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## **Monika Avery, CREW CT - The Real Estate Exchange**

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Opportunities rising: Leading to change.

Lead the change! Are you ready? If you attended the 2010 CREW Network Convention & Market Place in San Francisco this past October, you saw and lived these mantras for three very charged and exciting days alongside seven hundred women. Once again, the organization's main annual event did not fail to deliver an inspiring array of speakers, events, excursions, education sessions, and of course the long-awaited 2010 benchmark study.

Two new chapters were voted in by delegates at the council meeting in San Francisco, bringing the total number of CREW Network chapters to 73. In 2009, the organization added five new chapters. Despite the recession, women and men continue to join as they see the value of CREW Network which began with the idea of creating opportunities for women to work together and evolved into an 8,000-member organization dedicated to influencing the commercial real estate industry's success by advancing the achievements of women. There has, in fact, been a 7% increase of women in the industry since 2005.

CREW CT - The Real Estate Exchange was represented at the convention by six of its members: Monika Avery, Chapter president; Candace Cunningham, Chapter president-elect; Tiffany Stevens, Chapter membership committee chair; Jennifer Haddad, Chapter national delegate; Elizabeth Judd and Bert Kaplowitz, both Chapter past-presidents. This was Judd's 21st CREW convention, and we are very excited for her to represent our chapter as the National Delegate in 2011!

After the first day of the convention which included the Fall Council Meeting and the Network Reception and Marketplace, the morning began, introduced by CREW Network president, Kristin Blount, with Marcus Buckingham, best-selling author and visionary. Buckingham, who has dedicated his career to helping individuals discover and capitalize on personal strengths, inspired the audience with the basic premise of performance: leveraging strengths and weaknesses; the question of what would help one more: building on strengths or fixing weakness; and explanation of four signs of strength: success, instinct, growth, and need. According to Buckingham, when people have the opportunity to apply their greatest strengths at work, they turbo-charge their career and everybody wins.

This thought, or fact, occurs again in the findings of the "Women in Commercial Real Estate: 2010" study for which the CREW Network enlisted Cornell University Program in Real Estate as its independent research partner to survey, tabulate, analyze and produce the benchmark study, released every five years. The study findings showed, when asked to rate what they believed to be the most significant barriers to their success, 2010 respondents rated "Lack of Promotion Opportunity" as the most significant hurdle. Participants of a special roundtable discussion From VP to the C-Suite later that day, included a panel of accomplished C-Suite women from various professions in the industry who once again spoke of opportunities, long-term strategies, focus,

communication and crucial conversations, coaching and mentoring as essentials of advancement. The following day, keynote speaker, Steve Farber, emphasized dedicating yourself to bringing others along, leading by example or don't leading at all, creating opportunity as a way to boost talent, and ramp productivity. In addition to career advancement, the 2010 benchmark study also reports on compensation, work/life balance, and management dynamics in the workplace. What progress have women in commercial real estate made in the past five years towards equality in compensation and promotion? You may find an executive summary of the study on the CREW Network website [www.crewnetwork.org](http://www.crewnetwork.org)

The convention schedule was comprised of over 30 education sessions and panel discussions. The diversity of topics presented and discussed included: Appraisal 101; Environmental Risks in Real Estate; The Nature of Bio Tech and How it Uses Real Estate; Title Insurance and ALTA Surveys; Adaptive Reuse; Museums of Tomorrow; Affordable Housing Recent Developments and Trends; Creative Approaches to Capitalizing CRE; and Show Me the Money - Maximizing Your Stimulus Dollars.

Save the date for the 2011 CREW Network Convention & Marketplace, September 14-17 in Washington, DC. We hope to see all of our members there!

For CREW CT - The Real Estate Exchange 2011 sponsorship opportunities, please contact Monika Avery email: [avery@slamcoll.com](mailto:avery@slamcoll.com)

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