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2021 Ones to Watch: Leah Rubega, Associate, Hinckley Allen

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What led you to your current profession? My first job out of law school was at a small firm, where I was exposed to a little bit of everything, from litigation, to employment matters, to real estate deals. While the litigation was thrilling at first, I quickly realized that I loved the real estate side of my practice. In general, it involved two sides working toward the same end – whether an acquisition/sale, a lease, or a development project, at the end (at least with most deals), both sides are satisfied. Every single deal is different, and each deal requires an analysis of both the large and small details to put your client in the best possible position.

What advice can you offer to someone who is interested in a career in your industry? Go to as many industry events as you can and meet people in the field. The real estate world has so many players in a wide range of roles, so it's helpful to ask questions to learn the varying aspects of the industry. I've been very lucky to have great mentors who have exposed me to many different deals, helped developed my skills, and who have advocated for me.

Who or what inspires you? Over the past year, it has been incredible to see how the real estate industry, and society in general, have adapted and adjusted to the most extreme situations. Essentially, overnight, entire industries, businesses and communities had to shift how they operate. There have certainly been difficult obstacles and losses, but there's also been incredible ingenuity and resourcefulness as well. I've seen a renewed sense of community, compassion and collaboration that continues to inspire me.

How do you keep your team motivated despite conflicts and obstacles? Playing sports all of my life, I can't shake the age old adage that I continually heard in various forms: "Adversity to prosperity." It's about learning to love the adversity and challenges that come in life with anything you do, because it's in the adversity that you learn, grow and get better, especially when you are working as part of a team that you trust. Don't get me wrong, I love the easy, straightforward deals, but the difficult deals with complex issues tend to be the most rewarding at the end, because they expand my knowledge and context for future deals and deeper relationships are developed.

Who was/is your mentor and how did s/he influence/help you in your career? Jorie Andrews, a partner at Hinckley Allen, has had a significant influence on my career. When I started at Hinckley Allen, Jorie immediately brought me in on complicated deals and spent a great deal of time developing my skills. She also invited me to marketing events and introduced me to clients and

others in the industry. In a predominantly male career, Jorie is extremely successful at what she does, while also being her authentic self, which has been an important example to me as I progress in my career.

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