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2024 Women in CRE: Kaitlin McCarthy, Ionic Development Company

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Kaitlin McCarthy
Founder and CEO

What is your vision for the future of women in commercial real estate? I look forward to the day when women in commercial real estate ownership roles is the norm. Taking the leap to establish Ionic Development was a risk and has made me one of the only women-owned development companies in Boston. Women have the power to be owners and, in turn, shape the futures of both their careers and commercial development as an industry. While I'm honored to be recognized by awards like this, I eagerly await the day when such distinctions are no longer necessary because true equality has been achieved.

What advice do you have for young women aspiring to enter commercial real estate? Live life outside your comfort zone. Since starting a business, I've realized how important this is to building a company, but this can apply to young women within all stages of their commercial real estate career. Be bold and introduce yourself to established leaders, and always dedicate time towards your own personal development. I spend 99% of my time outside my comfort zone, and I've found that is an essential, yet often uncomfortable, part of being successful.

What challenges have you faced as a woman in commercial real estate? As a young woman in commercial real estate, I realized very quickly I did not have any female role models to look up to for advice. There were few women who could set me on the path towards leadership or growth, simply because there weren't any female leaders in the roles I dreamt of having. I had to make the path myself, trusting in my strengths, experience, and knowledge to get to where I always wanted to be. I'm proud of what I have achieved and of all the great work Ionic is doing, but it's undoubtedly been challenging to forge my own future with minimal reference points.