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First Niagara Financial Group, Inc. names Griffin to lead regional commercial real estate lending team

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NEW HAVEN CT First Niagara Financial Group, Inc. named Jeanneen Griffin to serve as first vice president and team leader, commercial real estate lending for the bank's New England and Tri-State Regions. Specifically, Griffin will manage a sizable commercial real estate loan portfolio and lead an experienced team of CRE lenders focused on developing business with middle market and institutional owners/developers throughout Connecticut, New York Metro, Westchester County and Northern New Jersey. Target transactions range from \$5 million to \$100 million for properties including multifamily, office, grocery-anchored and single credit tenant retail, and warehouse/distribution. Griffin is an accomplished real estate lender with more than 28 years of experience in debt and equity financing in both middle market and institutional lending.

She joins First Niagara from People's United Bank where she served as a senior commercial lending officer, and consistently ranked as a market leading performer in new loan production. She also held commercial lending roles with GE Commercial Finance, Webster Bank, and CRIIMI MAE, Inc. Earlier in her career she held positions at Paul Revere Life Insurance Company, CIGNA Investments, Inc. and Barclays American Business Credit.

"We are fortunate to attract someone with the depth and breadth of experience that Jeanneen possesses," said First Niagara senior vice president commercial real estate regional manager Christophe Terlizzi. "With her extensive market knowledge, strong underwriting and loan structuring skills, and proven ability to acquire profitable new business, she is the perfect leader to drive our CRE growth objectives in the region."

Griffin has been a member of the executive committee of the New York chapter of the Real Estate Lenders Association for three years, and currently serves as Membership Chair. She was a past president of the Real Estate Exchange (CT affiliate of CREW Network) and a board member of REFA in CT.

"I am excited to join First Niagara, and welcome the opportunity to work with such an accomplished team of lenders," Griffin said. "I have focused on the commercial real estate needs in the Northeast for more than ten years and look forward to putting my market knowledge to work for a community-minded bank with an impressive growth record."

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