

**Blog Post: Honoring the successes of our former CEO, Dontae Latson**  
**By Mark Marshall, RMC's Interim CEO**

Our former CEO, Dontae Latson, recently left RMC for another opportunity, and we would be remiss if we didn't shine a light on and honor all that he did to support RMC through the pandemic; how he set the organization up for current and future success; and how he supported our residents with unwavering commitment!

It has been my absolute pleasure and an honor to serve beside Dontae these past few years. While Dontae continues to expand his reach as a leader in the nonprofit industry, as Interim CEO, I'm proud to carry on the legacy of outstanding work that he put in place at RMC during his tenure at the organization.

Many thanks go out to Dontae for his shepherding RMC through a global pandemic from which we've emerged with a greater focus on resilience, self-care and a commitment to providing the highest quality of service possible to our residents and communities. We'll continue to use our tool of affordable housing as the vehicle by which families and individuals can stabilize their lives and take advantage of the many resources provided through our resident services that help them thrive.

Here are just some of the ways Dontae made a lasting impact on us, our residents and our communities:

- Hired new leaders for the executive team including myself as VP of Real Estate Development and now Interim CEO; Juanita Rodriguez as VP of Resident Services; Karrie Simmons as VP of Finance; and Amritpal Byrd as VP of Property Management. He also recently promoted Brandi Lindbom to VP of Business Development. Dontae added diverse leaders to the team with lived experience in affordable housing to better reflect the residents served at our properties.
- Reinvigorated and supported the reimagining of Resident Services under the leadership of Juanita Rodriguez to expand partnerships and bring more on-site services to residents. The goal of resident services is to engage residents, staff and members of the community to build Safe, Equitable, Resilient, and Vibrant (SERV) communities where people are empowered and thrive. Through this initiative, the team focused on securing funding for programs and supports including medical, dental, and mental health supports, access to computers and technology, financial literacy, mentoring and tutoring, and more.
- Created a Real Estate Department that had not existed at RMC for almost 20 years, with a team that has garnered a pipeline of development opportunities that spans out at least 5-years:
  - Built and opened The Commons in Colorado Springs with non-profit Homeward Pikes Peak and is in the pre-development phase for The Commons II.
  - Acquired Parkview Village West in Arvada, Colo.
  - RMC was named as the development partner for a new affordable housing community in Denver's Globeville neighborhood.
  - Underway with plans for the redevelopment of existing communities Gateway Village and Townview.
- Led the organization through COVID-19 and the challenges that came along with the pandemic, including stepping up as one of the first affordable housing organizations to support an eviction

moratorium alongside our partner, East Colfax Community Collective, protecting residents to keep them stably housed.

- Implemented organizational policies for the betterment of the organization and served as a leader and advocate for residents in the affordable housing industry.
- Worked with technology organizations to secure 1,400 laptops and tablets to distribute to residents to lessen the impact of digital redlining, an issue he believes is of the utmost importance for those living in affordable housing communities.
- Launched a new tagline, mission, vision and values with input from staff and the Board to ensure messages best reflect the organization and its support of residents:
  - **Tagline:** Building brighter futures. Inspiring hope.
  - **Mission:** Building brighter futures and inspiring hope by providing affordable housing and resident-focused services.
  - **Vision:** To build equity, potential and hope through affordable housing and resident services.
  - **Values:** Our values can be found in the acronym I-HOPE. I-HOPE is not just a catchy statement, but a lens through which we support our communities. It is a roadmap for how we conduct ourselves. It is a guide for how we treat one another and for the work we do every day to build brighter futures for our residents. I-HOPE brings Rocky Mountain Communities' mission to life. I-HOPE stands for:  
**I:** Integrity **H:** Holistic approach **O:** Opportunities **P:** Passionate **E:** Equitable

While this list is not exhaustive, the work Dontae and the team did helped to ensure that RMC will remain in a position of strength poised for growth.

Looking toward the future, we will continue to boldly promote our mission and vision with unquestionable integrity and a commitment to our values across all levels of the work that we do.

Thank you, Dontae, for all you did for RMC, our staff and residents!