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## Strike up the Band

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As each day's Wall Street Journal headline swings wildly, dependent on the world's emotional impressions, I thank God I don't work in the banking, financial or petroleum markets. Especially since our market place expresses consistent signs of recovery and the beginnings of what will become our next economic boon for investors. Sure, there are still portfolios with systemic conflict, demographic and geographic areas in which the damage will be lengthy to repair, but are we not all beginning to breathe sighs of relief? Invoices are being paid more timely, occupancies are improving, residents are coming back to apartments and management fundamentals are back in fashion. Well, at least from my perch.

Recently, I was in attendance of the Siena Park Apartments ([www.sienaparkapts.com](http://www.sienaparkapts.com)) grand opening reception in Arlington, Virginia. Woodfield Investments' mid-rise, mixed use, professional lifestyle housing development located in the trendy Columbia Pike neighborhood just outside of Washington, DC. This evening of culture was glorious, full of food, wine, music and arts. Influenced by the magnificent lobby artwork, Margaret Ford, the development partner on the project, hosted artist JD Miller for a live painting performance at the event.

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*JD Miller is an acclaimed contemporary oil painter based in Dallas, Texas. View his live performance with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra at [www.jdmillerart.com](http://www.jdmillerart.com).*

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Her tandem assignments included local vintners, artists, restaurant samplings and a live musical poolside performance. Not receiving such an invite in a handful of years, I leaped at the opportunity to attend the opening. The gathering was

reminiscent of better days, providing a hopeful reminder that those times are heading our way once again, thanks to successful key business groups such as Woodfield breaking the industry stalemate a project at a time. If I wasn't impressed enough with the property, the party and the invitee list, I couldn't help but look at Greg Bonifield of Woodfield as a venerable rock star as he referred to other development deals of this caliber he is actively tending.

So now the consensus to the above is, "Anyone can throw a great party, but what about the success of the project itself, how is the leasing effort?" Jamie Sue Gorski, Bozzuto Management, shared with me during the party that the community is over 50% leased during its first four months of operation. She commended the talent of her onsite team, elevated by Ellipse's community branding. Both of us agreed that the community logo was not only one of the most functional formats, but my recommendation for the large scale, commissioned lobby painting extolled sophistication to the community itself. I was personally complimented by her words of professional admiration of my team and company. As we chatted, I heard myself reiterating the importance of today's client/supplier relationships, and that no organization can operate with a "go it alone" mentality. Pressure to perform is higher than ever, both externally and internally, with deliverable results required from both sides. The sanctimony of our collective efforts must be honored by everyone, with the client working just as hard with tenured commitment to ensure victory for the grand vision. Kinda like the organizational effort required to pull off a memorable showing such as the grand opening, but the take away is so much more.

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*Lisa Benson is the CEO and Co-Founder of Ellipse Communications, Inc.; the largest provider of custom applications and website development for the Multifamily Industry. Visit the company website at [www.ellipseinc.com](http://www.ellipseinc.com).*