

Better Together

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A mutual fund is an investment fund that pools money from many investors to purchase securities.

Mutual funds are often classified as the following: money market funds, bond funds, or stock funds. Funds may also be labeled as index funds, which are passively managed funds that track the performance of an index, such as a stock market index or bond market index, or actively managed funds, which seek to outperform stock market indices but generally charge higher fees.

Mutual funds have advantages and disadvantages compared to direct investing in individual securities. The advantages of mutual funds include diversification, liquidity, and professional management. However, these come with mutual fund fees and expenses.

Mutual funds are regulated by governmental bodies and are required to publish information including performance, comparison of performance to benchmarks, fees charged, and securities held. A single mutual fund may have several share classes by which larger investors pay lower fees.

The S&P 500 tracks the 500 largest companies in the U.S. The S&P 500 index fund typically returns 7-8% on an annualized basis, compared to savings accounts at banks ranging from .05% to 4% APY (annual percentage yield). Another stock index that is always in the news is the Dow Jones Industrial Average which tracks a price-weighted measure of 30 blue chip companies in the U.S across all industries.

Overall, investing in a mutual fund is a lot safer than investing in individual stocks. If a stock in the mutual fund goes under or crashes, you will not be as adversely affected.

‘Compound interest is the eighth wonder of the world. He who understands it, earns it ... he who doesn't ... pays it.’ Albert Einstein

Building Wealth

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Reflections on Mental Health from NARSAAH Conference

by Tarahn Harris

Last month I had the opportunity to attend the National Alliance of Resident Services in Affordable and Assisted Housing (NARSAAH) Conference. They were celebrating the 20th year of their national conference. This year it was in New Orleans, Louisiana, a city rooted with a rich history of culture. This year’s theme was “I’m A Change Maker.” There were several hundred people in attendance from various housing organizations from around the country.

The workshops that were offered ranged from learning about Artificial Intelligence and its impact on Resident Services to Social Action and Engagement, Foster Youth and Self Sufficiency, Navigating Poor Housing Conditions, as well as Mental Health. I was fortunate to be able to present at a workshop on mental health the last time the conference was held in New Orleans in 2019. This year gave me an opportunity to observe and understand how observing a presentation on mental health from another facilitator could be impactful and helpful for the residents and community members I serve.

The workshop I attended was facilitated by Dr Crewe who is the Dean of Students at Howard University School of Social Work. I was familiar with Dr. Crewe from her involvement with the National Association of Black Social Workers.

Mental Health-The Struggle is Real, was the topic and subject of the workshop. Throughout the workshop I was able to gain insight on how we as a community view and deal with mental health. I learned that many times we tend to brush off the symptoms and signs of mental illness. The guilt, shame, and stigma associated with mental illness in our community often causes us more harm than good. I learned how to make sure that I am probing my residents and ensuring that their mental health is in order. I also learned how to probe without coming off as being intrusive or nosey, more caring and concerning. Approaching others about their potential mental health challenges is a skilled art. There are effective and ineffective ways to approach residents who may or may not be dealing with these challenges. The workshop provided me with the necessary tools I need to continue to provide support and assistance to the residents and community members that I serve.



From right: Mr. Tahrhan Harris and Taye Omolafe, Community Coordinators

It was an honor and pleasure to have the opportunity to attend the conference. It is always good to engage and network with others who are also doing the work and have their boots on the ground.

National Public Housing Museum *by Caprice Casson*

I enjoyed the workshop led by the [National Public Housing Museum](#). It's located in Chicago and is set to open in early 2024. The National Public Housing Museum wants to speak to everyone, everywhere that has ever lived in public housing! Stories, pictures, and memories are needed/wanted to share on a bigger platform. Just imagine, many Americans have lived in public housing at some stage of their life. Most of the public housing history everywhere (especially the architecture) has been destroyed and replaced. It's a great era for American history when everyday people from everywhere get to have their photos, videos and memories displayed in a national museum. Please contact [National Public Housing Museum](#) for more information.



NARSAAH Conference held in New Orleans, birthplace of Jazz.

What is Artificial Intelligence, pt 1? *by Taye Omolafe*

Artificial Intelligence is the use of machines (computers) to mimic human intelligence. It conducts human-like tasks or simulates human intelligence. At the NARSAAH Conference, Artificial Intelligence "AI" was explored in the context of affordable housing and its implications on the world in general.

There is so much to learn concerning this rapidly unfolding technology. Everyone will find value in exploring AI and how it in and we are shaping the future. For those interested in careers in AI, a good starting point is securing a bachelor's degree in mathematics and/or computer science.

AI is most widely known by the public for research and putting information together, ChatGPT is an example. There are so many areas in all sectors of society being impacted by AI. Part 2 (Benefits of Artificial Intelligence to the community) will include a brief list shared at NARSAAH to use as starting points on your journey.

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