vehicle charging stations, reserve studies and funding, alternative dispute resolution, fair housing, board member training, manager licensing, insurance, political signs, risk management, government regulation of community associations, and building inspections. For a full list, visit [www.caionline.org/publicpolicies](http://www.caionline.org/publicpolicies).

Grassroots efforts have allowed thousands of CAI members to advocate for public policy priorities on the state and federal level, as well as support CAI's LAC efforts first-hand. To date in 2025, more than 13,500 emails have been sent to legislators by more than 4,300 CAI advocates



*"CAI currently has nearly 500 volunteers serving on LACs in 36 states, including Georgia."*

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*CONTINUES ON PAGE 10.*



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## CAI'S GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS...from page 10.

across the country. CAI's voice is impactful across the country and critical to shaping current and future public policy regulating the community association industry. In 2025, the GA LAC actively monitored 30 bills that impacted community associations and took formal positions on five pieces of legislation, engaging CAI's grassroots network for one bill. More than 300 Georgia CAI advocates participated in this campaign, assisting CAI's voice of opposition with legislation overregulating the community association industry and successfully ensuring it did not pass in 2025. It is critical that the voice of CAI's membership is also heard during advocacy efforts, as well as a respective LAC's.

CAI's emphasis on and effectiveness in advocating for CAI members grew tremendously over the last five decades and continues to grow exponentially. Together, advocates, LAC members, lobbyists, and staff lead and influence legislation that makes community associations the preferred places to call home.

To learn more about CAI's GA LAC, visit: <https://www.caionline.org/advocacy/georgia-legislative-resources/>

To learn more about CAI's national advocacy efforts visit: [www.caionline.org/advocacy](https://www.caionline.org/advocacy)

If you have any questions, please contact CAI's Government & Public Affairs team at [government@caionline.org](mailto:government@caionline.org). ■



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Tuesday, January 27, 2026

Georgia State Capitol | Atlanta, Georgia

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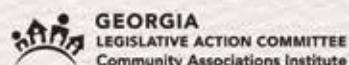
The upcoming 2026 legislative session presents several challenges that could significantly impact community associations across Georgia. Your participation is more important than ever.

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# Defining the Duties of Directors

By Christine Khano, Esq.,  
*Lazega & Johanson LLC*

**L**ow murmurs fill the community clubhouse along with a mixture of eager and disgruntled faces. All heads snap toward the front as a polished woman takes to the podium. “The votes are in. We are pleased to announce the results of the recent election for the association’s next board of directors!” the woman broadcasts from the front of the room. “The newly elected board members are ...,” she continues enthusiastically.

While so many boards of directors get their start with similar announcements, not all progress the same or manage to endure the deluge of demands from owners combined with the obligations of the job. Before a new board decides whether it should tackle hiring the new board member’s landscaping company or keep its existing vendor, the board would be wise to get a crash course in the duties of directors and officers.

## **But what is the “job” or duty of an association’s board of directors?**

For most community associations in Georgia, they are created as a non-profit organization and subject to the Georgia Nonprofit Corporation Code (the “Code”). Among the many obligations, the board is tasked with the responsibility of managing the operations and maintenance of the association and community’s affairs in accordance with the association’s governing documents (i.e., the declaration, the bylaws, and articles of incorporation) and the Code; after all, the association is a business.

While executing the obligations outlined under the governing documents like maintaining the association’s common property and establishing an annual budget seem hard enough on their own, the “job” does not end there. The job of the directors and officers of an association goes beyond the duty of obedience, ensuring that the association adheres to what is spelled out in the governing documents. It also extends to upholding the other duties outlined under the Code. Under the Code, association directors and officers have a duty of care and loyalty to the association and its membership.

## **What does the duty of care require?**

It means directors and officers are expected to act in good faith, exercising the necessary confidentiality, and with the same level of care as a reasonably prudent person in a similar position. In short, please act with common sense.

As a best practice, directors and officers should take the time to gather and rely on information from reliable and competent professionals, experts, and sources to make thoughtful decisions. This might mean seeking a legal opinion on whether the results from a special meeting were valid or having an engineer come inspect and report on the integrity of an aging retaining wall. Even simply having and relying on a license-holding community association manager can contribute to exercising due diligence. Community association managers have specialized skills and expertise in community management.

## **What does the duty of loyalty mean?**

The duty of loyalty requires directors and officers to put the association’s interest above their own personal interests. This duty includes



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*“As a best practice, directors and officers should take the time to gather and rely on information from reliable and competent professionals, experts, and sources to make thoughtful decisions.”*

protecting the association’s assets (a.k.a. its money and investments), avoiding competing with the association’s interests and opportunities, and the disclosure of any legal conflicts of interests.

Boards may stumble upon a conflict of interest from time to time, and that is to be expected and is even permissible if the board manages the decision-making process properly. It may turn out a director wants his company to be considered as the community’s next landscaping vendor. Is that a conflict? If a board is uncertain if a legal conflict of interest even exists, it is best to engage a community association attorney to help navigate the matter.

To resolve that conflict of interest, the director or officer with the conflict should disclose the conflict, if possible, to the remaining board members. After the disclosure, the transaction must be approved by a certain standard. The particular standard depends on how the board chooses to address the conflict, which is why engaging an attorney is highly recommended. By following proper protocol with the assistance of an attorney, boards may resolve certain conflicts. The director’s landscaping company may have a chance at becoming the association’s vendor after all!

## **Nugget of Wisdom.**

When a board of directors acts in good faith, with due care, and a clear commitment to the association’s best interest, it not only strengthens its shield against liability, but it also lays the foundation for what leadership should look like. Also, it gives the board members the best opportunity to tackle the true challenges of the community, getting everyone to pick up after their pets. ■

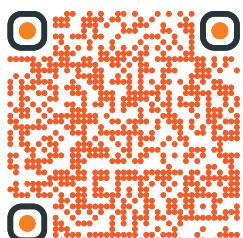


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# Bridging the Gap: Helping New Boards Thrive After Developer Turnover

By Lisa Simmons,  
Chairperson of Beacon Management Services

For many communities, the transition from developer control to homeowner governance marks both a milestone and a turning point. The amenities are finished, the homes are sold, and the neighborhood feels complete. But, in reality, the work of building a thriving, self-sustaining community association is just beginning.

As a community association manager, I've seen this moment unfold dozens of times. What often surprises new homeowner boards is how different the reality of running an association can be from what they imagined. A successful turnover requires more than handing over documents and holding elections. It requires education, communication, and most importantly, setting the right expectations.

## The Emotional Shift: From "They" to "We"

During the developer control period, the "they" is always clear. They built the homes; they made the decisions; they maintained the common areas. Once homeowners assume control of the association's board of directors, "they" quickly becomes we. Suddenly, the community's future rests in the hands of volunteer homeowners who may have limited understanding of governing documents, budgets, capital reserves and covenant enforcement.

That's where a good manager becomes indispensable. The first few months of a homeowner-controlled board set the tone for years to come. The way expectations are framed in this period, from what is and isn't feasible, how finances are structured, and how vendor relationships work, can determine whether the new board flourishes or falters.

## Expectation #1: The Developer's Budget Wasn't Built for the Long Term

One of the first and hardest lessons for new boards is understanding the developer's annual budget for the association. Developers are incentivized to keep assessments low while it sells homes in the community, sometimes deferring true long-term maintenance costs.

When the homeowners take over control of the board, they inherit a budget that may look stable on paper but isn't sustainable in practice. Landscaping, insurance, and utilities almost always cost more than projected. Planning for future common area maintenance such as aging irrigation systems, asphalt repairs, and clubhouse roof replacement can quickly strain cash flow. A realistic budget review, a professional reserve study, and clear communication about upcoming financial adjustments are essential first steps.

## Expectation #2: The Board Is a Governing Body, Not a Complaint Department

It's common for new board members to get bogged down in neighbor-to-neighbor issues or day-to-day maintenance complaints. While responsiveness matters, a board's real responsibility is to govern, not manage.



That's why community association managers should clarify roles from the outset. The board sets policies and gives directions; the manager executes the board's decisions. Early orientation sessions are invaluable. Walk new directors through their fiduciary duties, explain the chain of command for addressing owner concerns, and highlight how consistent enforcement protects everyone's property values. Setting boundaries early prevents burnout and helps new boards focus on strategic priorities: financial health, maintenance planning, liability mitigation and community engagement.

## Expectation #3: Governance Takes Time and Patience

Developers typically make decisions unilaterally; homeowner boards must do so collaboratively. It can be jarring to move from a single decision-maker model to one that requires motions, votes, and open meetings.

Managers can help by modeling professionalism and process. Distribute sample agendas, provide templates for minutes, and teach parliamentary basics. Encourage new presidents not to rush votes before the group fully understands the issues.

## Expectation #4: Vendor Transitions May Be Necessary

Developers often hire vendors who specialize in construction-phase work, not long-term maintenance. This can mean renegotiating contracts or replacing vendors who were selected primarily for speed and cost rather than quality and reliability. Managers play a crucial role in guiding this process, helping boards understand bidding procedures, vetting contractors, and ensuring continuity of service.

## Expectation #5: Communication Builds Confidence

Perhaps the most important expectation of all: homeowners want to feel heard and informed. During the transition, uncertainty can spread quickly if communication is poor.

Managers should coach boards on proactive communication such as monthly e-blasts, transparent financial updates, townhall meetings and open dialogue about upcoming projects. A well-informed community is more forgiving of growing pains. Set the tone with empathy and professionalism. When assessments increase or projects are delayed, explain why. When volunteers are needed, explain how they can help. Transparency builds community trust, and trust is the foundation of every successful association.

## A New Beginning

Turnover isn't an ending; it's a new beginning. For managers and homeowner boards alike, it's a chance to build a foundation for long-term success. By setting the right expectations early and fostering open communication, association managers can help new board members lead with confidence, clarity, and a shared vision for the future. ■



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# “Great Expectations” Keeping Up the Standards of the Neighborhood

By Benjamin Ost, Esq.,  
*Dorough & Dorough, LLC*

**T**here is little doubt that when a community buildout goes as planned, the recently top-coated streets, brand new paint and immaculate landscaping often present the picture of an “ideal” neighborhood. Unfortunately, time works its magic as paint peels, tree roots sprawl and pavement cracks. What, then, is the association to do to uphold the community standards that the first owner-elected board of directors was left with? The answer is the use of architectural control combined with the maintenance obligations imposed by the covenants. The purpose of this article is to provide advice – and issues to look out for – when attempting to ensure that the aesthetic condition of the neighborhood is maintained over time. It is important to note that the authority granted by the covenants differs from community to community, so be sure to consult professionals before acting on any advice below.

## Architectural Control

The purpose of an architectural control provision is to ensure a particular aesthetic standard in a community as it grows and evolves over the years. This standard is subjective – meaning that it can change from board to board. Because of this, each application for a modification to the exterior of a dwelling or lot should be treated in a thoughtful and fair manner. The following are recommendations that may help chart a course to keep a neighborhood looking as it good as it did when it was new:

1. Some covenants allow the association to create guidelines. These guidelines can vary greatly in what they contain, but often they provide the procedure for submitting a modification application and include helpful information regarding what is authorized in the community. Examples might include types of approved mailboxes or approved paint schemes and roofing material. While guidelines are often not legally required, they can ensure consistency over time when responding to owner applications.
2. Keep good records of the reasoning behind approvals or denials. Keeping meeting minutes that show the issues that were considered when deciding how to respond to an application can go a long way both in defending a claim that the decision is “arbitrary and capricious” and in allowing future boards to implement the same strategies.
3. Be Reasonable! Sometimes a new board comes in wanting to “change” the way the community looks. However, the odds are good that if certain improvements have been allowed over the years it will not be possible to “put the genie back in the lamp.” Many cases over architectural issues can be avoided with a thoughtful board or committee that understands that sometimes what a certain group of people desire must give way to the reality of what has been done in the past.
4. If you are going to change standards for something that has been allowed in the past, set expectations with the members. This can be done by guideline revisions, by email blast, at meetings, etc. Letting owners know of a change ahead of time can avoid a lot of strife.

## Maintenance Obligations

The counterpart to architectural controls is each owner’s obligation to maintain the improvements that already exist. Nothing can

*“The purpose of an architectural control provision is to ensure a particular aesthetic standard in a community...”*



GeorgePeters/E+/Getty Images Plus

sap property values more than the slow degradation of the exteriors of homes in the community. Keeping the association looking its best requires methodical and periodic oversight by the board and management. Below are some pointers to ensure a solid legal basis:

1. Many covenants authorize the board to create reasonable rules regarding maintenance. These can set out expectations for things like: (a) expected lawncare standards; (b) exterior dwelling surface upkeep; and (c) tree/shrub care.
2. Keeping up with maintenance requires periodic inspections. Failure to routinely perform visual inspections of the community not only allows maintenance violations to worsen, but it makes it hard to prove that the association is doing a proper job of enforcing the standards that make the neighborhood attractive. We recommend deferring to a property manager to determine what constitutes “industry standard” for maintenance inspections of property.
3. Don’t play favorites. This goes beyond avoiding targeting a problem owner – it means doing your best to treat each scenario in a similar fashion to other, similar issues. It is human nature to ignore “minor” violations while sending a “major” violator a laundry list of concerns. Doing this, however, just gives the problem owner the ability to argue that they are being treated differently from a neighbor who has the “same fading paint.”
4. Don’t forget about self-help (sometimes called “abatement”). This term describes the authority of the Board to perform work on an owner’s lot and charge them the fee. While this can be legally problematic, it is often a great way of keeping the community in good condition while dealing with a problem owner. It is important to consult with your property manager and attorney before taking this step.

One of the major benefits of a planned community is having a board in place to keep the expectations high for homes and lots. However, it is only through setting reasonable standards and by remaining vigilant that a board can ensure that the condition of a community remains at the level the owners saw when they first purchased their homes. ■

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# The Expectation Equation: How to Avoid Surprise Costs and Conflicts in Community Painting Projects

By Matt Martin,  
*Go Painting of South Atlanta*

**W**hen it comes to community painting projects, there's one thing association boards, community managers, and vendors can all agree on: no one likes surprises, especially when it comes to budgets.

With rising material and labor costs, capital improvement dollars don't stretch as far as they used to. That's why setting clear, realistic expectations for the budget for painting project is more important than ever. Boards must balance fiscal responsibility with maintaining property values, which means understanding the trade-offs between cost, quality, and timing. As a commercial painting contractor focused on community associations and multi-family communities, I've seen firsthand how having aligned expectations can make or break a project.

Here's how to set and meet budget expectations to ensure smoother repaints and better results.

## Start With the End in Mind

Before the first drop of paint hits the wall, ask, "What is the board's goal with this project? Is it to extend the life of exterior surfaces? Improve curb appeal before a round of sales? Or just stop the complaints about peeling shutters?"

When expectations are vague, it's easy to mismatch the budget and the outcome. A board may expect a "10-year result" on a "5-year budget," which almost always leads to frustration or surprise expenses. Start with clear goals, and you'll avoid finger-pointing later.

## Understand What Drives the Cost

Not all paint jobs—or painters—are created equal. Several key factors impact pricing:

- **Scope of work:** Are we painting all of the surfaces or only the worst-looking ones? Are railings, fences, or utility doors included?
- **Level of prep:** Light caulking and spot-scraping are cheaper than full sanding and wood repair but may not last as long.
- **Product quality:** Higher-end coatings like Sherwin-Williams Emerald or Loxon XP cost more upfront but can extend maintenance cycles.
- **Access and logistics:** Multi-story buildings, limited parking, and tight deadlines all impact labor costs.
- **Warranties and follow-up:** Will the contractor include service touch-ups, or walk away after the last coat has been applied?

Boards should insist on detailed, apples-to-apples proposals, and not just a bottom-line number. If a bid looks unusually low, there's probably a reason.

## Consider Phased Projects, But Know the Trade-Offs

If a full repaint project isn't in this year's reserve budget, breaking the work into phases—by building, section, or surface—can spread the cost over multiple budget cycles while still making progress.

But be cautious. Phased projects aren't always the cheaper route. With material and labor prices continuing to rise, what you delay this year may be significantly more expensive next year. Add in color



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matching issues and wear on unpainted sections, and phasing can carry hidden costs if not planned well.

The phasing approach works best when supported by a long-term maintenance plan and a contractor who understands your reserve strategy. It's not just about breaking up the job, it's about sequencing it to protect the community and control total cost.

## Budgeting for Quality vs. Just Getting It Done

Boards are often under pressure to go with the lowest bid or reduce scope to meet annual targets. But painting is one of the most visible capital projects your community undertakes. Cutting corners can lead to faster breakdowns, more frequent repaints, and unhappy homeowners.

I often explain it this way, "If you can paint once for \$100,000 and have it lasts 10 years, or paint twice for \$65,000 every five years, what's the better use of reserves?" When you look at the full lifecycle, the higher-quality job often wins.

## Communicate Clearly With All Parties

Even the best budget plan can fall apart if it's not communicated well. Before the project begins, make sure expectations are aligned with:

- **The board:** Confirm the scope, timeline, materials, and what's excluded.
- **The management team:** Coordinate resident notices, access logistics, and vendor support.
- **The residents:** Use door notices, community emails, and FAQs to inform them about prep, timelines, noise, and access.

A painting project that stays on budget but generates a flood of resident complaints isn't a win. Clear communication is often the lowest-cost item on the list, and the one that delivers the most goodwill.

## Final Thoughts

With community association painting projects, expectations shape satisfaction. Being realistic about what your budget can deliver, and working with contractors who prioritize transparency helps communities stay ahead of issues and avoid financial surprises.

At the end of the day, the only surprise your residents should have is how great the property looks when it's done. ■



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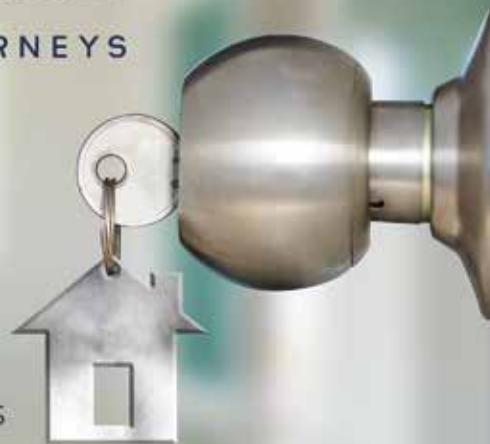
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# Great Expectations: Elevating Community Management Through Professional Credentials

By Marcy Kravit, CMCA, AMS, PCAM, CFCAM, CSM,  
*Senior Director of Community Association Relations – Developing Markets*

In today's dynamic world of community association management, expectations are higher than ever. Homeowners expect transparency, boards expect strategic leadership, and communities expect stability and growth. Meeting these expectations requires more than experience; it demands professionalism, foresight, and a commitment to excellence. That's where credentials come in.

Professional designations are more than just acronyms—they're a reflection of a manager's dedication to continuous learning, ethical standards, and industry leadership. In a field where regulations shift and challenges evolve, credentialed managers are equipped to rise to the occasion and exceed expectations.

## Setting the Bar Higher

Credentialed managers bring more than technical skills; they bring confidence, credibility, and clarity. Whether navigating complex budgets, resolving disputes, or guiding boards through strategic decisions, these professionals embody the high standards our industry strives for.

Through organizations like Community Associations Institute (CAI), managers gain access to cutting-edge education, legislative updates, and a network of peers who share a passion for excellence. CAI doesn't just support managers; it empowers them to lead with integrity and vision.

## Credentials That Inspire Confidence

Each credential represents a milestone in a manager's journey toward mastery:

- CMCA® – The foundation of professional management, ensuring managers understand governance, finance, and operations.
- AMS® – A mark of advanced expertise, equipping managers to lead with strategic insight and financial acumen.
- PCAM® – The pinnacle of achievement, recognizing those who manage complex communities with exceptional skill and leadership.

These designations aren't just personal achievements; they are community assets. They signal to boards and residents that their manager is prepared to meet today's challenges and tomorrow's opportunities.

## A Culture of Excellence

Credentialed professionals also play a vital role in shaping the future of our industry. They mentor others, share best practices, and advocate for policies that protect and uplift communities. Their



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*“Credentialed managers bring more than technical skills, they bring confidence, credibility, and clarity.*

work helps foster a culture where great expectations aren't just met—they're exceeded.

As someone who has served both as a board member and a manager for over two decades, I've seen firsthand how credentials transform careers and communities. They build trust, inspire innovation, and create a foundation for long-term success.

## Looking Ahead

If we want to build thriving, future-ready communities, we must invest in education, collaboration, and professional growth. By embracing credentials and supporting organizations like CAI, we set a higher standard—and we meet it.

Let's continue to raise the bar, support one another, and lead with purpose. Because when we expect more, we achieve more. ■



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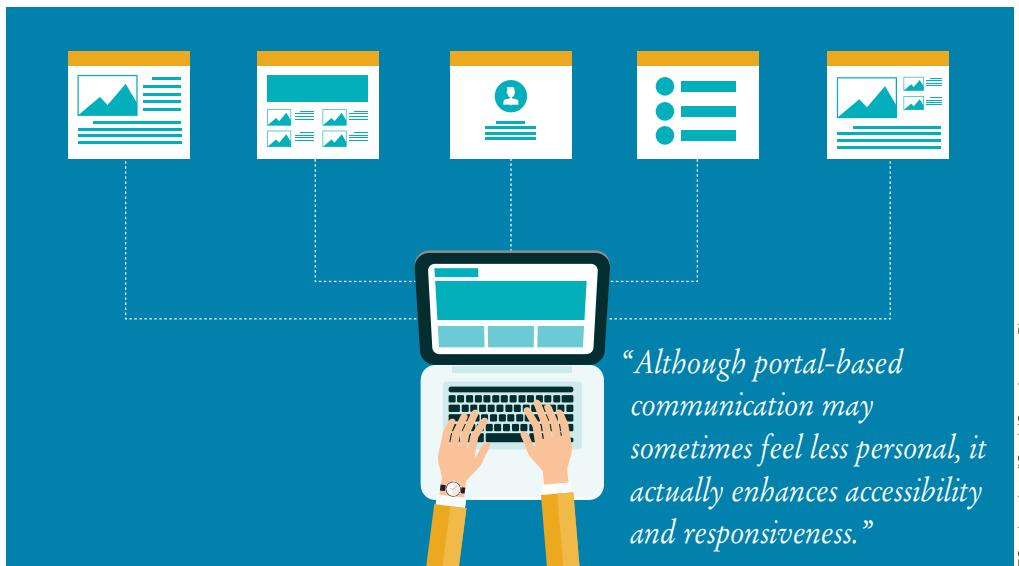
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# Evolving Communication in Community Management

By Stephanie Munn, PCAM,  
Access Management Group



*“Although portal-based communication may sometimes feel less personal, it actually enhances accessibility and responsiveness.”*

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Over the past five years, the community management industry has experienced a major shift in how we communicate and share information. What was once centered on community websites has now transitioned to property management software portals as the primary source for communication, education, and document retrieval.

Many management companies have also shifted from the traditional model—where the community manager was the single point of contact—to a more centralized communication structure. Today, companies often use a general email address or phone number that routes messages to the right department or team member for faster, more organized responses.

## Has Technology Made Us More Connected—or Disconnected?

It's fair to ask whether these changes have taken away some of the personal touch that once defined our industry. Technology has certainly changed how we connect, but it also offers tools to help us stay informed, efficient, and engaged in new ways. As communities and management teams, it's important that we pause to evaluate how we use these tools—and ensure they support, rather than replace, meaningful communication.

## The Role of the Homeowner and Board Portal

Most management companies now rely on their software systems to provide online portals for homeowners and Boards. These portals are used for documentation, communication, and service requests. Unlike traditional websites, these systems automatically generate and post reports and documents directly from the management software, ensuring the information is accurate, consistent, and available for both current and future homeowners and Board members.

Another advantage is that vendors and association professionals—such as attorneys or insurance agents—can be granted limited access

to view relevant reports or ledgers. For example, rather than faxing ledgers to attorneys during collections, many now access this information directly and securely through the system.

## Improving Access and Transparency

Although portal-based communication may sometimes feel less personal, it actually enhances accessibility and responsiveness. Instead of one or two individuals managing all correspondence, an entire support team can now assist with homeowner requests, ensuring nothing falls through the cracks.

## Many modern systems also feature:

- FAQ libraries that document standard policies and procedures, enabling any team member to assist with routine questions.
- Tracking tools that monitor communication volume, work orders, and violation trends—helping management better understand each community's activity and workload.

## Why Homeowners Should Get Connected

As a homeowner, logging into your portal and learning how to use it is a proactive step toward staying informed and empowered. Through your portal, you can:

- Access important community documents and reports.
- Submit maintenance or service requests.
- View account balances, payment options, and meeting updates.
- Communicate directly with management and receive timely responses.

By using the portal consistently, it will help maintain clear, documented communication. The community can benefit from the increased efficiency technology provides while still fostering a sense of connection within the community. ■



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## Validating Owner Expectations

By Alan Roberds, Chief Community Catalyst,  
Keystone Association Managers

Over the past 28 years, I've spoken with many different types of homeowners in Community Associations. While most encounters have turned out to be positive, I must admit that there have been several experiences that left a bad feeling for either me or the homeowner. When reflecting on these encounters, I've found that expectations both I and homeowners bring to the table – whether negative, high, or calm – can shape the outcome and the tone of the interaction. Negative expectations often spark conflict, high expectations risk disappointment, and calm or low expectations foster a more positive and satisfying experience. While I recognize that I cannot change the expectations a homeowner brings to the table, it is essential that we both set our own expectations and manage our responses to those of the homeowner.

Let's talk about the homeowner who comes in expecting a negative experience, either in the office, on the phone, or with the board. We do not know why they have negative expectations, but we need to remain calm in the conversation and not react to negativity. Listen to the person, and help them as much as we can, without providing misleading information. By remaining calm, confident, and professional, we may be able to change their expectations to a more positive outcome. At the very least, by not mimicking their attitude, we can reduce the risk that they will overreact.

Another type of person we encounter is one with extremely high expectations. Perhaps they are expecting 5-star spa hospitality to be delivered at a board meeting, or maybe they misunderstand the association's maintenance requirements, or possibly they expect something to be done immediately. Be cautious with this person or group, as it is easy to make them feel defensive or angry if the service doesn't meet their expectations. Again, be confident, courteous, and professional. Listen to what they are expecting and gain an understanding before responding. Sometimes their request has an easy answer. If they are requesting something be done, make sure to follow the community's procedure and explain what is being done, in as few words as possible. Be sure they understand the association's requirements and policy and the parameters their request must abide by. Then make them satisfied by doing what you said you would do. It may not quite fit their expectations, but it can go a long way towards satisfying what they believe they need.

Another group we encounter are those who are calm and have no expectations when they call or visit us. These are the people we like to engage with because they are less demanding and more understand-



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*"Let's talk about the homeowner who comes in expecting a negative experience, either in the office, on the phone, or with the board."*

ing. The key to this interaction is to mimic their actions, making them feel comfortable and ensuring they don't disrupt their experience of the conversation. Listen to their request, reason, or comment and simply respond appropriately. They may just want someone to listen to their grievance when they know they need to pay the special assessment. Respond politely and sympathetically to validate the conversation and their experience.

After an encounter, whether good or bad, it is important to reflect on what happened. What could have been done differently? What was their expectation, what was our expectation, and did that change over the course of the interaction? Could we have done something that would have changed the outcome?

You may have noticed a common theme when dealing with any type of homeowner: listen. One of my mentors and previous bosses would often quote Stephen Covey, "Seek first to understand, and then to be understood." To me, that means listen to what the other is saying before trying to help. In all our interactions, we often expect a simple validation. ■



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# Tough Talks: Reprioritizing Board Expectations Based on Reserve Study Priorities

By Henry McKenna,  
Reserve Advisors LLC

Every community association reaches a point where the reserve study transitions from an analytical document into a road map for real decisions. The moment when spreadsheets meet boardroom discussions is where the “tough talks” begin. The goal of the reserve study is to work with boards as they use their study to align priorities, make informed decisions, and strengthen trust among homeowners.

When budgets, expectations, and needs seem to collide, the reserve study offers clarity. It delivers more than numbers, it provides insight into timing, risk, and long-term sustainability. Still, data alone doesn’t make decisions, people do. And reconciling differing opinions about what should come first is where board leadership plays its most demanding role.

## From Data to Dialogue

A comprehensive reserve study takes inventory of every major common element, projects its remaining useful life, and estimates the cost of maintaining or replacing it. But what distinguishes a proactive board from a reactive one is how that information is applied.

Boards that use the reserve study as a conversation starter, rather than just a compliance document, can transform its pages into a shared strategic vision. The process often starts with conflicting priorities: a clubhouse renovation may compete with roof replacement funding, or landscaping improvements might appear more visible than deteriorating mechanical systems.

When those conflicts arise, I encourage boards to frame their discussions around three key questions:

1. What are the operational and financial risks if we defer this project?
2. Does this project directly preserve property value or resident well-being?
3. How does this align with our long-term funding plan?

These questions help boards pivot from subjective preference to objective prioritization. They shift the focus away from immediate desires and toward measurable outcomes related to safety, risk, and sustainability.

## The Role of Reprioritization

Reprioritizing does not mean sacrificing improvement, it means timing it wisely. The reserve study’s value stems from its ability to highlight which projects cannot wait without compounding costs or compromising safety.

For example, in several associations we’ve partnered with, boards were initially focused on desirable, visible upgrades like cosmetic painting or amenity enhancements. Reserve data showed that deferring critical structural repairs or HVAC replacements would dramatically increase future costs and risk exposure. By using the study’s life-cycle analysis, those boards were able to make defensible, data-supported decisions that ultimately protected their communities’ financial integrity.

*“When budgets, expectations, and needs seem to collide, the reserve study offers clarity.”*



Olga Yastremska/Stock/Getty Images Plus

Reprioritization conversations can be uncomfortable, but they often become turning points in effective board governance.

## Transparency as a Leadership Tool

Once decisions are made, how those choices are communicated can determine their success. Homeowners respond best to clarity, not complexity. They want to understand why a roof replacement takes precedence over a pool upgrade, or why a reserve contribution increase is necessary this year.

It is often recommended that boards use simplified visuals, funding scenarios, project timelines, and cost comparisons to make the message relatable. Communicating that “this decision prevents a future special assessment” or “this timing avoids a potential 30% cost escalation” bridges the gap between fiduciary duty and homeowner understanding.

Transparency fosters confidence. When owners see that decisions are based on professional analysis, supported by consistent data, and openly explained, even difficult funding decisions are met with increased cooperation.

## Turning Conflict into Confidence

The most successful boards don’t shy away from tough talks; they lead with them. Every difficult prioritization discussion is an opportunity to reinforce shared purpose and strengthen credibility. Objective data, coupled with open communication, helps boards steer away from short-term fixes and toward lasting solutions.

The Reserve Study role in this process is to provide the technical foundation and objective guidance that enable confident decisions. Reserve studies are built to support, not replace, board judgment. When combined, the data and the board’s leadership transform tension into trust and create a planning strategy that balances today’s realities with tomorrow’s goals.

Reprioritizing an association’s goals based on reserve study findings takes courage, patience, and perspective, but ultimately it delivers what every association strives for: stable finances, preserved property values, and a community that believes in its leadership. ■



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## Builder's Expectations when Hiring a Management Company

By R.C. Shanks, PCAM,  
*Homeowner Management Services*

**B**uilders/developers (declarants) hire a community association management company to manage the association's operation for a new community that they are developing. They are not, nor do they want to be in the community association business. They want to concentrate on building and selling homes. Their expectations for a management company are similar but different than those of the homeowners.

The basic things expected are: Clear and prompt communication, professionalism, proven expertise, good financial oversight, and reasonable rates.

The declarants also need a community association management company and manager that is flexible. Developing communities are much different than established communities, as things change before they are completed. Their expectation is for the management company to be able to pivot and handle things as the community builds out and the initial plans change. These changes often have an impact on the association's budget and can involve additional areas to be maintained or how they are to be maintained.

Also, most declarant-controlled boards rely heavily on a management company to handle everything relating to the association. The manager for a developing community is expected to utilize a lot of diplomacy as the declarant does not want any disgruntled homeowners. The manager must be able to explain what areas the homeowner are responsible for maintaining versus the declarant. ■



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*"Developing communities are much different than established communities, as things change before they are completed."*

Declarant-controlled boards need the management company and manager to be well versed in the governing documents as well as local, state, and federal laws or regulations that could affect the community. ■



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# Vendor Expectations: The Key to Successful Relationships with your Community Managers

By Fawn Dill,  
Access Management Group

**C**ommunity Managers are typically tasked with spearheading both the proactive and reactive maintenance of the properties they manage. Their responsibilities range from securing bids for large projects to managing service tickets and work orders for both planned and emergency repairs.

To succeed, managers rely on vendors who are responsive, honest, and dependable, traits that build the trust necessary for a strong partnership. The best vendor relationships are those where the manager feels confident the vendor will treat the community's needs as if they were their own.

## Honesty.

When managers reach out to a vendor, they are not simply looking for the best price. In fact, many times, boards and committees understand that the value lies in balancing cost with quality and reliability. What managers really need is an honest, informed response, a clear scope of work, realistic timeline, and a fair price to get the job done right. Community managers are not project managers, engineers, or general contractors. Typically, neither are their board members or committee volunteers. If the scope submitted doesn't make sense or is missing critical information, we need to know. Please reach out and ask the question or make a recommendation. Timelines are important for setting expectations. If you are out more than 6 weeks on approved work, tell the manager up front. If you know the project is outside of our professional scope, decline the bid. Transparency builds trust and ensures accuracy from the start.

## Collaboration.

Collaboration is the foundation of any great vendor-manager relationship. The most effective vendors consider themselves an extension of the management team and work in tandem with the manager in keeping the board and residents happy. When you're on-site, be observant and proactive. If you see something, say something. If you can submit a photo or a quick quote for a need, that will add tremendous value. If you think there is something more or different needed



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*“Collaboration is the foundation of any great vendor-manager relationship.”*

long-term, relay that to the manager. These gestures reinforce that you are more than a vendor and take the partnership seriously.

## Follow Through.

Dependability turns a good vendor into a trusted partner. The best way to ensure future work and opportunities is to follow through on communication, and any submitted requests. Few things are worse than having to chase down a service provider for updates or completion dates. Communication is key if timelines or scopes have changed. Managers and Boards remember vendors who make their jobs smoother and show up when promised. Deadlines matter to every community and following through on the item at your feet is paramount for project success and any future opportunities.

Ultimately, successful vendor relationships are built on mutual respect, transparency, and communication. Great vendor services enhance communities and when managers and vendors work together with honesty and follow-through, communities thrive. ■

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# 2026 CAI-GEORGIA CALENDAR

Dates are subject to change. Please check our website regularly for the most up-to-date timing and location information!



## JANUARY

- 22** Kick-Off Social at StillFire Brewery
- 27** CAI Legislative Day at the Georgia Capitol
- 29** Virtual Mock Board Education Webinar

## FEBRUARY

- 5** Education Seminar at Lanier Technical Conference Center
- 25** Young Professionals Speed Networking

## MARCH

- 20** Signature Luncheon at Zoo Atlanta
- 28** Board Leadership Development Education Class

## APRIL

- 16** Fundraising Event at PBR Atlanta

## MAY

- 7** Manager Appreciation Breakfast at Metropolitan Club
- 21** Past Presidents Advisory Council Zoom
- 28** CMCA Virtual Education Class

## JUNE

- 3-6** CAI National Conference in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida
- 13** International Community Associations Manager Day
- 18** Summer Social at Ormsby's

## JULY

- 13-15** Highrise Manager Workshop (National Class)
- 15** Emerald Education Summit & Tradeshow at Lanier Technical Conference Center
- 30** Young Professionals Event

## AUGUST

- 11** Past Presidents Advisory Council Zoom
- 20** Networking Luncheon at Sinclair

## SEPTEMBER

- 3** All Member Education Class
- 9-12** Large Scale Workshop (National Conference)
- 16** Mastering Young Annual Meeting Education Webinar
- 24** Young Professionals Event

## OCTOBER

- 8** Homeowner Education Class
- 14-16** CEOMC (National Conference)
- 22** 26<sup>th</sup> Annual CAI-Georgia Golf Classic at Chateau Elan Golf Course
- 29** Rita Kennedy Lunch \*Invite Only\*

## NOVEMBER

- 6** CAI Cares Day
- 10/17** Precious Metal Appreciation Lunch
- TBD** Past Presidents Luncheon

## DECEMBER

- 1** Committee Chair Training Luncheon
- 11** Awards Luncheon at Cobb Galleria



[WWW.CAI-GEORGIA.ORG/EVENTS](http://WWW.CAI-GEORGIA.ORG/EVENTS)



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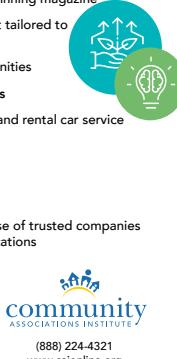
As a CAI member, you'll unlock access to exclusive benefits—resources and services designed to help you and your communities thrive. You'll also be able to enroll in career-enhancing CAI education and connect with nearby CAI members through your local chapter, where you can network and learn with peers and meet potential new clients.

**YOUR MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS INCLUDE:**

- Automatic membership in your local CAI chapter
- Members-only, how-to resources at [www.caionline.org](http://www.caionline.org)
- Exchange, CAI's online members-only forum to ask questions, get answers, and share your expertise
- Legislative, regulatory, and media advocacy at national and local levels
- Free subscription to *Common Ground*,™ CAI's bimonthly, award-winning magazine
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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE...from page 3.

measures success in numbers, we are reminded that true impact is measured in lives touched.

With great expectations comes great opportunities. Our Chapter has always been a hub of knowledge, leadership, and support for community associations across Georgia. Now, more than ever, we are poised to raise the bar through education, advocacy and meaningful engagement. While we may not always see the full impact of our work, rest assured: it is felt. Every educational event, every legislative effort, every connection forged among our members is a brick in the foundation of something enduring.

Let us continue to move forward not merely with expectation, but with purpose. Let us embrace the unknown not as a source of fear, but as the space where transformation is born. And let us never forget that we are each other's greatest resource, just as Pip's fortunes were shaped not by wealth, but by the quiet strength of those who stood beside him.

As your President, I am humbled by all that we have accomplished and energized by what lies ahead. Thank you for entrusting me with the honor of serving as your President. Our story continues under the strong leadership of our incoming Chapter President, Eric Love, together with our dedicated Board of Directors, Executive Team members Tina Saadat and Caitlin Janofsky, our committees, business partners, members, and homeowner leaders. Join us as we look ahead with excitement and great expectations.

With gratitude and anticipation,

**Miye Johnson Yi, Esq.**

*2025 CAI Georgia President*

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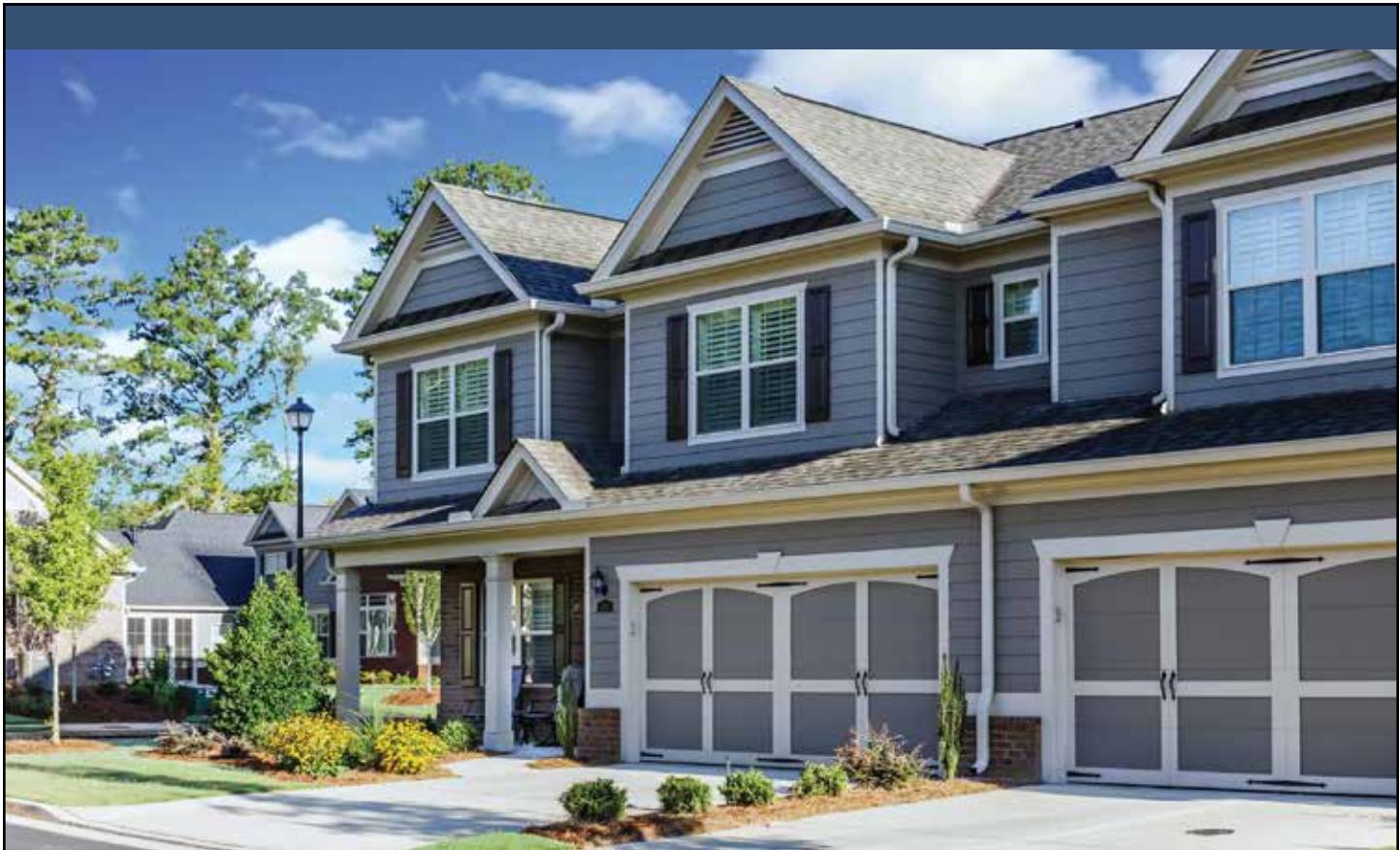


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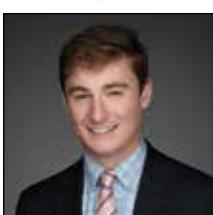


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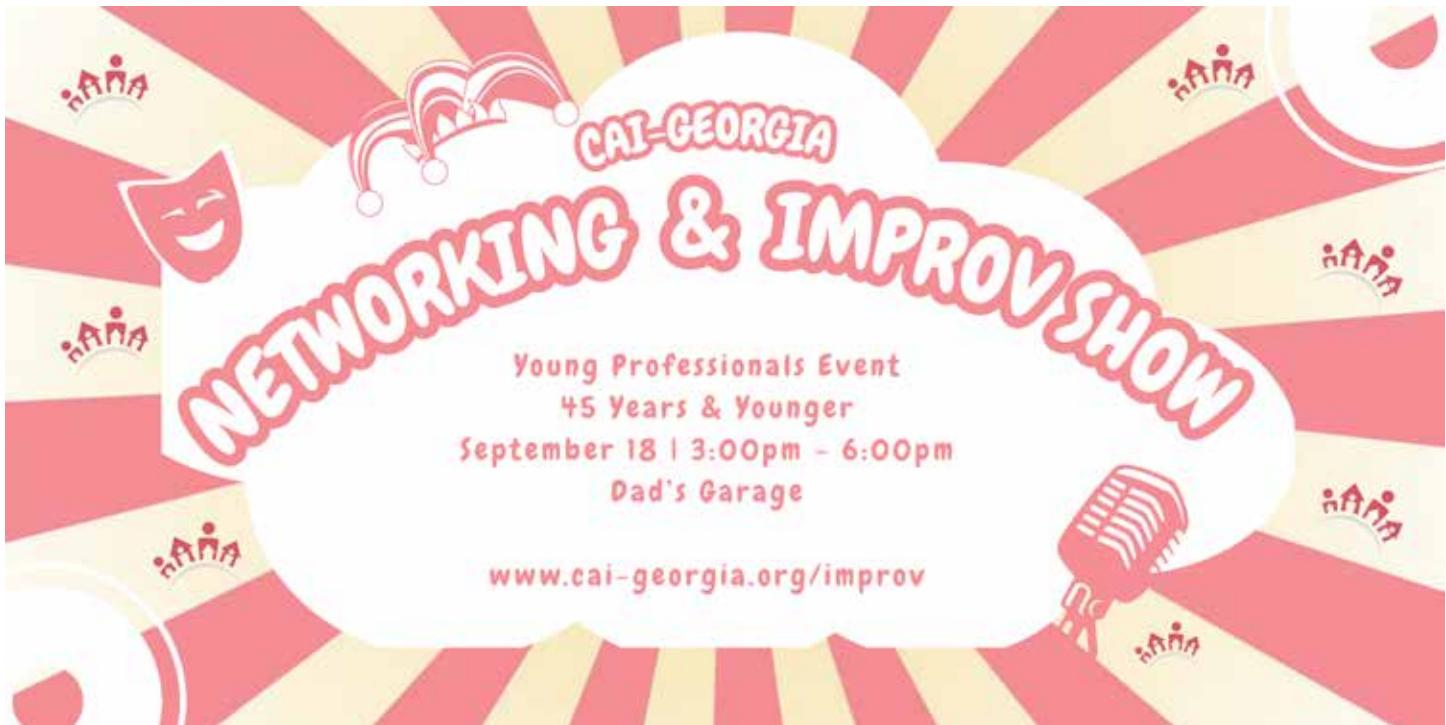


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