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Legacy: When past, present and future intersect

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I think we all recognize the intrinsic value in sharing knowledge. Think of what we have learned from history in terms of exploration, war, medicine, etc. Think of what your parents and grandparents taught you and what wisdom you hope to impart to your own children. By sharing our experiences, we pave the way for the next generation of leaders; we continue to develop as a society and as individuals. At NEWiRE, we strive to do just that through our Women of Legacy series.

Each year, the president of NEWiRE handpicks four executive level women in the commercial real estate industry to host individual luncheons throughout the year and share their stories. These events provide a small, intimate setting for a dozen or so women to gather and discuss topics that affect them. The luncheons culminate in an annual panel comprised of the hosts (in aggregate) who share their stories and insights with the membership at large.

The most recent and 3rd annual Women of Legacy panel took place on February 5th. It included Susan Allen, executive vice president of The Drew Company, Inc.; Dawn Neher, executive vice president and chief financial officer of New England Development; Tamie Thompson, managing director of Jones Lang LaSalle; and Kathryn West, vice president of real estate and facilities of Partners HealthCare System, Inc. Topics discussed included mentoring, networking and gaining recognition in the workplace.

Mentoring:

Whether formal or informal, mentoring plays a big role in one's career. Each of the panelists was able to recall someone who took them under their wing or gave them a chance to succeed. I encourage everyone to seek out a mentor or become one. It is important to have someone with whom you can talk through challenges and use as a sounding board before making important decisions.

Networking:

Getting to know people and letting them get to know you is key. Networking is a two-way street. It is not all about whom you know but who knows what you can do. Our panelists admit that it takes a lot of effort to get out there and meet people in order to do business or get introduced to someone new. It is how they built their own professional networks.

Gaining Recognition in the Workplace

Certainly being politically savvy and having strong leadership skills goes a long way. However, our panelists agree that in order to gain recognition in the work place you have to work hard and build a reputation for yourself based on the quality of your work. It is that simple. There are no shortcuts; it is not an easy ride. And therein lie the rewards.

These were the key topics of discussion at this year's Women of Legacy panel. I am already looking forward to next year's panel to see how things continue to evolve. These are exciting times and

women have more and more opportunities available to them.

Generally speaking, a legacy is something handed down from the past. However, I would argue that we are all pioneers. Each one of us brings valuable knowledge and experience to the table simply by working in the commercial real estate industry every day and by being part of NEWiRE. I encourage everyone to utilize the Women of Legacy series as both an opportunity to learn and to teach.

Holly Nelson is the 2012-2013 president of New England Women in Real Estate (NEWiRE), Boston, Mass.

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