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## **2024 Women in CRE: Jennifer Defreest, Cresa Boston**

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Jennifer Defreest  
Principal, Marketing & Operations

What challenges have you faced as a woman in commercial real estate? In an industry where revenue-producing roles often dominate decision-making, it can be difficult to demonstrate the strategic impact of marketing, operations, and other specialty and supportive functions. I've overcome this by consistently showing how my work drives results, whether it's by enhancing brand visibility, improving client engagement, or creating streamlined processes that support overall business growth. Building relationships and being proactive in communicating my successes have also been key. By consistently advocating for the value of non-brokerage roles and aligning my efforts with the company's strategic goals, I've been able to earn a seat at the table and make a meaningful impact.

What advice do you have for young women aspiring to enter commercial real estate? For young women aspiring to enter commercial real estate, my key advice is to actively seek out a mentor early on. A good mentor can offer guidance, support, and valuable industry insights, helping you navigate challenges and accelerate your growth. Building strong mentor/mentee relationships fosters continuous learning and opens doors to networking opportunities. Networking is essential in commercial real estate, as it helps you stay informed, develop relationships, and find new opportunities. Be proactive, invest time in your network, and focus on long-term, meaningful connections. These relationships will be instrumental in your career success.