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## Apartments, gone virtual: How SA-based property manager keeps up events, service through pandemic

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As local officials order residents to stay in their homes to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus, traditional apartment amenities such as fitness rooms and lounge areas — as well as leasing offices — could be seen as less of a benefit. In order to keep serving residents, property managers are resorting to nontraditional — mostly virtual — methods.

Kari Warren is executive vice president of operations at Kairoi Residential, which owns and manages more than 20 properties across Texas and in the Denver area. Kairoi has eight properties in San Antonio, which include Boulevard at Sonterra, Tribute at the Rim and Preserve at Westover Hills.

Before the pandemic, Kairoi's properties hosted an array of events from jewelry parties to food truck wars and yoga instructors. Warren said to find guests and partners to help host these events, her teams would often look to who has gained traction on social media, especially Instagram, working with established national brands such as Kendra Scott Jewelry and Lele Sadoughi for jewelry events as well as local food trucks and restaurants such as NOLA Brunch & Beignets.

"You have to know who the social media influencers are in your market," Warren said.

Warren said she is encouraging her employees at apartments in Texas and Colorado to keep this mindset as the company shifts community activities online. For example, Kairoi has started a "Wellness Wednesday" campaign on its social media channels sharing videos, tips and recipes from many of the same partners it worked with on in-person events.

Staff at Kairoi's communities are beginning to host events like yoga through video conferencing platforms such as Zoom or BlueJeans — inviting the same yoga instructors residents would see in person at their apartment complexes.

"The biggest thing is getting residents comfortable with using technology they haven't used in the past," Warren said.

Although events and community building are a key elements in the residential experience, Warren admits quite a few other things are on residents' minds, from losing jobs to being furloughed, schools closing or getting sick.

Additionally, the end of the month is looming — and rent payments along with it. As far as those worried about making payments, Warren said her companies are handling situations on a case-by-case basis, offering several options from payment plans to extended leases.

"Our communication strategy is to over-communicate with our residents. Even in the virtual world, there is a lot going on," Warren said. "What they do appreciate is the thought. We didn't go dark. We're there, we're at our offices, still doing what we've always done, just in a virtual manner."

**Mitchell Parton**

Reporter

San Antonio Business Journal



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Kairoi Residential operates more than 20 properties in Texas and Colorado, including Tribute on the Rim.