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## **Roger Williams University real estate symposium to be held on April 25th**

March 08, 2024 - Rhode Island



Gabe Amo

Phil Mobley

Heather Boujoulian

Providence, RI The real estate industry faces powerful forces including destabilizing rises in interest rates, city-altering office space vacancies, high inflation in material and labor costs, shortages of affordable, basic housing, and major shifts in how we live and work. These complications also present unique opportunities to pivot from a business-as-usual philosophy and reimagine real estate development, investment, use and reuse as the 21st century progresses.

The second annual Roger Williams University Cummings Institute for Real Estate Symposium on Thursday, April 25, will bring together leading experts in construction, planning, real estate, and

sustainability to discuss industry challenges, current trends, and potential rewarding opportunities in the rapidly changing real estate industry. The symposium – The Real Estate Industry in 2024: Challenges, Opportunities, and Strategies – will take place from 11:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. at District Hall, 225 Dyer St.

“Real estate is everywhere that we live, work, shop and play. All of these everyday facets of our lives are changing, and real estate must adapt to the new paradigms. Within the real estate education program and the Cummings Institute for Real Estate at Roger Williams University, we explore these issues every day,” said Richard Godfrey, the Institute’s executive director. “At our annual symposium, we bring together some of most experienced and knowledgeable individuals in the real estate industry to discuss and offer insight into these complex forces and their impacts on our economy and communities.”

Opportunities and potential strategies will be the focus of the discussion. Expert speakers and panelists will consider how to reuse vacant office space in urban areas; reflect on the evolution of retail development and the impact of e-commerce on this sector; and strategize how to balance the need for affordable and multifamily housing development with the uncertainty of investment and competitive rates of return.

The program will include a luncheon, networking reception, and opening remarks by congressman Gabe Amo, who represents Rhode Island’s First District in the U.S. House of Representatives. Drawing from his nearly 20 years serving the commercial real estate industry as a researcher, analyst, and consultant, Phil Mobley, national director of office analytics at CoStar, will deliver the keynote address. Heather Boujoulian ’97, managing director and chief investment officer of development Investments at Berkshire Residential Investments, will serve as master of ceremonies.

The symposium presents an opportunity for real estate professionals working in the various professions related to development, design, construction, and sales to connect with colleagues and discuss strategies for moving forward with increased profitability.

The day will also showcase poster presentations exploring new ideas and solutions in real estate development from RWU’s Real Estate graduate students.

The RWU Cummings Institute for Real Estate was established in 2022, in part, by a \$20 million gift of Cummings Foundation. Through the Cummings Institute for Real Estate, RWU has launched a Real Estate Program that meets the challenges of multi-faceted design, preservation, real estate and related career paths. The program boasts an interconnected portfolio of academic programs across RWU’s nationally recognized architecture, construction management, engineering, investment and financing, preservation, and law programs. With its interdisciplinary focus and approach to problem-solving, the program prepares students with a deep knowledge of the natural and built environments, grounded in an innovative framework of social impact, sustainability, and community planning.

For more information and to register for the 2024 Real Estate Symposium,

visit <https://www.rwu.edu/symposium-real-estate>.

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