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For immediate release

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Workshop participants learn putting your best financial foot forward is a key step toward homeownership

GCAAR, Capital Area Asset Builders program offers insights to first-time homebuyers

ROCKVILLE, Md. – Homeownership had always been a dream for Sarah and Mario Aguila. The couple had been saving for years, paying attention to their finances, and never splurging on anything unnecessary. Finally, they decided it was time to take the plunge and explore purchasing their first home.

"We attended the workshop series on homeownership put on by the Greater Capital Area Association of REALTORS® (GCAAR) and Capital Area Asset Builders (CAAB)," Sarah recalls. "It was extremely informative and taught us everything we need to know about the process. The instructors armed us with the knowledge we needed to bring our dream of homeownership closer to reality.

"What they offered was down-to-earth advice; information that should be taught in school, but unfortunately it's not," said Sarah, a development manager for a D.C. non-profit who lives with her husband in an apartment in Northeast Washington, D.C. Mario works as a maintenance manager at a corporation in Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

The first three lessons covered Understanding Your Financial Relationship; The Art of Budgeting; and Take Charge of Your Credit, followed by Understanding Your Financial Rights and Pay Yourself First.

"My husband and I have been looking for a while now and one thing we learned was how to put together your best financial package to put your best foot forward," she said.

They quickly realized that buying a home is not as easy as they make it seem on TV.

"If you're considering buying a home, we highly recommend attending the workshop series," she said. "It will give you the knowledge you need to make your dream of homeownership a reality. Just be prepared for the challenges that come with the process. It's not always easy, but it's worth it in the end."

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One tip they already knew but needed to set into action was that when budgeting for a new home, it's important to "pay yourself first" by setting aside money for savings. This discipline will help you in the long run, as you'll have money set aside for unexpected expenses or repairs. Plus, it's always a good idea to have some money saved up in case you lose your job or encounter other financial difficulties.

They also heard that the housing market is extremely hot right now, so it's important to get pre-approved for a loan and have your financing in order before you start shopping for a new home.

The bottom line is that if you're thinking about buying a home, it's important to learn everything you need to know about the process, and it helps to attend a workshop like the one put on by CAAB and GCAAR. Just be prepared for the challenges that come with it. It's not always easy, but it's worth it in the end.

[Find out more about the GCAAR/CAAB partnership.](#)

About GCAAR

The Greater Capital Area Association of REALTORS®, one of the largest local REALTOR® associations in the U.S., is the voice for REALTORS® in Washington, DC and Montgomery County, Maryland. Representing more than 10,000 real estate professionals in the greater capital area, GCAAR provides services vital to its members' daily business needs and works with lawmakers to ensure public policy that encourages homeownership and supports the real estate industry. Visit www.GCAAR.com.

About CAAB

Capital Area Asset Builders (CAAB) is a non-profit organization based in Washington, DC with a mission to create opportunities for low- and moderate-income individuals in the greater DC region to build financial security, savings, and wealth for the future. Visit www.caab.org.

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