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**Contact:** Christine Barnhart, Vice President, Strategic Communications  
301.590.8764 or [cbarnhart@gcaar.com](mailto:cbarnhart@gcaar.com)

## **Local REALTOR® association receives national award for DEI program**

Rockville, Md. — The Greater Capital Area Association of REALTORS® (GCAAR), the local REALTOR® association for Montgomery County and Washington, D.C., has been recognized as a Power of Associations Gold Award winner by the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) for its successful diversity, equity & inclusion (DEI) program. Only 25 associations received this honor among ASAE’s more than 7,400 member organizations nationwide.

As one of the largest local REALTOR® associations in the country with 12,000+ members, GCAAR became more intentional about its DEI efforts when the national spotlight was placed on injustice and inequity in 2020. Given its location in a highly diverse area, GCAAR saw a unique opportunity to leverage its role to make a positive difference within the real estate industry and the community overall.

Through its DEI Committee, GCAAR created a DEI Champions program to promote diversity, equity and inclusion within its membership. Modeled after a National Association of REALTORS initiative, it requires members to complete three training elements, including two courses GCAAR offers at no cost. As of 2023, all GCAAR board and committee applicants were required to become GCAAR DEI Champions in order to serve in leadership positions at the association.

“We’ve gone beyond expectations in collaboration with our board, staff and volunteers,” said 2024 GCAAR President Christopher Suranna. “We feel it’s not only important to tell people that our association supports DEI, but to put actions behind our words. And now we’ve made DEI an integral part of our culture.”

In addition to the DEI Champions program, GCAAR has created educational programs, charitable partnerships, a DEI-specific award to elevate members who support homeownership among clients from underserved communities, and training for its instructors on how to facilitate diverse, inclusive and equitable classrooms.

“Congratulations to GCAAR for exemplifying the impact associations have on the industries and professions they represent, and on society at large,” said ASAE President and CEO Michelle Mason, FASAE, CAE. “It’s always so incredibly satisfying to see associations going above and beyond their everyday mission to change the world. We’re very proud to spotlight this award-winning initiative.”

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“Because all of our volunteer leaders are DEI Champions, we serve as a model to our members and other REALTOR® associations about what GCAAR stands for – and to REALTORS® who want to become leaders in the future. And there is still more work to do,” said GCAAR Chief Executive Officer Ed Krauze.

To learn more about GCAAR’s DEI initiatives, visit [gcaar.com/dei](https://gcaar.com/dei).

### **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, D.C. and Montgomery County, Maryland. Representing more than 12,000 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. For more information, visit [www.GCAAR.com](https://www.GCAAR.com).

### **About ASAE**

ASAE is the largest organization of its kind, representing more than 7,400 organizations and 50,000 association members nationwide. Its members lead, manage and work in or partner with organizations large and small in disciplines ranging from executive management to finance to technology. ASAE is the premier source of learning, knowledge and future-oriented research for the association and nonprofit profession. ASAE’s Power of Associations Awards recognize the association community’s economic and societal contributions locally, nationally and globally.

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