

Celebrate **Albanian Independence**

SUPPLEMENT

Catching up with
R.E.M.

'Unite, Help & Give" was R.E.M. Residential's disaster relief initiative that helped hard-hit Staten Island exactly one year ago. R.E.M. Residential, a Manhattan based property management company, joined the cause to lend a hand to those stranded in S.I. whose help from authorities couldn't come fast enough. Fortunately R.E.M. was able to mobilize the hearts of industry associates, vendors, tenants, employees, friends and family to come together volunteering their time and donating goods and over \$10,000 in monetary donations used to purchase a tremendous amount of supplies. A donated hot pink, breast-cancer-awareness truck traveled with R.E.M.'s crew to Staten Island on Nov. 16, 2012 and carried a piece of the help that was long awaited by its residents.

Unity, generosity and camaraderie reside right at the core of Rick Elezi's business philosophy. It is with that spirit that Rick, the president of R.E.M., strives to develop every working relationship whether it is

with his clients, tenants or employees; that philosophy extends to R.E.M.'s day-to-day atmosphere.

"A year has passed since Sandy and a lot has changed at R.E.M.," Rick says. "I am delighted to say that this year has been good to us." In the beginning of the year R.E.M. relocated its headquarters to a new and expanded 5,000 sq. ft. facility in the heart of N.Y.C.'s Midtown south neighborhood. "We tried to create a pleasant and welcoming atmosphere," says Rick who along with his wife and business partner Shpresa Elezi designed the space with a unique vibrancy. If one was to visit R.E.M. you'd immediately feel the warm family liveliness that fills the air. "Our goal is to put a smile on everyone's face from the moment they step into our office to the services we provide for our clients day in and day out through the years," Shpresa says. The new space was celebrated when it was turned into an elaborate party, where 200 of R.E.M.'s closest friends and industry associates were invited to celebrate R.E.M.'s move.

R.E.M. launched a new and improved website complimenting its management services. "Our website is like no other," Rick says. "Our 'Day-to-Day' section itself is like a property management training class." There is a thorough description and analysis of the management's everyday activities ranging from building inspections and violations to management reports and technology. "Providing our owners with peace of mind by facilitating a transparent and stress-free environment carries crucial importance to me," he continues. R.E.M.'s 'Industry Links' section is also unique in the industry where it is filled with all the imperative links to city, state and other real estate links. In addition to turning around buildings from a variety of issues like problematic tenancy, violations and the like, R.E.M. is dedicated to enhancing the communities of the properties it manages, and it doesn't stop with their creative management services. Its comradeship extends to the properties' commercial spaces for which R.E.M. has dedicated an 'Our Stores' section on the website, supporting the very stores that enrich the buildings and neighborhoods that they reside in.

Within the breadth of the company's growth that 2013 had to offer, R.E.M. added 12 new properties to its portfolio, located in Manhattan's Upper East and Upper West Side and one building in Queens, adding to its high profile client list like Eastern Consolidated, Earl Altman of ABS Partners Real Estate and Kayvan Hakim of Carnegie Hill Properties.

Rick Elezi, whose family moved from Albania to the U.S. when he was just two years old, will be covered in "Albanian



R.E.M. staff in their new office.

Success Stories" in the New Year. "Even though I left Albania when I was just a child, I am proud of my heritage, and fortunately we have eight talented and hard-working Albanians on our multicultural R.E.M. team," says Rick.

"In concert with our growth and aspirations, we welcomed three new executives to our talented team," Rick says, including Maria Guzman who serves as R.E.M.'s compliance director, property manager Rashaad Middleton and their associate director of leasing Tye Moody. In addition the firm recently also expanded its accounting and administrative department. "We always like to hire ahead," Rick continued. "We love to find great talent and train from within, giving these individuals an opportunity to grow alongside R.E.M., and that is important to me." An ongoing staff education is also part of R.E.M.'s culture where its staff continuously attends a wide variety of industry related education programs. Rick believes that it is crucial to build on their comprehensive knowledge by remaining immersed in the latest technology and regulations.

R.E.M.'s expansion didn't stop there. As the company had been involved in various marketing activities for the past year it recently created an in-house marketing department who is run by Venila Xhaferi, their branding and social media marketing specialist. This addition came as Rick envisioned immense opportunities in the world of marketing. "The possibilities are endless in the world of marketing today. Having a social media presence for instance helps us create brand awareness and gives us an opportunity to interact

with our customers and tenants directly. Hearing their voice and receiving their feedback on our services is priceless. This adds into our improvement strategies, turning our customers into fans, where our tenants love being in our buildings, giving the landlords a peace of mind and that is our ultimate goal" explained Rick.

R.E.M.'s marketing initiatives and superb management services have received industry acknowledgements and great media coverage. This year R.E.M. was featured as NY Residential and Mann Report Management cover stories as well as the subject of several articles featured in Real Estate

R.E.M.'s grand opening party from April, 2013



Weekly and Illyria. Furthermore, it was recently announced that R.E.M. Residential will receive NYARM's "Trailblazing Management Company" of the year award for their Innovation in Marketing & Management. The award will be presented at the NYARM Honoree Gala on January, 25, 2014. "We are grateful and excited for the award," Rick says. "We have felt the good fortune of 2013, and we look forward to new opportunities in the coming year."

— Venila Xhaferi
Branding & social media specialist
R.E.M. Residential

Rick and Shpresa Elezi