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## **2024 Women in CRE: Nicole Stenclik, Akrete**

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Nicole Stenclik  
President

What recent project, transaction, or accomplishment are you most proud of? I am most proud of helping to lead Akrete's growth and scalability of our flexible work model over the last two years – a model that we have been pioneering since 2011, long before it was popular to do so. After making a significant operational and cultural shift to focus more on profitability, Akrete achieved a 5% increase in profitability and 6% revenue growth in the first year. This was a significant achievement given more than 75% of our client portfolio is in the commercial real estate sector, which experienced significant disruption from COVID and interest rate volatility. We achieved this while continuing to deliver exceptional results and value for our CRE clients, and within our culture that empowers team members to embrace our flexible, hybrid model.

What challenges have you faced as a woman in commercial real estate? I have been incredibly fortunate to be supported and mentored by incredible role models over my almost two decades in this business, most of whom have been women. Early in my career, I certainly felt a bit of imposter syndrome being one of the only women in room with our male-dominated CRE and financial services clients. However, this made me want to constantly prove myself, which in the end helped me learn more and build my confidence much faster. As a mother of three young children, I have also struggled with balancing work and family, but this is why I am so passionate about building Akrete's unique flexible work model.

What advice do you have for young women aspiring to enter commercial real estate? My biggest piece of advice is to keep an open mind, prioritize working with good people who inspire you and always embrace a challenge. When I started my career, I expected to enter a consumer lifestyle industry, but what was most important to me was finding company where the people were smart, kind and supportive, with a culture where I could learn a lot. This led me to truly finding my passion in B2B communications, particularly for commercial real estate and financial services businesses. By keeping an open mind and embracing for opportunities to take on new I have been able to follow a path – with some unexpected twists and turns – to exactly where I am supposed to be in this moment.

Why should this nominee be recognized in our Women in Commercial Real Estate Spotlight?

"Nicole Stenclik deserves this recognition for her leadership as the first president of Akrete, our agency focused on commercial real estate, financial services and professional services. She is a thoughtful, empathetic leader with the ability to navigate complex client relationships, and dedication to fostering a flexible, people-centric workplace. As a trusted advisor to C-Suite executives and a key driver of Akrete's success, Nicole has helped elevate the firm to become one of the top PR agencies in the country. Her role as a mentor, culture carrier, and advocate for women also makes her an inspiring role model and leader." - Margy Sweeney, CEO at Akrete.