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CREW Awards recognize accomplishments of women

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On April 30, CREW Boston held its 17th annual Achievement Awards at the Fairmont Copley Plaza Hotel, honoring members for their contributions to the Greater Boston real estate industry, the organization, and the community as a whole. This night was a chance to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of our members who have made extraordinary strides in a variety of areas.

Awards and Honorees

* **Leadership Award:** This award recognizes a member who has inspired, motivated and supported CREW Boston year after year and contributed time, energy and talents to the organization as well as the industry at large. This year's honoree was Judith Nitsch, founding principal of Nitsch Engineering. Judy embodies the definition of a leader and has served on a number of boards including her most recent role as the 2014 president of CREW Network. She is a master networker, coach, advisor, mentor and example to all of us in the industry.

* **Networking Award - Business to Business:** This award recognizes a deal or transaction that truly exemplifies the spirit of CREW Boston by demonstrating the success and value of networking. This year's award was presented to the team who collaborated on The Continuum at Barry's Corner in Allston. This strategic partnership was the result of the determination of the team as the first of Harvard's expansion projects in the Allston area. The Continuum is a dynamic mixed-use project opening to the public this summer with 325 rental apartments and 35,000 s/f of ground floor retail and outdoor amenities. The team recognized included: Leslie Cohen, principal, executive vice president of development, Samuels & Associates; Melissa Schrock, formerly development manager at Samuels & Associates, now with Boston Properties; Karen Gray, formerly senior advisor to the executive vice president, Harvard University; Julie Gray, Senior vice president, McCall & Almy; Karen O'Malley, partner, Goulston & Storrs; Sophie Stein, formerly senior commercial transactions counsel, Fidelity, now with Stewart Title; and Elizabeth Lowrey, principal, Elkus Manfredi.

* **Esprit de Coeur Award:** This award recognizes an individual who embodies the goals and mission of CREW Boston and demonstrates a strong commitment to advancing these goals. This year's honoree was Rebecca Bachand of UBLA Site Planner & Landscape Architects. Rebecca is an active member, encouraging others to join and to make the most of membership. She has served on several committees and continues to help others to network and find value in membership.

* **Entrepreneur of the Year:** This award honors a risk taker who strikes out on her own and starts a business venture. This year's honoree was Kirstin Brown, Northstar Project and Real Estate Services. In 2010, Kirstin and four of her partners struck out to start Northstar. As the only female partner, Kirstin serves as an excellent example to CREW Boston and the community of the rewards to be gained from calculated risk taking.

* **Suzanne King Public Service Award:** This award recognizes a member who is committed to strengthening the community through effective action and leadership. This year's honoree was

Susan Gittelman, executive director of B'nai B'rith Housing. Susan has spent more than 30 years bringing affordable housing, jobs and services to greater Boston's underserved communities. With B'nai B'rith, she has worked to provide affordable housing in some of Boston's costliest communities within city limits.

* Professional Service Award: This award honors a member who has demonstrated excellent service and leadership within her organization and to clients and colleagues alike. This year's award recipient was Martha Faigen at Reimer & Braunstein. Martha has spent more than 25 years focused on representing banking and finance regional lenders in commercial real estate transactions.

CREW Boston provides a solid base and supportive environment, along with focused, serious networking and connection-making.

Each year, the Achievement Awards marks the results of women's successes made all the more significant as these successes are acknowledged by their peers. CREW Boston congratulates this year's winners and encourages others to use them as examples of what everyone can achieve with the encouragement of an amazing organization to help drive them to their best work.

To learn more about CREW Boston and upcoming events visit www.crewboston.org or follow us on Twitter @CREWBoston.

Claudia Piper, senior vice president at Webster Bank, is the 2014-2015 president of CREW Boston.

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