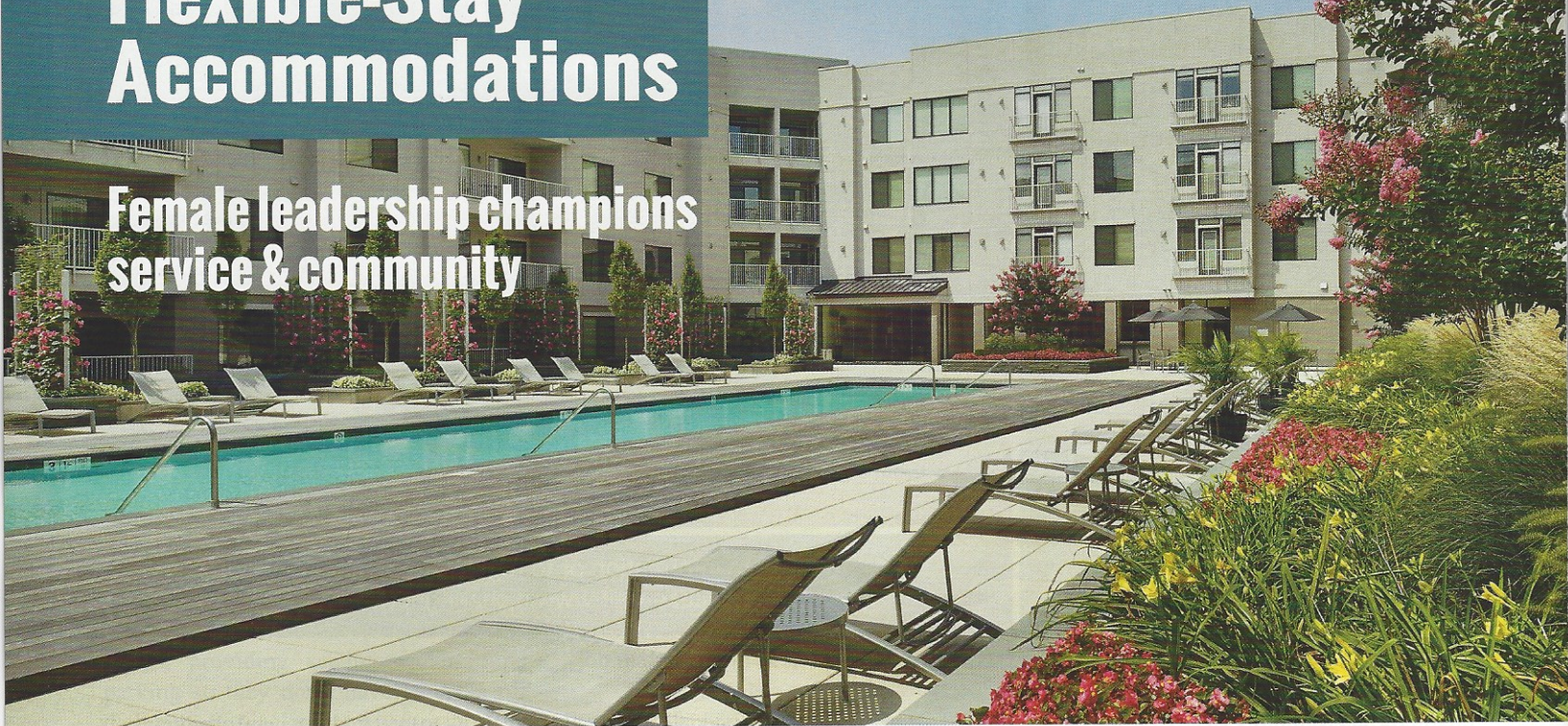


# AVE

## Flexible-Stay Accommodations

Female leadership champions service & community



**A**VE Clifton, a sophisticated flexible-stay rental community just off Rt. 3 in Clifton, is a unique hospitality provider family-owned-and-operated by Korman Communities.

Not quite hotel and not quite apartment community, this luxury property, which offers 1- and 2-bedroom fully furnished suites and unfurnished rentals, is what happens when the aesthetics of a posh resort, on-demand amenities and an empowered team combine.

### The answer is “Yes.” Now, what is the question?

It’s AVE’s high-touch resident services that differentiate it from other flexible-stay accommodations. “Since we are owned and operated, we have team members on site that can personalize the resident experience,” says Lea Anne Welsh, president of AVE and COO of Korman

Communities. “We encourage our teams to anticipate residents’ needs and respond quickly.”

“Many of our residents stay with us because they are on an extended business trip or project or relocating to the area for work, so our teams are happy to recommend a local restaurant for their upcoming business meeting or coordinate travel for them to and from the airport,” says Jamie D’Ercole, general manager of AVE Clifton. “We have even purchased custom kitchen accessories to make international residents feel more at home.”

AVE has in-house maintenance, housekeeping, resident services, administration, IT and even its own landscaping team, to ensure the community operates at the highest standard and that every resident enjoys a carefree lifestyle.

“If somebody arrives in the middle of the night, or from another country, we make sure everything is taken care of and

that there is a friendly AVE team member there to greet them,” adds Kim Schimenek, global mobility specialist (GMS), senior vice president, key strategic accounts. “Upon arrival, we provide a drink of water or Starbucks coffee and a property tour so they can feel comfortable in their home away from home.”

### Always on the go or somewhat in flux

Residents and guests at AVE Clifton fall into many categories: super commuters, extended-stay business travelers, consultants, visiting professors, relocatees, trainers, trainees, medical professionals, snowbirds who might be visiting family and friends, and individuals who need temporary accommodations for life-changing reasons such as home renovations, marital separation or unexpected home disasters. The personality of an AVE community is defined by nearby industries. AVE Clifton draws residents from a range



## Community Features

- 24/7 Resident Services Desk
- Resort lap pool and sundeck
- Seasonal bike share
- Gated, underground parking
- 24-hour fitness center with wellness classes
- Weekday club breakfast menu featuring Starbucks coffee and Tazo tea
- WiFi Internet access in common areas and suites
- Business center with computers, printers, fax and scanning capabilities
- Conference room, meeting space and private work space
- Media theater
- NYTimes.com access and copies of Meadowlands USA
- Online Resident Portal
- Social Media
- Monthly resident events
- Non-smoking environment

of industries, including entertainment, sports, restaurant management groups, finance, retail and pharmaceutical.

“Whether they’re working long hours on assignment or have been displaced, the need for temporary housing can be stressful. We ensure the transition is seamless,” says Schimenek, who is in charge of strategy for all corporate sales. “Our clients are busy; they want a quick response and a guarantee of service and quality.”

One anecdote a client tells us is that during Hurricane Sandy in 2012, Schimenek provided accommodations for the client’s executives immediately, even though Schimenek’s own home was affected by the storm.

Residents at AVE Clifton stay for a week, a month or even longer. “Having an on-site team gives us the opportunity to engage our residents on a daily basis and cultivate a sense of community,” says Welsh.

Residents socialize at monthly catered events, poolside, or in the 24-hour comprehensive fitness center.

### Furnished suite pioneers

Korman Communities’ dynamic dwellings have an origin story. While the company had been selling housing since the early 1900s, back in the 1960s, Steven Korman pioneered the furnished suite industry at The Plaza in Philadelphia when he came up with a creative solution to sell its pie-shaped floor plans.

Korman commissioned designers to decorate one apartment on each floor so those touring could visualize how to live in the space. When a prospect wanted to lease the fully furnished model, Korman eagerly agreed. When another requested a shorter lease than the traditional one-year term, Korman again showed flexibility and foresight by allowing a flexible, shorter-term lease.

“The furnished suite industry was pioneered by Korman Communities. Steven saw a practical need and addressed it creatively. He is a visionary,” says Welsh. “Others came along in the early 2000s, but we have been in this business for decades. What differentiates us is our commitment to the resident experience and all of the details that go into our brand identity.”

The AVE experience is consistent across the portfolio—in service, in team member training and presentation, in preventative maintenance and asset improvement. Resort pools, tranquility gardens, pristine common spaces, friendly team members and spacious accommodations are standard at every AVE.

### Live better at AVE!

AVE Clifton offers “a carefree lifestyle for its residents. All of our amenities and services, even our locations, are hand-



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picked for convenience,” says D’Ercole. “We offer tremendous value to our residents, providing secure, underground parking so they don’t have to clean off their car after inclement weather, hosting club breakfast during the week, so they don’t have to make an extra stop on their way to work or take the time to prepare it themselves in the morning. They can focus on the reason they are here and enjoy themselves.”

Since many of AVE Clifton’s residents are traveling for business, the team planned for public spaces to eliminate the burdens of business travel and to enhance productivity. AVE Clifton offers its residents complimentary use of its 24-hour business center, a media theatre perfect for presentations and screenings, a conference room available for booking meetings, and a 24-hour comprehensive fitness center so residents can maintain health and wellness routines while away from home.

### An “AVE-tastic” team

“Our team members are the most important asset of our company,” says Welsh. While it may sound cliché, it is not. Korman creates an environment where individuals can grow, where communication

is crucial and training is offered and encouraged to make sure people are in the job that fits them best.

Tracy Casale, senior resident representative at AVE Clifton, coined “AVE-tastic” years ago to summarize the AVE resident experience—and her career is a great example of growth within the brand. Casale, a natural at connecting with people and local businesses, grew into her position.

The leadership interviewed for this article all share stories of growing with the company. Welsh began her career with Korman more than 22 years ago in resident services right out of college. D’Ercole credits strong mentorship for growth within the company after a hiatus in her career. Schimenek started as a sales manager almost 15 years ago, eventually developing the key strategic accounts division, which she leads.

With five-year-old twins, a busy schedule and work travel, Schimenek says, “Korman gives me the flexibility to do what I need to do to get the job done. I am lucky for a company that gives me this role and the power to get things done.”

### A sense of community

AVE Clifton is involved in the Clifton

and Meadowlands community in many ways. Their monthly resident receptions highlight local businesses, varying the restaurants that cater and even including pop-up boutiques and entertainment. Clifton hosted two comedy nights this year featuring standup comedians from the area produced by Jersey Night Live.

“We are building relationships and partnering with the community,” says D’Ercole. As a result, our residents know what a great community this is and what it has to offer.”

AVE Clifton promotes local businesses and community events on its vibrant social media channels. The team also participates in MS bike rides, breast cancer walks, and coat, food and toy donation drives.

Being part of the community and encouraging reciprocal growth aligns well with the purpose of the Meadowlands Regional Chamber, where Schimenek serves among its Board of Advisors. AVE Clifton also has hosted MRC events and participates in all the major outings and events.

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