



## ***A Note from Executive Director, Lisa Zimmers***

### **Please, Keep Complaining**

I often hear, *"I wouldn't have your job for all the money in the world."* I always find this amusing. First of all, I don't do it for all the money in the world. It's not a volunteer role, but it's also not something that turns off after normal business hours. It's an all-in initiative for me. I know others in the industry who view it as a job, and they don't enjoy it nearly as much.

One reason I believe people feel it's such a tough job is because they think my role is a non-stop barrage of complaints. I do receive a great deal of feedback from residents, associates, prospects, leaders, regulatory entities, family members, guests, community members -- the list goes on and on. It may seem that all I do is field complaints. If that was how I perceived feedback, I may not value my role or the community in the way I do. I would also likely be a very unhappy person.

Many times, people confuse feedback with complaints. They're overly sensitive to others' opinions or get consumed by their own insecurities. When someone calls, emails, or stops me in the hall the conversation sometimes opens with, *"I hate to complain, but..."* More often than not, the individual isn't actually complaining but rather sharing an opinion about a specific topic. The most wonderful ideas and improvements come from the -- insights learned in these interactions. I share my gratitude with the individual for sharing, and I truly am grateful. Their sharing means they care and they know I care.

I can't fix everything, nor do I try. Nothing would ever be accomplished, and there would be tremendous chaos if I reacted to every bit of feedback. When someone does have a true concern, I ask that they make it known as reasonably close to the event or situation as possible. Sometimes people think I'm already aware of the situation, so they keep their view to themselves and assume I haven't done anything because I don't care. It may seem obvious to the individual, but it may be a blind spot from my seat. I need lots of eyes all around as there is so much that goes on outside of my immediate orbit. If someone fails to share something with me, I will 10 times out of 10 fail to respond. Please don't take the opportunity away from me by keeping it to yourself.

Believe it or not, I have far more conversations of appreciation than of concern. I'm blessed to hear so many wonderful stories about neighbors, associates, family members, and friends who are making a difference in others' lives. Whether someone pauses to share gratitude or concern with me, I welcome it as a gift, and I look forward to receiving many more of these gifts.

Warmly,

***Lisa Zimmers***