



Gary J. Reggish, 2016 President

MICHIGAN REALTORS®

We are barely through the first quarter of the year, and Michigan Realtors® has already racked-up a number of major accomplishments. We continue to re-engage our members on the benefits, education, and the dedication that our state association provides to those in the real estate profession. While we had success in many of our industry efforts, our state has been faced with a few challenges.

In the wake of the current water crisis in Flint, our Association has launched the first “Michigan Realtors® Relief Fund (MRRF)” in order to support the City of Flint and its response efforts. This fund has been able to connect our membership, affiliates, local associations, and national support to the ongoing relief efforts in Flint. While the primary focus of establishing this particular fund has been centered on the current water crisis, the MRRF is intended to be ongoing as a 501(c)(3) organization, to provide any housing-related assistance to victims of disasters and other challenges our state may face down the road.

Along with the Relief Fund this year, our Association also established the “Michigan Realtors® Leadership Academy”. This new venture aims to create leaders in our industry who have demonstrated their potential through job-related and community activities. In addition, the Academy seeks to create a network of industry experts across the state who are actively involved in improving our Association and profession.

Entrance into the year-long program has proved to be a highly competitive, as only 14 applicants are accepted each year. The feedback from those who have been involved in the Academy has been incredible, and we look forward to continuing this great program for many years to come.

On top of these impressive initiatives, our Association has been hard at work in crafting sound policy for the benefit of our industry. Recently, legislation has been signed into law to statutorily guarantee continuing education classes approved by the association. As you may recall, Michigan Realtors® created the CE Marketplace last year, a one-stop shop for all real estate continuing education needs. Under the new law, licensees taking classes verified through our CE Marketplace will be deemed to have completed their continuing education requirements. Simply put- under Michigan's self-reporting for continuing education, a Department audit ends with us.

While the CE Marketplace continues to build upon its successes, work continues on various Association initiatives that have been ongoing over the past few years. This year, our Association has collaborated with 15 different municipalities across the state who are taking part in the "Realtor® Lighter Quicker Cheaper" Placemaking initiative. These community revitalization efforts turn underutilized common spaces into vibrant, bustling, usable shared places quickly and creatively. Also at the local association level, we continue to foster efforts in promoting awareness and cooperation for data sharing.

RPAC Participation is a top priority at the national level, and we are working hard to improve upon our percentages in Michigan. Local associations have participated in the "Phone a Friend for RPAC" initiative, and so far, we have made personal contact with more non-investors than ever before. This initiative has been an extraordinary opportunity to re-engage members who have been investors in the past, but haven't in recent years.

In addition to this great program, there has also been a new tool created for members investing in RPAC. The "We're on Your Side (WOYS)" initiative simplifies investing at the closing table! The WOYS initiative was made by a "Game Changer" grant, and allows a member to earmark a portion of their commission on each transaction closing to go directly to RPAC. Michigan Realtors® worked diligently with the Traverse Area Association of Realtors®, along with the National Association on integrating the concept with technology. So far, this new way of investing has been successful, and we continue to build momentum for the program throughout the year.

While our RPAC Participation presence continues to grow in Michigan, we are continuing our successful RPAC Major Investor events around the state. Over the last few years, these events have been highly successful, with recent events bringing in almost \$300,000 this

year alone! We continue to create an RPAC culture of awareness, and so far this year, our efforts in focusing in on Major Investors have paid off. Crunching the numbers so far, Michigan Realtors® has: 34 President Circle Investors: 2 Platinum R Investors: 11 Golden R Investors: 14 Crystal R Investors: and 144 Sterling R Investors. With numbers like that, along with many more committed RPAC investors along the way, I am confident Michigan Realtors® will reach their 2016 state goal of \$800,000.

We wouldn't have the success in RPAC without strong public policy efforts. Legislation enacted into law late last year clarifies exemptions to Michigan's Real Estate Transfer Tax Act with regard to lost value on a principal residence. These exemptions are also retroactive up to 4 years, so it is the perfect opportunity for Realtors® to go back and re-engage their past clients who may have sold at a loss.

And that is just the beginning! I look forward to see what the rest of the year has in store for the real estate industry. We are off to a great start!