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WLI Fall Meeting Scholarship
Key Takeways Essay
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Thanks to the generosity of ULI's Women's Leadership Institute, I was able to attend my first ULI Fall Meeting in New York City. My experiences at the Fall Meeting were as varied as the City itself; I took a hard hat tour of the new One World Trade Center Building, visited a chicken coop on the roof of a boutique hotel, and enjoyed one of the best meals I've ever had sitting next to national leaders in the multifamily industry.

I crowded my way into the concurrent session on whether rental housing is the "New American Dream or Classic Bubble"; despite the panel's reassurances, the packed room had me wondering. As a guest of the CRC Blue Product Council, Wall Street analysts and industry leaders highlighted retail trends across the country. As a multifamily developer, I found it fascinating to hear about a different product type: who is winning the battle between online vs. brick and mortar? What retailers are hot and how are global political and economic trends affecting retail in the U.S.?

Resilience, the capacity to deal with change and continue to develop, was highlighted in many sessions I attended. How can we create a built environment that not only minimizes impact on the environment, but lasts through the increasingly volatile climate impacts, natural disasters and time? Resilience seems to go hand in hand with sustainability – the more we can create a built environment that lasts, the fewer resources we will use.

As the trend towards urbanization continues, it seems that cities are proving their resilience. Walter Isaacson highlighted this by noting that technology doesn't displace workers, it creates new opportunities and cities are at the heart of this opportunity. Cities create intersections between creativity and technology. This cannot be achieved in solitary silos – it requires interaction. So while cost of living is increasing and the size of spaces for living and working is decreasing, people still seek the interaction and human connection that cities provide.

ULI Fall Meeting was a tremendous experience, and I am grateful for the Women's Leadership Institute for giving me the opportunity to attend.