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## Real Estate Finance Association October update: Fall programming and REFA Gala

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Shown (from left) are: Travis D’Amato, 2019 REFA president; David Manfredi and Elizabeth Lowrey, 2018 Swain Award recipients; and Paul Ayoub, 2018 REFA president at REFA’s 30th Annual Gala.

Travis D’Amato,  
Walker & Dunlop

On September 20th, REFA held the Annual Fall Conference at the Boston Harbor Hotel. The keynote session and panel discussion focused on the topic of, “Boston as the Center for Economic Development and Innovation.” The keynote speaker Kate Gulliver, global head of talent with Wayfair and Claudia Piper, senior vice president with Webster Bank, and the REFA 2019 president-elect, lead a compelling fireside chat about Wayfair’s strategies to attract top talent to the area and to the company. Todd McGrath, vice president - finance, Boston Properties moderated the panel discussion with speakers Peter Bekarian, managing director, JLL and Yanni Tsipis, senior vice president, WS Development.

REFA is delighted to be honoring Jonathan Davis, founder and CEO of The Davis Cos. at the Annual REFA Gala. As the 31st recipient of the Swain Award, Davis joins a list of award honorees, all of whom have made outstanding contributions to the Greater Boston community, both through their professional career and charitable work. This year’s REFA Gala will be held on October 17th from 5:30 – 9 p.m. at the Westin Copley Place.

The REFA Gala is one of the largest gatherings of the Real Estate Finance Association and brings together over 500 members of the real estate finance community to network with colleagues, reflect on the year, as well as recognize their peer(s) with the Swain Award, named in honor of the late Robert Swain, Jr. More information regarding sponsorships and the event can be found on the REFA homepage or by visiting [www.annualrefagala.com](http://www.annualrefagala.com).

The REFA Mentorship Program is a 7-month program that pairs, young professionals (REFA Emerging Leaders) with senior leaders in the commercial real estate industry. The program will be coming to a close this November following the REFA Annual Holiday Party.

Who We Are: The Real Estate Finance Association (REFA), a division of the Greater Boston Real Estate Board (GBREB), is a commercial real estate business association providing members with high-quality networking and educational opportunities. REFA strives to maintain its reputation for excellence by promoting the exchange of information between professionals in the real estate finance community, fostering a platform for growth and development for its Emerging Leader membership and maintaining a central role within the commercial real estate industry – one that is at the center of it all.

What We Do: Real estate professionals from a variety of institutions join REFA to network and exchange ideas through educational programs, networking events and committee participation. From forums featuring senior-level executives to the Annual Gala, REFA programs are well attended with leaders from the industry and provide excellent opportunities for industry updates and networking. Formed in 1988, REFA currently has over 700 members, 100 corporate sponsors, and hosts 30 educational and networking events per year. REFA has built a strong Emerging Leaders program with a membership of 250 members.

Travis D’Amato is managing director for Walker & Dunlop and the president of REFA, Boston, Mass.

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