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The Real Estate Exchange is here to guide, inform and connect commercial real estate professionals

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Scale, proportion, balance, rhythm, emphasis, and harmony. I am an interior designer, with The S/L/A/M Collaborative Inc., and these are my professional principles. It is my job to ensure that the spaces I design are safe, healthy, and sustainable because we, as people, spend 90% of our lives inside buildings. After ten years in the commercial real estate industry, working with owners, landlords, tenants, property managers, and brokers, I know that efficient, well-designed spaces are a measurable value.

As the 2010 president of The Real Estate Exchange, Connecticut chapter of the CREW Network (Commercial Real Estate Women), I am looking forward to illustrating the measurable value of our organization to our members, sponsors, and dedicated supporters. I follow in the footsteps of a dedicated, tireless leader, our past president attorney Sara Taylor, who met the enormous challenges of the last year with strength, tenacity, and determination.

At the annual CREW Convention in Boston last October, we adopted the credo of "Opportunities Rising: Revival of the Fittest." I believe that opportunities are still rising as we continue to revitalize and reinvent ourselves and our industry. Our organization is 8,000 strong and growing! It is proof that networking is a priceless tool as we challenge ourselves to focus and cultivate opportunities spurred by today's global economic environment. We know that relationships and information sharing are two of our greatest professional assets, and The Real Estate Exchange is here to guide, inform, and connect commercial real estate professionals locally and nationally - appraisers, architects, attorneys, brokers, builders, consultants, developers, insurers, investors, lenders, and, starting this year, qualified vendors.

I am a strong believer in distributed leadership and the collective capacity to envision and create our future, and that is why I am proud to be joined on this journey by a passionate, purposeful, and determined executive committee of The Real Estate Exchange: vice president/president-elect and national delegate, Candace Cunningham of Robinson & Cole LLP; treasurer, Karl Badey of Montovani, Murry, Nemphos & Tierinni, LLC; immediate past president/sponsorship chair, Sara Taylor; national delegate, Jennifer Haddad of Cohn Bimbaum & Shea P.C.; blue ribbon committee chair, Carolyn Bligh of Bligh Graphics, LLC; membership committee chair, Tiffany Stevens of McCarter & English, LLP; professional development chair, Jennifer Rockwell of Murtha Cullina LLP; program committee chair, Martha Collier; and public relations committee chair, Josephine Aniello of Italia & Lemp, Inc.

The executive committee goals for 2010 are to continue to balance the support and the growth of our membership, to emphasize and provide the high quality of our programs and events, including our very popular Developers Showcase and Blue Ribbon Awards coming soon on March 24th, and finally to harmonize and proportionally reflect our message and principles in our brand image. To

accomplish this third goal, this year we have assembled a talented and fearless team to form the Graphic Brand Design Committee. The team includes: member and consultant, Carolyn Bligh of Bligh Graphics LLC; Maura Cochran of Bartram and Cochran; Linda Spevacek of The Launch Companies, Ltd.; Sarah Stevens of Grubb Stevens Consulting; Tiffany Stevens of McCarter & English, LLP; Sara Taylor; and myself. The sole purpose of this committee is to evaluate our current message and the way we deliver it through our brand image. We will achieve this by employing a survey, distributed to our members and supporters, and the consulting expertise of the designer, Bligh Graphics, and will unveil the new design at our March 24th event.

For the past 22 years, The Real Estate Exchange has been able to deliver high quality programs and forums in large part due to the financial support of our sponsors. There are three available sponsorship levels, scaled to be affordable and manageable, all providing explicit visibility throughout the year. Please contact Sara Taylor for your sponsorship opportunity at stesq150@aol.com.

To learn more about membership in The Real Estate Exchange, please contact Tiffany Stevens at tstevens@mccarter.com. Our members stand to benefit from The Real Estate Exchange's affiliation with the CREW Network and from our dedication to maintaining a scaled balance, rhythm, and harmony that connect us all as commercial real estate professionals.

Monika Avery, IIDA, LEED AP is president of The Real Estate Exchange, Hartford, Conn. and an interior designer with The S/L/A/M Collaborative, Inc., Glastonbury, Conn.

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