



# Industry *insider*

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## A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



**AMANDA SHAW**  
*President of AAM*

## Welcome to 2010!

For many in our industry, the year caps off one of the most dramatic decades in Valley real estate history. That's significant, in and of itself. But for those of us at AAM, 2010 is significant for another reason. It marks a milestone in AAM's history – the beginning of its 20th year in business.

The company has come a long way since December 1990, when Laura Ziff was the only employee operating out of a 100-square-foot executive suite in Phoenix. In those days, Laura wore many hats, including community manager and chief business development officer. She juggled cold calls between tending to the association management needs of her first client, the developer of a 119-home community in Phoenix. That developer remains a great client today.

Today, the company employs 230 people and manages 323 communities out of six offices in metropolitan Phoenix, Prescott, Tucson and greater Albuquerque, N.M. Sophisticated technology, skilled accounting professionals and attentive community managers have made Laura's job a little easier over the years, but she continues to play an active role in attracting new business.

Her original goal of building the best communities possible by providing the finest association management available remains at the forefront. And, her dedication to not only managing associations, but making the overall community a better place to live, has indeed set new standards in our industry.

We head into the future with enthusiasm. In fact, we're so excited that we plan to celebrate our 20th anniversary for 20 months! Our celebration includes supporting local food banks with donations of time and money, as well as encouraging our employees to give back to the community with 2,000 collective hours of community service, with 400 of those hours focused on food banks. (We completed more than 1,200 hours in 2009!).

Thank you for the role you have played in our past and present successes. We look forward to serving you in the future with the same level of professionalism you have come to expect from AAM over the last 20 years.

## Cornerstones of the Business



On Dec. 27, 1990, armed with a vision, strong commitment and a hefty dose of courage, Laura Ziff opened the doors to Associated Asset Management (AAM, LLC) with a goal to raise the bar in community management. She had no clients, no employees, a tiny office and a huge passion. Thus, the journey began...

Ziff's initial vision to raise the bar has been realized in numerous ways. Some improvements have come at the hands of evolving technology -- from three-part carbon forms used to track violations to complex information technology systems; from typewritten newsletters to dazzling Web sites; from hand-posting assessment payments to complex lockbox systems; from telephones with boxy red hold buttons to sophisticated data systems, including laptops, cell phones, personal data devices, wireless connections, real-time data, shared drives and amazing office environments, to name just a few.

But more importantly, AAM has remained true to Ziff's original vision. The firm's commitment to the client, "doing the right thing," supporting one another, reading and understanding the documents, continuing to educate its people and its clients about the ever-changing community association management industry, and most importantly, giving back to the community, is stronger than ever.

*Continued on back*

Today AAM, LLC proudly serves 320+ communities, has six offices in two states, a team of 230 talented professionals, an incredible pool of vendor partners, hundreds of dedicated Boards of Directors and is still growing.

As any entrepreneur knows, those early days were anything but easy. Ziff recalls how her husband, Scott, challenged her to make more than a dozen cold calls a day. "He told me not to come home unless I'd made 15 calls," she said. "I remember crying because I hated making those phone calls. But, it paid off."

## Did You Know **BEST PLACES TO WORK**

Did you know AAM has been voted one of Arizona's Best Places to Work for the third year in a row?

In a list published last month in the Phoenix Business Journal, BestCompaniesAZ ranked AAM No. 11 among the top medium-size companies to work for based on its winning combination of team effectiveness, strong management and company alignment with employee goals – among other attributes!

We are grateful for the honor and thankful for our amazing employees and clients.  
**They're No. 1 in our book!**



## TEAM SPOTLIGHT

**LAURA ZIFF**

# Thank You! from Laura Ziff

Building a successful business with staying power takes not only the initial efforts of the entrepreneur, but also that of the many people who provide support, guidance, challenges, mentoring and business through the years.

If I had known when I started the business in 1990 that I would meet such incredible people along the way, I would have immediately realized there was no need to worry and would have slept significantly better during the last 20 years. I have had the privilege and the honor of interacting with so many genuine, caring, extraordinary people while growing AAM. Each person has played a vital role in our success.

As we prepare to celebrate AAM's 20th anniversary, I'd like to take this opportunity to say thank you. Of course, thanking each person by name would be optimal, but I can safely say that to do so would take more room than we have available in this brief space! So, if you are reading this, please know that I am sincerely grateful for the impact you have had on my life and on the life of AAM.

Thank you for your business and your trust in AAM. We truly appreciate it. Wishing you and your families a healthy, happy and prosperous 2010.

## Cornerstones of the business continued

Given her passion for educating, it comes as no surprise that Ziff spent nearly a decade as a teacher before founding AAM. She also has been involved in nearly every aspect of the real estate industry, from sales and leasing to monitoring a loan-servicing portfolio for a financial institution.

She holds a master's degree in education from Oakland University and a bachelor's degree in education from Michigan State University. Ziff also is a licensed real estate agent in the state of Arizona and active in a number of civic and industry organizations, Arizona Association of Community Managers (AACM), Valley Partnership, Urban Land Institute, and the Home Builders Association of Central Arizona.



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## News You Can Use: 2010 DEVELOPER TRAINING SCHEDULE

Start your year off right with a Developer Training session from AAM. You'll be glad you did!

### January 13, 2010, 9 a.m. – 11 a.m. – Fair Housing

With Attorney Jason Smith from Carpenter Hazelwood, Delgado and Wood. Learn crucial information as a developer board member, especially if you are also on an Architectural committee and make decisions to provide reasonable accommodations to homeowners who fall under this category.

### August 11, 2010, 9 a.m. – 11 a.m., Legislative Update

A not-to-be-missed wrap-up of the Legislative session featuring news about proposed legislation affecting our industry.

Location for both meetings: AAM, LLC Corporate Office: 7740 N. 16th ST., Ste. 300, Phoenix OR via webinar. Includes Continental breakfast.

Please contact **Gina Beverly** to RSVP or for webinar instructions at [gbeverly@aamaz.com](mailto:gbeverly@aamaz.com) or **602-288-2675**.

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An invaluable HOA information resource  
for residential builders and developers



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