GENIUS BAR

Lacey Barker has over 15 years of experience in affordable housing, starting her career in leasing and property management before advancing into housing counseling, compliance, and asset management. Her background includes managing tax credit and subsidized housing, processing certifications, conducting inspections, and working directly with tenants and owners.
She currently serves as a Senior Asset Manager at the Seattle Office of Housing, where she oversees more than 140 affordable housing properties spanning almost 9,000 units. Her responsibilities include reviewing financial and occupancy reports, conducting property inspections, managing regulatory compliance for multi-layered funding sources (HUD, LIHTC, HOME, City, MFTE), and providing technical assistance to underperforming assets.
Lacey is also the Owner of Grit City Services, a consulting firm offering HUD inspections, compliance training, government contract management, and notary services. She is certified in REAC/NSPIRE, HQS, and C3P LIHTC, and is an experienced trainer in affordable housing compliance.
In addition, she serves as Director of Development for Hearts on Fire, where she has helped secure nearly $1 million in grant funding for youth-focused programs. Lacey is an active member of the Tacoma Redevelopment Council and the Affordable Housing Management Association of Washington (AHMA).

Colleen Carr is a seasoned leader with over 30 years of experience in property management, known for her strategic vision and deep commitment to affordable housing. Since joining Allied Residential in 2009 as a Portfolio Manager, she has played a pivotal role in the company's growth becoming a Principal Shareholder in 2011 and being instrumental in expanding its Affordable Housing Division into a well-recognized brand for affordable housing in western Washington.
Her leadership from 2023 onward has marked a period of exceptional growth, driven by her passion for ethical housing, strong team culture, and resident-focused solutions. Colleen's expertise spans compliance, lease-ups, and community engagement, and her dedication to professional excellence is reflected in her extensive background in affordable housing and regulatory standards.
In 2024, Colleen was honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Affordable Housing Management Association, recognizing her transformative impact on the industry. She continues to be a trusted voice in housing, known for her collaborative spirit and unwavering commitment to making a difference.

Amy Cubbage is Vice President of Asset Management at Imagine Housing, overseeing a portfolio of affordable housing communities in East King County. She brings over a decade of experience in nonprofit affordable housing, including nine years focused on asset management. Her expertise includes real estate finance, housing development, and strategic portfolio planning. Amy holds the Certified Housing Asset Manager (CHAM) designation from the Consortium for Housing Asset Management, co-chairs the Housing Development Consortium's Asset and Property Management affinity group, and previously taught affordable housing finance at the University of Oregon, where she earned her Master of Nonprofit Management. She is committed to sustaining mission-driven housing and advancing collaborative solutions across Washington's housing sector.

GENIUS BAR

Melissa A. Donahue has been Manager of the Asset Management & Compliance division at the Washington State Housing Finance Commission (WSHFC) since 2005. Previously, she spent several years with a large housing authority. She has nearly 30 years of experience in the affordable housing industry, working in direct service and administrative capacities in both the government and non-profit
sectors. While at WSHFC, she completed her master's degree in Information Management from the University of Washington, and has a keen interest in how technology and data can help inform strategic asset management and compliance decision-making.

Patrick Tippy is a seasoned leader in affordable housing finance and development field, currently serving as ARCH's Investments Manager supporting ARCH member cities (including our host, Bellevue) invest in new affordable developments. With over a decade of affordable development experience for various sponsors across the state, he has consistently championed initiatives that support vulnerable populations and production in diverse communities. Patrick holds a Master of Public Affairs from the University of Washington, with a focus on Non-Profit Management, Economics, and Financial Management, equipping him with the strategic and fiscal expertise to drive impactful housing solutions.

Tracy Cleveland is the driving force behind TrueCompliance Compliance Consulting, bringing over three decades of experience to the table. Having worked across all aspects of business, she has a comprehensive understanding of the challenges organizations face, and she takes great pride in helping others navigate them effectively. Tracy's approach is warm, engaging, and often infused with humor, making even the toughest compliance topics more approachable. She believes in rolling up her sleeves, diving into the details, and empowering others with a deeper understanding of the nuances of compliance. Her goal is always to ensure long-term success for her clients by equipping them with the knowledge and tools they need to thrive in a complex regulatory environment. With her unique blend of expertise, passion, and personal touch, Tracy is committed to making compliance not only manageable but an integral part of your organization's success.
Tracy holds numerous designations for LIHTC and HUD affordable housing, has helped organizations in 14 states and is a Managing Broker in the state of Washington

TyeRae Guined is a dedicated housing professional with over a decade of experience in asset management and compliance. As a Portfolio Manager at the Washington State Department of Commerce, TyeRae oversees a diverse portfolio of affordable housing properties, ensuring regulatory compliance, long-term sustainability, and support for vulnerable populations across Washington State. Since joining the Department in 2015, TyeRae has held progressive roles in compliance and asset management, including serving as Compliance Asset Manager and later as Compliance Asset Management Supervisor. Her work focuses on bridging the gap between policy and on-the-ground property management, supporting housing providers in navigating complex requirements while promoting safe, stable housing for residents.
TyeRae holds a degree from Saint Martin's University and is committed to strengthening housing systems through collaboration, accountability, and equity-focused solutions.

What Are Your Top Priorities in Affordable Housing?

Whether it's preserving existing homes, building new affordable units, supporting vulnerable communities, or advancing green housing — we want to hear from you!

How do you see the affordable housing landscape changing?

Share your insights on the challenges and opportunities shaping your work in the field.

1. Preserving Today. Planning for Tomorrow

How do we protect our existing affordable housing stock while preparing for the challenges ahead?
We're asking professionals across the industry:

- What are your top priorities in this evolving landscape?
- What strategies are needed to preserve affordability long-term?
- How should we plan for a future where demand continues to outpace supply?

Your insight matters. Let's work together to shape a sustainable, equitable future in affordable housing.

2. Navigating Affordable Housing Development in High-Rent Markets Challenges, Partnerships & Policy Shifts

Developing affordable housing in high-rent areas presents growing challenges. In many regions, market-rate rents — and even maximum allowable rents under affordability guidelines — are outpacing what individuals and families on fixed incomes can afford. This includes populations traditionally classified as Very Low-Income (VLI) and Extremely Low-Income (ELI), raising critical questions about how to maintain affordability and access.

In response, developers must consider a broader range of partnerships to make projects viable and sustainable. Collaborations with public agencies, housing authorities, service providers, and local employers can provide essential resources such as rental subsidies, supportive services, or alternative funding streams. These partnerships are becoming increasingly vital as financial gaps grow wider.

At the same time, changes to landlord/tenant laws are reshaping the landscape. New regulations around eviction processes, rent controls, and tenant protections are impacting property operations, leasing strategies, and long-term planning. Understanding and adapting to these legal shifts is essential for developers, owners, and managers alike.

Finally, some markets are beginning to experience unexpected vacancy challenges — particularly in units targeted to specific income bands. This signals a need for deeper conversations around income targeting, rent levels, and market demand. Strategies around tenant retention, supportive services, and regional coordination may be key to improving lease-up and long-term occupancy.

As the housing landscape evolves, now is the time to ask tough questions, think creatively, and work collaboratively to ensure projects remain both viable and impactful.

3. The challenges of serving special needs and vulnerable populations amid budget constraints.

How can we take strategic approaches that balance compassion, compliance, and cost? Who must be at the table from the start to ensure inclusive, sustainable housing solutions?

4. Landlords: A Critical Piece of the Housing Solution

Landlords—whether nonprofit or for-profit—play a vital role in addressing the housing crisis. But their responsibilities go far beyond providing a place to live. Today's housing providers must navigate a growing maze of administrative demands: compliance deadlines, inspections, reporting requirements, and constantly evolving regulations.

These challenges demand time, staffing, and financial resources—often without the infrastructure or support needed to keep up.

If we're serious about creating lasting housing solutions, we must acknowledge and address these operational burdens. That means streamlining processes, cutting unnecessary red tape, and bringing landlords to the table in policy conversations.

At the same time, housing providers must take ownership of their role—not just as landlords, but as stewards of stability. This includes being proactive about meeting deadlines, investing in staff training, and staying ahead of compliance expectations. Accountability and preparation are just as essential as compassion and capacity.

Building trust, improving housing outcomes, and keeping people safely and stably housed starts with supporting—and expecting the best from—those who make housing possible.

5. Is Training a Priority?

As seasoned professionals retire, they take with them decades of institutional knowledge. This growing gap in experience raises critical questions: Are we preparing the next generation of leaders? What are we doing—right now—to ensure long-term success? Leadership development, mentorship, and structured training are no longer optional. They are essential.

Across our teams, we see a lack of consistent training leading to real consequences—especially in facilities, where safety issues and building damage are preventable with proper guidance. Inexperienced staff often struggle with compliance tasks like inspections, reports, and annual reexaminations, unintentionally creating larger organizational risks. Similarly, applicants are often unprepared for what to expect once housed, highlighting the need for education from the very beginning of their journey with us.

Now is the time to act. We must invest in professional development, provide clear mentorship opportunities, and build pathways for advancement. Doing so will strengthen our teams, protect our assets, support our residents, and shape confident leaders for the future. The success of our mission depends on the efforts we make today.

6. HOTMA

has any part of the new guidance been adopted by your organization? Where can someone go for guidance?

7. What are the panelists thinking?

a. What do you see as the future of housing and affordable programs?
b. What keeps you engaged and hopeful for the future?
c. When has collaboration led to bigger benefits than you expected?