



## HCCP Designee Spotlight: Barbara Kethler

*Yardi Support Specialist  
POAH Communities*

Barbara Kethler works as a Yardi Support specialist in the Kansas City office for POAH Communities. She started in property management in the late '90s with single-family investment homes and moved to affordable housing in 2011. She previously held positions as assistant property manager, senior property manager, regional compliance supervisor and compliance auditor for layered properties.

In previous lives, Ms. Kethler held a real estate broker license, a mortgage brokers license and earned a bachelor's degree in finance. She bought and sold properties to flip and/or rent. She owned multiple small businesses until she found her niche in affordable housing. The experiences gained from those businesses added to her ability to contribute to the affordable housing community.

### **How has the HCCP designation impacted your career?**

I took the HCCP exam six months into my affordable housing career. I was grateful to take that course from Scott Michael Dunn himself, and what I learned has guided my work ever since.

The HCCP designation reinforced the reasoning behind daily management tasks. I appreciated that the course and subsequent training reinforced the overall functions of the program, even though at that time I was only focused on certifications. It gave me the broader scope to see LIHTC from the viewpoint of investors, developers, management companies and site staff. From this, I gained the confidence to help colleagues and residents understand what was needed to fully comply with LIHTC regulations.



### **How did you get into the LIHTC industry?**

A good friend who knew my background worked at a senior HUD/LIHTC property and recommended I apply for an Assistant Manager position with POAH Communities. The Senior Property Manager and Regional Manager gave me a chance and I found a passion and a career path! My first weeks were a trial by fire because my first day was two days after a tornado ravaged nearby Joplin, Mo., and we scrambled to house those we could. I learned quickly the importance of file maintenance, physical assessment and asset management and how that interacts with all aspects of affordable housing.

### **What are your day-to-day responsibilities?**

Compliance in today's world heavily relies on data management and detailed communication skills. As Yardi Support Specialist, my compliance experience and my technical knowledge are constantly expanding to maintain compliance for properties in 12 states layered with subsidies, LIHTC, HOME and a wide variety of local programs. Between new funding sources, HOTMA changes and ever-changing forms, we work to stay up on regulations that require change on a regular basis.

Accurately applying program regulations in any software requires coordination and communication with all departments. I am part of a dedicated team that helps every level of staff from onsite users to the asset management team. Our team answers questions on topics from property setup to wait-list management to certification particulars, to proper unit mapping. We dig for details that make a difference and make sure they are applied in ways that make sense. More than just making sure the software is doing its job, we look to maximize the efficiency of our staff and our resources.

Preventing potential findings is the focus of my position. To this end, our team is working to incorporate online applications for wait lists and full certifications across our portfolio. It is important that these workflows consistently meet all requirements for all programs in all states. These workflows tie into the software to further reduce compliance errors. Our goal is to make the process easier and more consistent for residents and staff while maintaining a high standard of compliance.

### **What helped with your success in the LIHTC industry?**

No man is an island, and that is twice as true in property management. I have been guided by some of the strongest, most passionate people I've ever met. They have taught me that our industry is first and foremost about service to both residents and owners. It is my responsibility to take the best possible care of all the stakeholders in between so they can provide high quality service to residents and owners. In the end, teamwork is what brings success.



Starting as an assistant property manager and working my way up in affordable housing gave me real world perspective that helps me relate to people on all levels. I am forever grateful for those around me who have taken the time to share their knowledge and experience with me — most notably Myra Hinkle, Kimberly Zorumski-Barnes and the late Connie West. May I influence others in the same way.

Ongoing support and training from the affordable housing community gives me ever greater understanding in the industry. I thrive on learning new aspects and new ways to make affordable housing work! I look forward to seeing what the affordable housing industry will accomplish in the near future.

### **What's your favorite hobby?**

I seem to have a hobby of collecting hobbies. I lean toward anything nerdy or crafty or both, and extra points when I get to combine hobbies! My husband, Karl, and I regularly camp in our homebuilt teardrop trailer and enjoy RC cars, fishing, gaming, HAM radio operation and anything else we can stuff in while out and about!

In the last year, I picked up a new "hobby" of creating faces wherever possible by placing googly eyes where they don't belong. It's my way of optim-eyes-ing smiles in the world around me. Try not to laugh the next time you see googly eyes!