



CELEBRATING
55 YEARS

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2025 Women in CRE: Briana Pinheiro, Ionic Development Company

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Briana Pinheiro
Partner + Senior Vice President

What has been the most rewarding project or deal you've worked on in your career, and why? The most rewarding project I've worked on has been Moderna's Cambridge headquarters fit-out. Coming out of COVID, it was an incredibly exciting time to help build a life science research lab that was gaining so much momentum and attention worldwide. To be part of something that had such a direct connection to the global recovery was both humbling and motivating. The fast-paced environment, combined with the knowledge that our work supported groundbreaking science, made it especially meaningful in my career.

What drew you to commercial real estate, and what keeps you passionate? I've always had a passion for the built environment. Starting out in mechanical engineering, I was fascinated by how buildings come together and the collaboration it takes to put just one on the skyline. Even as a teenager, I'd find myself studying structures and imagining being part of the process. What keeps me passionate is that every project tells its own story. The legacy of creating something that lasts, and the variety that comes with each new challenge, continues to inspire me every day.

What's a challenge you faced early in your career, and how did you overcome it? An early challenge in my career was shifting from engineering to development. Engineering taught me to focus on technical precision and details, which had many benefits, but development required stepping back to see the big picture – overseeing the strategy, vision, and how all the moving parts connect. It wasn't always natural to pull myself out of the weeds, but I learned to trust my instincts and adapt my mindset. Over time, I realized that my technical foundation gave me credibility while the broader view made me more effective.

What advice would you give to a woman considering a career in commercial real estate? My biggest advice is that if you love it, jump in full steam ahead. Commercial real estate is a grind – it's hard work and takes tenacity, persistence, and a deep well of passion and patience. If you don't genuinely connect to your work, the challenges will wear you down. But if you do, it's an incredibly rewarding field. Don't underestimate the value of your unique perspective – your voice matters, and you're in the room for a reason. Own it, lean into your strengths, and let that passion carry you forward.