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2021 Women in Commercial Real Estate: CREW Boston

September 24, 2021 - Spotlights

CREW Boston's mission is to promote the advancement and parity of women in commercial real estate by:

- Providing excellence in programming and events;
- Building networks and fostering business among members;
- Creating professional and personal growth opportunities for our members throughout all stages of their career; and
- Maintaining the highest degree of integrity in all organizational endeavors.

Kerry Hawkins
Senior Director, Capital Markets
JLL

How has your involvement in CREW Boston impacted your career? My involvement with CREW over the past 20 years began with committee participation, leading to a seat on the Board of Directors, and I'm now the President of this 500 member chapter. I've learned from being a mentor and a mentee, committee chair, and have the opportunity for unmatched networking through our programming. I've gained invaluable leadership skills in my past few years as a board member and in my presidency. The relationships garnered over the past 20 years will last a lifetime.

Patricia Pinto, PE, LSP, LEP
Senior Vice President
Sanborn Head & Associates, Inc.

How has your involvement in CREW Boston impacted your career? CREW Boston is an organization where I feel at home with many colleagues and friends, and my involvement has really enhanced my network within the industry. I also find it quite inspiring to work closely with strong women leaders. I have learned a great deal from my CREW Boston colleagues about effective leadership and networking, which has helped me to achieve many of my career goals.

Laura Gregoriadis

Partner

DGC LLP (DiCicco, Gulman & Company)

In the past year, what project, transaction or accomplishment are you most proud of? I am most proud of CREW Boston's accomplishments during my term as President for 2020-2021. Leading any organization during a pandemic is difficult but our committees and Board rose to the challenge to have an incredibly successful year. We also took this time to look inward, review our governance structure and policies, and consider our value proposition to members and sponsors. The Board engaged in many conversations that helped us better define our goals and improve the way we operate. As a result, I believe we are a stronger organization that will continue to thrive for years to come.

Maureen McCaffrey

Director

MIT Investment Management Company

In the past year, what project, transaction or accomplishment are you most proud of? I'm fortunate to work in an organization focused on fostering the innovation environment in Cambridge and surrounding MIT. I'm enormously proud of our recent completion of 238 Main Street which continues the transformation of Main Street. It's exciting to learn about the tremendous research that will take place in this amazing new space to advance much-needed cures and therapies.

Anna Dastgheib-Beheshti

Senior Civil Engineer

Arup

What is the best advice you have received, and who was it from? During an award recognition speech earlier this year, Maureen McDonough (Deputy Chief of Contract Services at the MBTA) told us to remember: "You belong anywhere you want to be." Immediately after I heard this, I wrote it on a post-it and stuck it to my computer monitor. This little note has helped remind me every day that no matter what causes self-doubt to creep up, whether it be an issue with a project or just being a little unsure about a decision, if I believe in myself and I know that I want to succeed - no one and nothing is allowed to make me feel otherwise.

Michelle Callahan
Project Manager
Nitsch Engineering

What led you to your current profession? I began working at Nitsch Engineering as a co-op student and fell in love with land development. I always knew I wanted to do something environmentally focused with my civil engineering degree, and the opportunities at Nitsch allow me to use engineering to develop sites and infrastructure projects in a sustainable way. I love how every site has its own unique challenges, and I'm able to come up with low impact, sustainable solutions, particularly when it comes to stormwater management design.

Maddie Carens
Senior Advisor
Perry CRE

How has your involvement in CREW Boston impacted your career? Being a member of CREW for the past 4.5 years has impacted my career in numerous ways, and the mission of CREW is very important to me personally. As a female broker in a male-dominated industry, I have learned first-hand the importance of advancing and advocating for women's careers in commercial real estate. CREW's annual programming is always top-notch and has greatly expanded my knowledge of the dynamic CRE industry; I consistently have opportunities to sharpen my networking skills and build professional and personal relationships with other women in the industry. My involvement with CREW has been a cornerstone of my professional development; leading a committee, meeting women from all sectors of the industry, and engaging in female mentorship programs has helped me grow into a well-rounded asset for my team and clients.

Dianne Crocker
Principal Analyst
Lightbox

What are some of the benefits of being a mentor or having a mentor? I started LightBox's Developing Leaders mentor program three years ago because I'm passionate about helping young professionals, especially women, to ensure the ongoing success of our industry for the next generation. I had the good fortune of having a great early mentor in my career, and after three decades, he's still a trusted advisor. A good mentor will dare you to dream, push you toward goals, help recalibrate as needed, connect you with veterans who have the skills you aspire to, and candidly give advice and encouragement. These skills can be a game changer for a young professional. I encourage anyone starting out to find a mentor through an organization like CREW Boston. The sooner you start building your own personal Board of Directors and seeking out the advice of veterans, the better. Professional networks are like a 401k: the earlier you start, the more valuable they become over time.

Karen Hurd, CCIM
Senior Business Development
Manager | National Accounts
AEI Consultants

How has your involvement in CREW Boston impacted your career? Investing time in CREW Boston has enabled me to build a vast network of commercial real estate professionals with a shared common goal. CREW Boston also connected me to CREW's Global Network which also expanded my vast network, allowed me to participate in professional and leadership development training and presented public speaking and new career opportunities. Investing in CREW opens more than just doors.

Liz Nyman
First Vice President, Client Services
CBRE

How has your involvement in CREW Boston impacted your career? I am a proud alum of the

2018-2019 CREW Leadership Academy program, which remains the most meaningful professional experience I have ever had. I continue to draw upon the lessons I learned and cherish the relationships I made (and we still get together for drinks.) Overall, CREW has been a professional catalyst for me; I've embraced more and more opportunities to lead, both inside the office and out. It's gratifying to see how professional growth can reverberate throughout the rest of your life.

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