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NEWiRE Message: Harnessing the power of perspective

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all know how important it is to keep the big picture in mind. If you only have a narrow view of the industry, your career, etc., you are likely to miss something important. That is why NEWiRE is affiliated with a national organization known as the Commercial Real Estate Women (CREW) Network. Staying on top of national industry trends and making national connections allows us all to broaden our horizons.

For those who may not be aware, CREW Network is the industry's premier business networking organization dedicated to advancing the achievements of women in commercial real estate. It is a national organization with nearly 9,000 members in 74 major markets across North America. Having just returned from the 2013 CREW Network Convention and Marketplace (Oct. 9-12) in Dallas, TX, I have a lot to report.

First and foremost, the theme of this year's convention was "The Power of Perspective." One of the featured speakers was Barbara Corcoran. She is the founder of The Corcoran Group, real estate contributor to NBC's TODAY Show, author, and an investor/shark on ABC's Shark Tank. As one of the most successful entrepreneurs in the country, she took a \$1,000 loan to start The Corcoran Group, which she later sold for \$66 million.

In keeping with the convention theme, Corcoran spoke about how perception is reality. In fact, "The Corcoran Report" initially gained fame due to an inadvertent celebrity referral. More specific to women, she emphasized that "you have the right to be there" when it comes to business, important decisions, capitalizing on your experience and knowledge. Have the courage to walk through the door, she advised. I think there is much to be learned from her gutsy, tell-it-like-it-is attitude!

As president of NEWiRE, I attend the convention in an official capacity. I look for nuggets of wisdom, innovative ideas, and anything else I can bring back and apply to our organization. While there are many activities that take place at the convention, these are a few highlights:

Representation: As a delegate of the New England chapter (NEWiRE), I met with representatives from other CREW Network chapters. This is a great way for us all to compare notes about what is working and what is not working. We also share ideas. As a result, I take note of best practices from other chapters that we may want to consider/implement here at NEWiRE.

Networking: Clearly, with over 1,000 people attending the convention from around the country and a Networking Marketplace in which to gather, there are plenty of opportunities to make new connections. In particular, I sought out some of the experts who presented at the convention. All of them have a great wealth of knowledge and experience, and I am hoping to persuade some of them to come to Boston and enlighten NEWiRE members at future luncheon programs.

Industry Trends: Each convention includes a Capital Markets Overview that covers the debt and equity markets from both the private and public sectors. To summarize, recent trends include multifamily growth, a high demand for old/distressed properties to be converted, and an increase in

micro units. Coincidentally, many of these trends are consistent with what local economist, Barry Bluestone, shared at our NEWiRE September kick-off luncheon.

Another keynote lunch presentation included futurist David Houle talking about what he refers to as "The Shift Age." According to Houle, we are currently in a time of transformation, much of which is being driven by technology and our accelerated electronic connectedness thanks to devices such as tablets and smart phones. He also said we will see the ascendancy of women - when all the economic, cultural and social gender definitions from history will be changed.

This was my fifth year attending the CREW Convention and I think the "Power of Perspective" theme was right on the money. Especially when you consider that the first conventions I went to in 2008 and 2009 were during the dark days of the economic downturn. Now the perception is that things are getting better all around. Let's harness the power of perspective by learning from others, as well as from the past, and use it to shape reality.

To learn more about NEWiRE and upcoming events visit www.newire.org, find us on LinkedIn, or follow us on Twitter @NEWiREBoston.

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