



nerej

NEWiRE president's message: Paving the way for women

October 25, 2012 - Front Section

A big part of NEWiRE's focus is directed at advancing women in their careers. However, in order to have an impact on women in the commercial real estate industry, we must continue to raise awareness about the need for more diversity.

A recent article in Architect Magazine ("Double Whammy," October 3, 2012) posed the question "Would there be more women in architecture if there were more women in development?" The article incorporated some stark statistics from the Commercial Real Estate Women Network (CREW). For instance, women account for only 30% of development professionals. And while women are well-represented in junior level positions, they represent only 9% of the employees in C-level positions.

Clearly, we need to affect change at the top, so that women developers can help advance more women architects and so on down the line. This is just one example of how women in higher positions can help advance other women. This would give them access to the same opportunities as their male counterparts: to be decision makers and equity holders and to gain the experience they need to start their own business.

What Action Can NEWiRE Members Take?

Within the NEWiRE community, we encourage members to support other members in a variety of ways. Some examples include:

Mentor Program

The Mentor Program matches members either in a traditional senior and junior mentor/mentee relationship or a colleague-to-colleague relationship as requested. Both can be arranged in the same discipline or across disciplines. This provides the opportunity to our younger members to draw upon the expertise of more senior women to pave the way for career advancement. Further, this is another example of how more senior women can assist those with less experience.

Spread the Word

The "Member News" section of our website is a perfect example of an online forum designed to keep fellow NEWiRE members in the know. What companies have won a new project or award? Who has a new job or title? Who's partnering on projects? It's a simple, effective way to share news and experiences.

Recognize Achievements

Each year, we honor our member's accomplishments at our annual achievement awards. Among the awards we present, is a Networking Award. This award is designed to recognize a networking experience that most clearly exemplifies the goals and purposes of NEWiRE. These may include referrals, career opportunities, business transactions or information sharing activities that showcase successful collaborations.

Keep the Momentum Going

Events are always a great way to develop relationships and to discuss pertinent topics. Our October and November luncheons are open to anyone who may want to join in the conversation. We are also hosting Women on Boards 101: How To Get On For Profit Boards (a members only event) on November 5. Visit www.newire.org for more details on all of these events. We also encourage people to be part of the national conversation on December 12th, when 2020 Women on Boards (www.2020wob.com) is hosting luncheon events nationwide.

Currently, there are over 400 women in NEWiRE. As our numbers grow, so does our voice. Together, we are working to affect change in our little corner of the business world, and beyond. To learn more about NEWiRE and upcoming events visit www.newire.org, find us on LinkedIn, or follow us on Twitter @NEWiREBoston.

Holly Nelson is president of New England Women in Real Estate (NEWiRE), Boston, Mass.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540