

Anwar Faisal: Why Stable Housing Is the Foundation Every College Student Needs

Anwar Faisal, owner of Alpha Management Corporation in Boston, Massachusetts, explains how secure housing shapes academic success and what communities can do to help students thrive.

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Students across Greater Boston are navigating one of the toughest rental markets in the country. Many arrive in unfamiliar neighborhoods without understanding lease terms, credit requirements, or tenant rights. When housing feels unstable, education suffers.

Anwar Faisal has spent more than 30 years helping students find housing near universities throughout Boston. Through Alpha Management Corporation, he has seen firsthand how housing challenges affect academic outcomes.

"You have to understand that housing affects education," Faisal said. "When students feel stable and supported, they can focus on learning and building their future."

What Students Face When They Arrive

International students often arrive weeks before classes begin, racing to secure a lease in a city they barely know. Domestic students from other states face similar pressures. Both groups struggle to understand rental applications, security deposits, and roommate agreements.

"Students are arriving in a new city, and sometimes a new country, without understanding how the housing system works," Faisal explained. "They need information, support, and people willing to help them through the process."

Many landlords hesitate to rent to students because they worry about inexperience, short lease terms, or late payments. This reluctance shrinks the pool of available housing and pushes costs higher. Students without strong credit histories or co-signers face even steeper barriers.

Community Support Makes the Difference

Faisal believes the solution lies in education and community involvement. Universities, landlords, and local organizations can work together to provide clearer guidance and more welcoming processes.

"You have to understand what people need," Faisal said. "Students coming from different countries need guidance, not just an apartment."

He encourages landlords to offer orientation sessions that explain lease terms, maintenance requests, and local tenant laws. Universities can host pre-arrival workshops that walk students through the rental process step by step. Local nonprofits can connect students with housing advocates who answer questions and troubleshoot problems.

Drawing on Personal Experience

Faisal understands the challenges of starting over in a new place. He was born in the Gaza Strip and moved to the United States to pursue a master's degree in communications at Boston University, which he completed in 1983. One year later, he purchased his first property, a 590-square-foot one-bedroom apartment that became the foundation of his career.

"When I first came to America, I understood how difficult it can feel to start over somewhere new," Faisal said. "That experience stayed with me throughout my career."

Over four decades, he built Alpha Management Corporation into a portfolio of thousands of residential units across Greater Boston, with many properties located near major universities. His work focuses on simplifying the rental process for students and families.

Small Steps, Big Impact

Faisal does not believe in shortcuts. He built his business through incremental progress and daily problem solving.

"I never looked for shortcuts," he said. "I focused on doing the work every day and improving little by little."

He encourages students, landlords, and community members to adopt the same mindset. Small actions add up. A landlord who takes time to explain a lease clause can reduce confusion and build trust. A university that shares a list of vetted properties can save students weeks of stress. A neighbor who answers questions about public transit or grocery stores can help a new arrival feel at home.

Local Action List

Here are 10 steps you can take this week to support students navigating the Boston housing market:

- **Share rental resources.** Pass along trusted websites, landlord contacts, or tenant rights guides to students you know.
- **Host a neighborhood welcome event.** Invite new student renters to meet neighbors and learn about local services.
- **Volunteer with a housing nonprofit.** Organizations that support renters often need help with workshops, translation, or one-on-one advising.
- **Offer lease explanation sessions.** If you are a landlord, set aside time to walk new tenants through their lease and answer questions.
- **Connect students with legal aid.** Share information about free or low-cost tenant legal services in your area.
- **Organize a roommate matching event.** Help students find compatible housing partners before they sign leases.
- **Publish a local housing FAQ.** Create a simple guide that explains security deposits, utilities, renter's insurance, and maintenance procedures.
- **Advocate for clearer rental policies.** Encourage landlords and property managers to simplify applications and reduce unnecessary barriers.
- **Mentor a student.** Pair experienced renters with first-time tenants to answer questions and provide support.
- **Share transportation tips.** Help students understand how to get from their apartment to

campus, grocery stores, and other essential services.

How to Find Trustworthy Local Resources

Look for tenant advocacy groups, university housing offices, and community legal clinics in your area. Many nonprofits offer free workshops on tenant rights and lease negotiations. Universities often maintain lists of approved or recommended landlords. Local libraries and community centers may host housing fairs or Q&A sessions with experts. Search for groups that have been active in your neighborhood for several years and check their reviews or references before sharing information.

A Call to Action

Housing challenges will not disappear overnight. But every landlord who listens, every neighbor who shares advice, and every university that invests in student support moves the community forward.

Pick one action from the list above and take it this week. Help a student understand their lease. Share a resource with someone who needs it. Volunteer an hour of your time. Small steps create stability, and stability creates opportunity.

About Anwar Faisal

[Anwar Faisal](#) is the owner of Alpha Management Corporation, a Boston-based real estate company that owns and manages thousands of residential units throughout Greater Boston. Born in the Gaza Strip, Palestine, Faisal earned a master's degree in communications from Boston University in 1983 and purchased his first property in 1984. For more than 30 years, he has focused on simplifying the rental process for students and families, with many properties located near major universities. He is also a philanthropist who supports organizations including The Boston Islamic Seminary and The Palestinian Cultural Center for Peace.

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