

**Strength Matters® Financial Management Conference
Loews Chicago Hotel**

September 3, 2024, 5:30PM to 7:00PM CT: Welcome Reception (Lake View Lawn)

September 4-6, 2024: Core Conference (Wright Ballroom, 1st Floor)

All Sessions – Group Live – Total CPEs Available: 15.4

Tuesday, September 3 Pre-conference activities

- 2:00 – 4:30 Site Tour with Hispanic Housing Development Corporation** *(advance registration required)*
- 3:30 – 4:30 Advisory Committee Meeting** *by invitation* **Jenney, 2nd Fl**
- 5:30 – 7:00 Opening Reception** **Lake View Lawn**

Wednesday, September 4 6.4 CPEs available

7:30 – 8:30 Breakfast **Wright Ballroom, 1st**

8:30 – 10:15 Welcome and Opening Plenary – The State of the Industry **Wright Ballroom, 1st**

1.6 CPEs
Moderator: Eileen Fitzgerald, Founder & Principal, ThruSight
Rebecca Clark, CEO, Linc Housing
Matt Reilein, President & CEO, National Equity Fund
Geoff Smith, ED & Principal Investigator, Institute for Housing Studies, DePaul University

A number of economic, political, and social factors have converged to make this one of the most complicated periods for the affordable housing and community development industry. Rising costs, continuing rent arrearages, staffing shortages, immigration pressures, increasing homelessness, crime rates, aging stock, polarized politics – these are just a few of the trends that have come together to create what for many organizations in our industry is an existential crisis. The opening plenary will examine the principal economic factors at play today from the perspective of key industry players and will help ground the conversations that will follow, offering hope and a path forward.

Learning Objectives: *Understand market forces shaping policy and impacting affordable housing business. Discuss data sharing and quantitative best practices.*

Field of Study: Business Management & Organization *Level: Intermediate*

10:15 – 10:30 Break

10:30 – 12:00 CONCURRENT SESSIONS – Block 1

1.6 CPEs
Portfolio Optimization **Mies van der Rohe, 2nd**

Moderator: Harold Nassau, HCNassau Consulting
Tatiana Blank, Eden Housing
Katherine Fleming, EAH Housing
Pedro S. G. Rodriguez, Coachella Valley Housing Coalition
Alvin Saafir, Community Housing Capital

**Business
Continuity &
Agility**

In the current climate, owners of multifamily portfolios can no longer think in terms of “break even” or even “sustainability”. Owners are beginning to figure out what the optimum shape and content their portfolio is. What does “highest and best use” mean to a mission-based, nonprofit organization? Who is the best owner for a property? A CFO, An ED (ex CFO), a mission lender and an asset manager share strategies.

Learning Objectives: *Create the framework for a portfolio-wide strategy for ownership optimization. Identify practical strategies around disposition, recapitalization and operations.*

Field of Study: Specialized Knowledge *Level: Advanced*

10:30 – 12:00 CONCURRENT SESSIONS – Block 1 continued**Business Intelligence for Housing Developers****Jenney, 2nd****Lisa Nelson, Focus & Flow****Financial
Performance**

Join Lisa Nelson for an exploration of business intelligence best practices applied to the unique needs of housing developers. Business intelligence is a process of gathering, analyzing and visualizing data support strategic and operating decisions. Lisa will take you on a journey from accessing your business intelligence (BI) needs, getting your data ready for analysis, developing a protocol for maintaining reporting, and producing reporting specific to the needs of your decision-makers. She will also highlight case studies to spark enthusiasm for developing your own customized business intelligence strategy.

Learning Objectives: *Understand the fundamentals of business intelligence – overview of the process of gathering, analyzing and visualizing data. Develop framework for getting data ready for analysis, developing reporting protocols and producing reporting. Explore a case study to prepare to develop a customized business intelligence strategy.*

*Field of Study: Specialized Knowledge**Level: Intermediate***Recruiting Challenges – What Do You Need to Know?****Wright 4, 1st****Moderator: Valorie Schwarzmann, Homeport****Donna Diane, Corporate FACTS****Sarah Dunn, ZRG Partners****Financial
Talent & Teams**

Finding talent is hard. What are the creative ways for recruiting talent to your organization. What makes you an attractive employer and how do you differentiate your organization from the competition for new staff. This panel will include recruiting firms and HR professionals who have been successful in finding top talent for their open positions in Finance, Development and Asset Management.

Learning Objectives: *Understand how to frame a competitive comp package. Identify keys to success in recruiting talent. Develop an awareness of current competitive forces in hiring.*

*Field of Study: Personnel/HR**Level: Intermediate***Foundation Support to Meet New Challenges****Wright 5, 1st****Moderator: Eileen Fitzgerald, ThruSight****Allison Clark, MacArthur Foundation****Ianna Kachoris, The Chicago Community Trust****Joanna Trotter, JPMorgan Chase****Partnerships**

Owners of affordable housing are facing new challenges and headwinds. Many owners realize that they must re-think their business models. Many nonprofits that believed they could “do it all” are forced to face the choices that they did not make in the past. The foundation world was, and is, a key partner and player in that decision making process- what values to support and how to support them. In this conversation leading foundations will look back at the values they have supported in the past and the current landscape. What are the values, the outcomes, and the measures their organization are prioritizing.

Learning Objectives: *Explain how to partner with foundations as thought leaders, not just financial support. Understand the changing perspectives and priorities of national, local and corporate foundations. Identify key metrics required to measure impact (values and outcomes).*

*Field of Study: Business Management & Organization**Level: Intermediate***12:00 – 1:15 Lunch Program: Celebrating Victories****Wright Ballroom, 1st****Scan this QR code to access the conference evaluation:**Join the conversation by following [Strength Matters](#) on LinkedIn. #StrengthMattersNeed CPEs? Be sure to sign in and out of all sessions. Questions? Email consult.lwells@gmail.com.

1:30 – 3:00 CONCURRENT SESSIONS – Block 2

1.6 CPEs

Tech 1 – Assessing Needs and Evaluating Systems**Jenney, 2nd****Moderator: Lisa Nelson**, Focus and Flow**Cassi Johnson**, Software for Good**Paul Ricci**, Cohn Reznick**Amanda Roy**, AprioBusiness
Continuity &
Agility

This session focuses on assessing systems and tools in your operating platform with a focus on identifying your real needs and wants, aligning your technology strategy mission and vision, auditing your technology, assessing your needs and set values-driven priorities, creating a practical and mission-aligned product and portfolio road maps. We will discuss steps for technology strategy and implementation prior to the buy or build decision. Panelists include technology consultants Software for the Common Good, Chief Information Officers from Affordable Housing Industry and Accounting Consultants specializing in technology assessments.

Learning Objectives: Describe a thoughtful process to assess current IT environment and needs. Design the specifications to identify software solutions with focus on systems integration.

Field of Study: Information Technology

Level: Intermediate

HUD Primer**Mies van der Rohe, 2nd****Moderator: Dana Moore**, Compass Advisors**Rich Devaney**, Eagle Bank FHA**Melissa Dunn**, AprioFinancial
Performance

In the lengthy recovery from COVID and the heightened focus on the formerly homeless, HUD continues to be a critical force. REAC inspections, ENSPIRE, rent ‘catch ups’ and subsidy allocation are complex and stressful. Get the latest on HUD’s view of where we are and how HUD can help.

Learning Objectives: Develop a basic understanding of applicable HUD offerings. Discuss new HUD practices and asset management. Understand the backend requirements to avoid compliance issues.

Field of Study: Specialized Knowledge

Level: Overview

CDFI Ratings Panel**Wright 5, 1st****Moderator: Matt Glatting**, NeighborWorks Capital**Debra Turner**, Community Housing Capital**Nora Wittstruck**, S&P

Partnerships

More organizations, both affordable housing developers and CDFIs, are being rated by S&P and Moody’s. This session will discuss the approach to ratings and the view on the industry from the standpoint of the Rating Agencies and will discuss the process and the implications from the standpoint of a newly rated CDFI and an affordable housing developer.

Learning Objectives: Discuss the ratings process for CDFIs and implications for future relationships with your lenders. Understand the ratings process and key metrics for affordable housing entities.

Field of Study: Business Management & Organization

Level: Overview

CANCELLED**~~Enterprise Risk Management~~****~~Session cancelled due to lack of speaker availability~~****3:00 – 3:15****Break**

3:15 – 4:45 CONCURRENT SESSIONS – Block 3

1.6 CPEs

Tech 2 – System Selection**Wright 4, 1st**

Brent Bozman, NeighborWorks Capital
Wayne Pryor, 2Five1 Consulting
Jhona Traina, Linc Housing

Business
 Continuity &
 Agility

Investing in new systems or making the decision to build an application? Experts will discuss a disciplined process for approaching these projects. While practitioners will share their experiences in system selection and implementation and the keys to a successful match of organizational needs to system selection.

Learning Objectives: Recognize how to retain the right team for developing specifications. Explain the vendor selection process. Plan for testing environments and team buy-in.

Field of Study: Information Technology

Level: Intermediate

A Development Primer for CFOs**Mies van der Rohe, 2nd**

Moderator: Len Tatem, Tatem Consulting
Sal Bosco, Urban Edge
Jeanne Marie Coronado, CBRE Affordable Housing
Gayle Lacroix, VOA Massachusetts

Financial
 Talent & Teams

The CFOs office is where the financial performance of a portfolio and the strength of the organization meet. And Real Estate development is *usually* the biggest investment and risk that an organization takes. This session offers CFOs an overview of the development process and will focus on the key decision points in the process: choosing deals, financing resources and support. What are the danger points, and red flags along the way? How to build an integrated process for your organization.

Learning Objectives: Develop an understanding of the development process, including key milestones/decision points. Identify financing resources and support required to move development forward (interaction with CFO from opening escrow to close). List best practices for building an integrated development process.

Field of Study: Specialized Knowledge

Level: Intermediate

Workforce Trends**Wright 5, 1st**

Moderator: Harold Nassau, HCNassau Consulting
Sarah Dunn, ZRG Partners
Matt Slepín, ZRG Partners and Leading Voices in Real Estate Podcast

Financial
 Talent & Teams

Matt Slepín and Sarah Dunn from ZRG Partners (and Matt as the host of the Leading Voices in Real Estate podcast) talk about topics relating to talent, leadership, culture and business platform in the nonprofit housing sector. Discussion topics will include leadership succession, compensation, retention and career paths and the switching cost of team members moving to the for-profit side of the business, the interaction of scale, business platform and technology, and learning from the for-profit affordable “competitors” as well as the broader conventional apartment industry.

Learning Objectives: Understand modern-day workforce landscape trends to better position your organization in the industry. Discuss staffing strategies to compete with for-profits and larger organizations. Identify current tools to recruit and retain talent (compensation trends, consolidation, career paths and leadership opportunities, diversity, culture of excellence).

Field of Study: Personnel/HR

Level: Intermediate

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3:15 – 4:45 CONCURRENT SESSIONS – Block 3 continued**Syndicator Panel****Jenney, 2nd**

Moderator: Ben Greenberg, HPN
Danny Gutman, National Equity Fund
Michael B. Rossi, Enterprise
Kait Schutz, Cinnaire

Partnerships

What are the trends and issues facing our syndicators against the backdrop of interest rates, rising delinquencies, and declining portfolio performances. How is this impacting structuring at the Fund's upper tier level and impacting new business decisions? Syndicators will share their views on the state of the LIHTC equity markets.

Learning Objectives: Discuss trends shaping new equity transactions. Understand new counterparty pressures and techniques to mitigate risk.

Field of Study: Specialized Knowledge

Level: Advanced

Thursday, September 5

6.4 CPEs available

7:30 – 8:30 Breakfast**Wright Ballroom, 1st****8:45 – 10:15 Plenary – Game Changing Technology Initiatives****Wright Ballroom, 1st**

1.6 CPEs

Moderator: Arturo Weldon, Executive VP & Chief Information Officer, NeighborWorks America
Lisa Nelson, CEO & Founder, Focus & Flow
Wayne Pryor, Principal, 2Five1 Consulting
Paul Ricci, Partner, CohnReznick

For years, we have been expecting a quantum leap forward in the use of technology to drive solutions for our industry. Has that moment arrived? The same convergence of trends that makes for a complicated moment for our industry is driving forward technology innovations. This plenary will explore how technology is driving operating efficiency and impact in our industry. We will hear from technology and industry leaders – including nonprofit and for-profit affordable housing developers – on what tools and innovations hold the most promise. What has worked in the adoption of new technologies? What has failed? How do we position our organizations to navigate technology change and drive organizational strength for the future?

Learning Objectives: Understand how technology shapes the affordable housing landscape. Discuss change management and necessary adoption in the world of AI, Digital Works and other technology.

Field of Study: Information Technology

Level: Intermediate

10:15 – 10:30 Break**10:30 – 12:00 CONCURRENT SESSIONS – Block 4**

1.6 CPEs

Insurance 2.0**Jenney, 2nd**

Moderator: Tracy Pride, IMA
Angela Bruno, Mercy Housing
Brian Kay, Community HousingWorks
Abby Krueger, Licata Risk Advisors

**Business
Continuity &
Agility**

After a brief market update, this panel will explore real estate risk from a financial perspective. The two key levers are risk management and risk retention. How much risk can we afford to retain? And which risk? Can we get partners to absorb a risk share? Can we fund a loss reserve? How much? Define captive from an investment perspective. CFOs and industry experts discuss strategies owners have employed, how they made their decisions and industry response.

Learning Objectives: Discuss new risk-sharing paradigms (partner loss sharing, captives, changing deductibles). Compare retaining versus laying-off risk and tools for managing retained risk.

Field of Study: Management Services

Level: Advanced

Need CPEs? Be sure to sign in and out of all sessions. Questions? Email consult.lwells@gmail.com.

10:30 – 12:00 CONCURRENT SESSIONS – Block 4 continued**Investor Perspective on Portfolio Performance****Wright 4, 1st**

Moderator: Adam Coile, NeighborWorks Capital
Matt Boelter, National Equity Fund
Michael Witt, Cinnaire

Financial
Performance

Equity partners discuss their perspective on the current state of their LIHTC portfolios. The persistence of rent collections issues, opex trends, and the rise of nonperformers and the approach being taken to address problem assets are a few of the topics that will be addressed by this panel.

Learning Objectives: Discuss portfolio data on trends and analytic measures used to evaluate affordable housing portfolios. Identify insights into current portfolio trends. Explain data sharing and quantitative best practices.

Field of Study: Finance

Level: Intermediate

Workout Strategies**Mies van der Rohe, 2nd**

Moderator: Mark Deitcher, Mission First
John Fowler, Consultant
Dana Moore, Compass Advisors
Michael Pitchford, M&A Consulting

Financial
Performance

Workouts are no longer a strategy just for deals that do not work. They are essential tools for creating portfolios that do work. Understanding the equity in deals and also the potential in properties, if they can be improved, are essential items in the asset management toolbox. Workouts can be as important to having a strong organization as having a strong property. Experts share their workout experience.

Learning Objectives: Prepare for a workout – discuss what you need to know to get started. Develop the ask of your lender/investor. Identify negotiating strategies.

Field of Study: Finance

Level: Intermediate

Public-Private Partnerships**Wright 5, 1st**

Moderator: Caroline Horton, Aeon
Kristin Faust, Illinois Housing Development Authority
Seila Mosquera-Bruno, Connecticut Department of Housing
Moddie Turay, Massachusetts Housing Investment Corporation

Partnerships

Public partners have the second greatest interest in the long-term success of our housing. As the industry faces severe economic and social headwinds, many Housing Finance Agencies and public/private partners are looking for ways to support our common mission. In this session the leaders of three organizations discuss their perspectives and their strategies to provide resources, to ease obligations and to offer assistance.

Learning Objectives: Develop strategies to work with your public partners to provide resources, ease obligations and offer assistance. Understand the operating constraints and challenges facing public partners. List tools that are available for use by your public partners.

Field of Study: Business Management & Organization

Level: Intermediate

12:00 – 1:15 Lunch Program: DEI**Wright Ballroom, 1st**

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1:30 – 3:00 CONCURRENT SESSIONS – Block 5

1.6 CPEs

Tech 3 – Implementation and Integration**Wright 5, 1st****Amanda Roy**, Aprio**Arturo Weldon**, NeighborWorks AmericaBusiness
Continuity &
Agility

Successful implementation and integration of new systems requires a rethinking of process and procedures, change management to get the team to adopt and use the new system to its fullest extent, and a well thought out integration and adoption plan. This panel will address the successful implementation of systems. The panel includes consulting experts to help with documenting new workflows for process, as well as practitioners with shared experience in new system adoption.

Learning Objectives: Identify systems integration steps. Explain the importance of process mapping to ensure the control environment remains intact and that there are no gaps in process. Discuss practical tips on Systems Implementation and Integration.

Field of Study: Business Management & Organization

Level: Intermediate

Business Combinations**Mies van der Rohe, 2nd****Moderator: Melissa Dunn**, Aprio**Tatiana Blank**, Eden Housing**Chris Cherry**, Wesley Housing**Dana Moore**, Compass AdvisorsFinancial
Performance

There has been a recent uptick in asset acquisitions, mergers and other “business combinations” to enhance and expand capacity and services, or to simply grow. Learn how these affordable housing organizations have/are expanding their platforms. Speakers will explain their process to identify the opportunity and bring in support to create and structure the transaction.

Learning Objectives: Develop a framework for due diligence. Differentiate between different business combinations (e.g. merger, or acquisition of assets). Identify how to select the appropriate risk-based framework for your transaction.

Field of Study: Finance

Level: Advanced

Learning Culture – Feedback Loops**Wright 4, 1st****Moderator: Michele Stowe**, SkyRocket Coaching**Mark Angelini**, Mercy Housing Lakefront**Katherine Fleming**, EAH Housing**Roxanne Huey**, Tenderloin CDCFinancial
Talent & Teams

Creating a culture of communication and honest feedback in a highly collaborative space is essential in a housing development organization. The communication between the Finance-Development-Asset Management-Property Management-Resident Services is critical to achieving high results. How do we form effective feedback loops across the business segments and develop a culture of collaboration? This panel will include executive leaders from Real Estate Development, Portfolio Management and Finance who will share the frameworks they have used to collaborate effectively and break down internal silos.

Learning Objectives: Discuss building cultures of communication and transparency. Explain tips for breaking down silos and creating cross departmental feedback loops.

Field of Study: Personnel/HR

Level: Intermediate

3:00 – 3:15**Break**

3:15 – 4:45 CONCURRENT SESSIONS – Block 6

1.6 CPEs

Housing Stabilization and Rent Collections**Wright 5, 1st**

Moderator: Althea Arnold, SAHF
Angela Bruno, Mercy Housing
Alexa Ducote, The Community Builders
Shaun Rai, Community Housing Partners

Business
 Continuity &
 Agility

Long Covid impacts housing, too! Multifamily portfolios continue to suffer slow or nonpayment of rent, and high long-term receivables. Reestablishing a norm in which residents pay their rent means recreating a culture of housing stability and mutual trust. This not what Property Management or Resident Services are trained to do. Learn how owners have changed communication, incentives, and debt forgiveness to rebuild relationships, and how CFOs have changed their cash flow projections.

Learning Objectives: Compare strategies to enhance rent collections and create housing stability in the post-COVID environment. Discuss the interaction of Resident Services, Asset Management and Property Management in forging solutions. Identify vacancy stabilization strategies.

Field of Study: Specialized Knowledge

Level: Intermediate

Tech 4 –The Practical Implications of AI**Jenney, 2nd**

Moderator: Brett Oumedian, Cinnaire
Brian Martin, AbbVie
Paul Ricci, CohnReznick
Cole Weinman, Plante Moran

Business
 Continuity &
 Agility

What are the practical implications of AI in our business. Explore the use of digital works, and machine learning and how to incorporate these efficiencies into your business models to drive down cost. Join experts from the work of Generative AI and machine learning, along with nonprofit practitioners who have implemented digital workers into their operating platforms.

Learning Objectives: Develop strategies to use generative AI to its full potential. Discuss how to optimize the opportunity for digital workers to enhance efficiencies within Finance.

Field of Study: Information Technology

Level: Overview

Liquidity Management**Mies van der Rohe, 2nd**

Moderator: Eric Chatman, Housing Partnership Network
Angela Kuo, JPMorgan Chase Treasury
Erik Lund, Bridge Housing
Dana Moore, Compass Advisors

Financial
 Performance

Managing organizational liquidity begins with a board adopted liquidity framework assessing the operating and investment needs of the organization. Defining your risk tolerances and liquidity management strategy, how do you then safeguard your cash investing it prudently, managing FDIC insurance risk, managing fraud risk with appropriate bank protections. This session will cover Liquidity Management from both a governance and practical approach with panelists including consultants, cash management leaders and CFO practitioners.

Learning Objectives: Explain a governance framework to guide your liquidity management and investment practices. Discuss treasury best practices for creating a secure banking environment. Identify strategies for maximizing returns on liquidity while ensuring safety of principal.

Field of Study: Finance

Level: Intermediate

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3:15 – 4:45 CONCURRENT SESSIONS – Block 6 continued**Permanent Supportive Housing****Wright 4, 1st****Moderator: Andrea Ponsor, SAHF****Mark Angelini, Mercy Housing Lakefront****Carl Kunda, Full Circle Communities**

Partnerships

Permanent Supportive Housing is hard but there are housers who are making it work through aggressive adoption of service model, pairing healthcare reimbursements, and other innovative efforts. This panel will address models for owning and managing permanent supportive housing from nonprofit that have been tested and have been proven to be successful.

Learning Objectives: Identify and compare models for delivering permanent supportive housing.

Field of Study: Specialized Knowledge

Level: Advanced

5:30/6:00 Optional Thursday Evening Activities (advance registration required)

Architectural Tour Cruise: <https://www.chicagodinearound.com/strength-matters-architecture-tour/>

Friday, September 6

2.6 CPEs available

7:30 – 8:30 Breakfast**Wright Ballroom, 1st****8:45 – 10:15 CONCURRENT SESSIONS – Block 7**

1.6 CPEs

Accounting Updates Panel**Wright 5, 1st****Moderator: Rodney Sommers, Novogradac****Winell Belfonte, CohnReznick****Kelly Perlman, Plante Moran****Tracy Teale, Aprio****Andrew Walton, Novogradac**Financial
Performance

Industry panel comprised of CPAs from top accounting firms supporting the Affordable Housing Industry will discuss “hot topics” and trends they are seeing with their clients. Discussion will include rising fraud concerns, CECL, going concern, impairment considerations, Uniform Guidance audits, and staffing/recruiting.

Learning Objectives: Develop an understanding of the current trends impacting the Affordable Housing industry (fraud, IT changes, etc.) Discuss upcoming accounting standards changes.

Field of Study: Accounting

Level: Update

The CFO Wearing Too Many Hats? Managing Disparate Business Functions**Wright 4, 1st****Moderator: Dana Moore, Compass Advisors****Chris Cherry, Wesley Housing****Gayle Lacroix, VOA Massachusetts****Laura Selby, Hispanic Housing**Financial
Talent &
Teams

All too often the nonprofit CFO is not simply the CFO (as if that isn't enough) but also a COO managing all or some of a disparate array of functions to include IT, HR, Risk Management, Asset Management, etc. Learning to manage functions outside your natural area of expertise is a challenge. A panel of practitioners wearing many hats, will discuss how they manage the array of functions within the span of their control.

Learning Objectives: Identify best practices to manage disparate functions (outside Finance). Discuss strategies for prioritization across multiple departments.

Field of Study: Personnel/HR

Level: Advanced

10:15 – 10:30 Break

10:30 – 11:30 Closing Plenary – The Road Ahead**Wright Ballroom, 1st**

1.0 CPEs

Moderator: Dana Moore, Compass Advisors

What just happened? What are the major themes and learnings that emerged over the past three days? What action items can we take back for implementation? What future content do we want Strength Matters to deliver throughout the year and at next year's conference? Join your colleagues for an honest assessment of the conference and gain insights that you can take home and apply to your work.

Learning Objectives: Synthesize major themes and issues arising from conference. Develop action items for implementation at your organization.

Field of Study: Business Management & Organization

Level: Intermediate

11:30 Adjourn

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Or go to <https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/7974385/SMconf2024>

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Materials will be posted to <https://strengthmatters.net/2024-conference-materials/> as they are available.

