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The Real Estate Exchange is a member run organization dedicated to serving its constituents

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There is no question that 2009 will be fraught with challenges for those of us in the commercial real estate industry. Networking within the industry has taken on a heightened level of importance, and there is no better organization at it than The Real Estate Exchange.

The Real Estate Exchange has a long, proud history as a networking organization for Connecticut commercial real estate professionals, having celebrated its 20th anniversary in October 2007. REX, as it is referred to by many of its members, is the Connecticut affiliate of CREW Network, a business organization dedicated to the advancement of women in commercial real estate, with members located in 66 major markets across North America. Although REX has been in existence two years longer than CREW Network, REX's mission is consistent with CREW Network's. REX, however, is a co-ed organization and has historically had a high level of participation from men. The Real Estate Exchange is a member-run organization that is dedicated to serving its constituents and, in doing so, has not raised its annual dues in several years, in part as a response to the current economic climate.

In the first quarter of 2009, the Blue Ribbon and Program Committees, chaired by Richard Meehan of Meehan & Goodin Engineers and Surveyors, P.C., and Janet Wheeler of Diversified Project Management, respectively, will plan the Annual Connecticut Real Estate Awards & Developers Showcase. The organization's premier event will take place on Wednesday, March 25, 2009 at the Connecticut Convention Center, with the Developers Showcase, a cash bar, hors d'oeuvres and networking from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., followed by the presentation of the Connecticut Real Estate Awards at 7 p.m. The Connecticut Real Estate Awards & Developers Showcase is Connecticut's only exhibition focusing solely on commercial real estate development.

Other events that are open to non-members are public forums in May and November and the State of the State in September. Members-only events, which are smaller and more intimate, are professional development seminars of general interest to the membership, the annual summer and fall socials, and the annual holiday party.

Of particular interest in 2009 is the CREW Network Convention and Marketplace which will take place in Boston - right in the backyard of The Real Estate Exchange. This good news has led to the formation of a special committee, the 2009 Convention Committee. The 2009 Convention Committee will be chaired by Jennifer Gosselin of CB-Richard Ellis and will be charged with motivating a critical mass of The Real Estate Exchange membership to attend the national convention.

In addition to Meehan, . Wheeler and Gosselin, the 2009 Real Estate Exchange executive committee consists of Sara Taylor of Murtha Cullina LLP, president; Monika Avery of The S/L/A/M Collaborative, vice president/president-elect/co-national delegate; Diana MacPherson of Robinson &

Cole LLP, immediate past president/sponsorship committee chair; Karl Badey of Blum Shapiro, treasurer; Jennifer Haddad of Cohn, Birnbaum & Shea, P.C., co-national delegate; Robert MacDuff of Triton Environmental, Inc., membership committee chair; Jennifer Rockwell of Murtha Cullina LLP, professional development committee chair; and Ann Melite of Tecton Architects, public relations committee chair.

Anyone interested in learning more about membership in The Real Estate Exchange should contact membership committee chair Robert MacDuff at rmacduff@tritonenvironmental.com, or membership committee vice chair Tiffany Stevens at tstevens@mccarter.com, and anyone interested in learning more about sponsorship opportunities should contact sponsorship committee chair Diana MacPherson at dmacpherson@rc.com. The Real Estate Exchange has been able to deliver high quality programming to its members and non-members in large part because of the support of its sponsors. REX's three sponsorship levels are designed to be affordable and manageable for businesses. The names of all sponsors are highly visible at all REX events. Penthouse Level Sponsorships for 2009 are available for \$2,000, and, in addition to the recognition and acknowledgment that all sponsors receive, they entitle the sponsoring companies to seven certificates for attendance at any REX events. Executive Sponsorships (\$1,500; five certificates) and Boardroom Sponsorships (\$750; two certificates) are also available.

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