



# WX NEWS

NEW YORK  
WOMEN EXECUTIVES  
IN REAL ESTATE

SPRING 2019

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER



At WX, our mission is our compass. As I reflect on the past 10 months as President, I am proud to report that we continue due north, as evidenced by the following:

- WX membership remains coveted and we welcomed 17 new members in our October and February cohorts. These new members represent an expansion of each of our networks and affirms the valuable place that WX creates for New York women to support and advance one another in the world of commercial real estate.
- We had record attendance at our monthly breakfast programs, half of which were completely sold out. The topics are consistently engaging and help to keep us informed of relevant industry topics and trends.
- We awarded \$144,000 in scholarship funding to 15 students and admitted a total of 31 students to the Program this year. Our mentoring program thrives, with mentees and mentors forging lasting bonds and providing a much-needed support system for our WX Scholars. These women are the future leaders in the world of NYC commercial real estate, and our investment in them will pay dividends. If you have not served as a mentor, consider signing up to do so in the Fall.
- WX continues to give back with its partnership with Non-traditional Employment for Women. We learned basic construction techniques from the women of NEW at a February event, where we found ourselves humbled by their stories of overcoming poverty, lack of education, and other challenges. Today, these same women are working in the construction trades and proudly supporting their families.
- We have 114 dedicated volunteers that serve on our eight committees. Our enhanced and expanding social media presence provides us a means to share our mission with a broader audience.
- We have fun together and celebrate each other's individual success, every chance we get.

It is my hope that you find meaning in your membership and speak often and proudly of being a member of WX. Your membership carries a responsibility with it: as leaders in the industry and WX members, you can be an advocate for women within our organization and the broader field. I have two suggestions to consider adopting in that regard that, in addition to everything else that WX does, can help us advance our mission.

The first is "amplification," a simple tactic that can lift our fellow women while combatting unconscious biases that may be at play. This concept gained traction in President Obama's White House. In 2016, Juliet Eilperin of The Washington Post reported the following anecdote:

"When President Obama took office, two-thirds of his top aides were men. Women complained of having to elbow their way into important meetings. And when they got in, their voices were sometimes ignored. So female staffers adopted a meeting strategy they called "amplification": When a woman made a key point, other women would repeat it, giving credit to its author. This forced the men in the

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## ANNOUNCING THE 2019 WOMAN OF THE YEAR HONOREE: PAULA SCHAEFER



WX Inc. is excited to announce this year's honoree for the Annual Woman of the Year Gala is Paula Schaefer, Senior Vice President at Clarion Partners. The Gala will be held on November 14, 2019 at The Pierre Hotel. Paula has been an

active player in the commercial real estate industry for more than 25 years and is a dedicated leader within WX Inc. Paula is a past President of WX Inc., has consistently been a leader on the WX Scholars Program and Mentoring Committees, including the Summer Internship Grant Program, and has served on the Charitable Fund Board of Directors. As a long-time member of WX, Paula has been an inspiration and a consistent voice for the development of young women entering and advancing their careers in all aspects of the real estate profession.

Clarion Partners is one of the world's largest real estate investment managers, offering a broad range of real estate strategies across the risk-return spectrum. It is distinguished by a performance-driven approach, organizational stability and a mandate of accountability to their clients. They invest in high quality properties: office, retail, industrial, multifamily, residential and hotel. Clarion boasts \$50.3 billion in total assets under management and 350+ domestic and international institutional investors.

Paula joined Clarion as Chief Operating Officer of the Client Capital Management Group in April 2013. Prior to joining Clarion Partners, Paula was COO of Christie's International Real Estate. She was a Managing Director at Morgan Stanley Real Estate, where she worked from 1995 to 2010 in a variety of roles in Asset Management, Fund Management and Investor Relations, in both New York and London. Paula has an MBA from the Wharton School and an undergraduate degree from Georgetown University. She has been an Adjunct Professor of Real Estate at Columbia University. **WX**

>> TO READ THE FULL WX WOMAN OF THE YEAR PRESS RELEASE, VISIT [wxnyre.com/news](http://wxnyre.com/news)

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER CONTINUED

room to recognize the contribution — and denied them the chance to claim the idea as their own. “We just started doing it, and made a purpose of doing it. It was an everyday thing,” said one former Obama aide who requested anonymity to speak frankly. Obama noticed, she and others said, and began calling more often on women and junior aides.” During Obama’s second term, Eilperin noted, women finally gained parity with men in Obama’s inner circle and determined that the “amplification” strategy seemed to be paying off. Adopting this strategy of amplification can be very powerful. So the next time you find that you or other women are interrupted, given less credit or even chastised for speaking out, try amplification and see what traction you gain.

The second is for WX members to adopt our own version of the “Mansfield Rule.” The Mansfield Rule is an initiative that requires law firms to affirmatively consider qualified women and lawyers of color for significant leadership roles and responsibilities. It was inspired by the NFL’s Rooney Rule, which was created by the late Dan Rooney in 2003 and is now supported by his son, Art Rooney II, President of the Pittsburgh Steelers. The Rooney Rule requires every NFL team to interview at least one minority candidate for head coach vacancies. In the years following its implementation, the number of minorities hired to fill head-coach roles doubled. New research, which controlled for other factors that may have contributed to this positive outcome, shows that a diverse candidate is about 20 percent more likely to fill an NFL head coaching vacancy during the Rooney era than before the rule was introduced. The Mansfield Rule certifies that law firms consider at least 30% women, LBGTQ+ and minority lawyers for significant leadership positions. A number of our WX members belong to law firms that are participating in the Mansfield Rule certification process. (Note: The Mansfield Rule is named after Arabella Mansfield, the first woman lawyer in the U.S., in an effort to close the gap in leadership roles for women and minorities in Big Law.)

We can call our version of this rule simply, “WX First”, in which those that are so inclined will challenge themselves to consider at least one qualified WX member for any business referral opportunity. I’m sure this experiment will yield many positive outcomes for you and your firms.

As we strive to fulfill our mission to promote the advancement of women in commercial real estate, enhance the public perception of the role

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## NEW MEMBERS

**WX IS PLEASED TO WELCOME THE FOLLOWING WOMEN WHO HAVE BEEN ADMITTED TO MEMBERSHIP SINCE JANUARY 1, 2019:**

**Marissa Ballan**  
CitizenM Hotels

**Gemma Burgess**  
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**Adriana de Alcantara**  
TH Real Estate

**Abbe Franchot-Borok**  
Amherst Capital

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*WX is proud of the diversity of its membership and seeks applicants with a variety of backgrounds and experiences in the real estate industry.*

of women within the industry and promote the highest standards of professionalism, ethics and integrity in the field, let’s see if “amplification” and “WX First” can help us move the needle forward for all women in NYC’s real estate industry. I look forward to hearing from each of you and collecting success stories in the months to come.

**-BETH ZAFONTE, WX PRESIDENT WX**

## WX SCHOLARS PROGRAM: ANNOUNCING THE 2018-19 SCHOLARS AWARD RECIPIENTS

WX is delighted to announce the selection of the WX Scholars for the 2018-2019 academic year. In addition to sixteen merit awards, financial grants and awards were made to another fifteen women on the basis of both need and merit, totaling \$144,000 and resulting in awards being granted to 31 women from 13 schools. The Scholars awards are given to accomplished women at the completion of their undergraduate or graduate degree programs who are entering the real estate profession in the New York City area. Since the program launched in 2004, WX has awarded scholarships to 269 women at 15 schools totaling \$1.26 million.

WX would like to thank the members of the Scholars Program Committee, co-chaired by Maria Kastanis and Jennifer Schwartzman, who dedicated their time to work with the schools and review and interview applicants to recommend for awards.

Congratulations to the following recipients:

### City College of New York

Alexandra Bilinski  
Yu ‘Nikki’ Cheng  
Alyssa Martori  
Anna Speidel

### Columbia University

Emily Berg  
Hanna Cassorla  
Kate Cioffari  
Marisa Rodriguez

### Cornell University

Lauren Leizman  
Lauren Palazzola

### Fordham University

Olivia Pizzo  
Jill Weston

### Georgetown University

Adriana Fini

### Harvard University

Kim Bernardin  
Diana Fedorova  
Malia Teske

### Lehigh University

Morgan McCuaig

### New York Law School

Na'Asia Cobb  
Brittany Young

### New York University

Jessica Giguere  
Julie Gresack  
Emily McLarney  
Kendra White  
Michelle Wigder  
Christine Yip

### Pratt Institute

Cetera Dimanche

### Rutgers University

Omayra Echenique

### University of Pennsylvania

Christie Chen  
Sydney Howard  
Julia Sher

### Wellesley College

Michaela Rhile

## PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE: WINTER 2019 RECAP

The breakfast series this winter/spring featured a unique blend of compelling discussions around curated topics along with stellar networking at the Harvard Club. These breakfasts are well attended by WX members and their guests, and always provide important and relevant industry information. In January, Robert White, President and Founder of Real Capital Analytics, kicked off the series with his annual **"Market Update"** and analysis of trends. **"The Future of Transportation and Its Effect on Urban Centers"** was the topic of the February panel, moderated by Mimi Raygorodetsky of Langan. Panelists Ruchika Modi of PAU, Sabrina Kanner of Brookfield, Patrick Mondt of Uber, and Karen Lightman of Metro 21 discussed transportation trends in urban centers and their revolutionary effects on the way people live, work and travel. In March, the topic was **"Changing the Game: How NYC Leads the World Through Inclusive Innovation."** Speakers Ana Ariño, NYCEDC's Executive Vice

## GET (& STAY) CONNECTED

Stay connected with WX through our website, at [wxnyre.com](http://wxnyre.com), and log into the Member Portal from the website, where you can register for upcoming programs and events, update your member profile, access the Member Directory, read member news and access the Job Board.

Follow us on LinkedIn



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**Changed positions? Have new contact details? Have a new headshot you'd like to use? Make sure we can all stay in touch by updating your profile through the Member Portal. It's easy! For help, email [info@wxnyre.com](mailto:info@wxnyre.com)**



President and Chief Strategy Officer, Rachel Loeb, NYCEDC's Chief Operating Officer, and Miriam Harris, Executive Vice President at Trinity Holdings spoke about the EDC's groundbreaking projects as well as specific job-creation and venture-funding initiatives that promote women in New York City. Next the April breakfast focused on one of EDC's pivotal partnerships entitled **"Essex Crossing – Crossing Delancy 45 Years Later."** Charles Bendit of Taconic Investment Partners, Margaret Chinwe Anadu of Goldman Sachs' Urban Investment Group, Gigi Li of the office of Council Member Margaret Chin, and Sara Tranter of the NYCEDC participated in an insightful discussion



of this signature development moderated by Karen Scanna of Stroock & Stroock & Lavan LLP. The final topic of the series, **"Life Sciences in Real Estate: The Challenges and Opportunities in NYC"** featured a detailed presentation of the data surrounding the demand for life sciences space as well as a robust discussion regarding the early-stage complexities of an important growth sector in NYC. Speakers included Steve Purpura of CBRE, Inc, Colleen O'Connor of BioMed, Nancy J Kelley of Nancy J. Kelley & Associates, Susan Solomon of the NY Stem Cell Foundation Research Institute, and Doug Thiede of NYCEDC.

The WX Program Committee welcomes suggestions for topics for our breakfast program. You may reach out to the Program Co-chairs, Miriam Harris at [Miriam.harris@tphs.com](mailto:Miriam.harris@tphs.com) or Elise Wagner [ewagner@kramerlevin.com](mailto:ewagner@kramerlevin.com). **WX**

## 2019 MENTORING PROGRAM RECAP

The WX Mentoring Program, designed to support and develop young women as they begin their real estate careers, recently completed its seventh year. Throughout the year, the 35 Mentor-Mentee pairs met at WX-sponsored events as well as informally, to share work experiences, provide guidance and build networks. Recent Mentees shared their thoughts below on the value of this program.

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“ **The WX Mentoring program provides an unparalleled opportunity for young women starting in the industry to meet and network with senior women. WX members who serve as mentors genuinely care about the professional development of their mentees; my mentors have shown this by not only providing advice, but making introductions, advocating for me, and coaching me through interviews and difficult moments in my career. The WX Mentoring Committee puts significant thought and effort into making mentorship pairings that will provide an opportunity for a meaningful, professional relationship for both women involved.** ”

- Lena Duffield

“ **As a WX mentee, I have been privileged in many ways. I have learned and interacted with my mentors, Susan Swanezy and Carly Miller, whom I admire for their professional and personal achievements and esteem for being key advisers in my career transition and growth as a Project Manager. I also had unique educational and networking opportunities in the breakfast and workshops events that I attended, and which were led by the most influential industry leaders. I look forward to becoming part of the next WX generation.** ”

- Maibi Rojas

“ **Being a WX mentee is a life changing experience. I walked out of every event feeling empowered, and more conscious to support other women around me. During the first half of my fellowship, I was hesitant to ask for 2 hours off from work. Fast forward to the second half, I was eager to promote WX at my company and have even brought in women executives and VPs to our events. Every one of the intelligent, delightful WX women leaders I have met always offers me genuine insights. Not only do I have a clearer aspiration, I now know my value and feel braver. I'm extremely grateful to WX for opening up doors and broadening my perspective.** ”

- Wei Zhang

The Mentoring Committee hosted 3 events this winter designed specifically for Mentors and Mentees:

**Building Value Ground-Up** | On February 25th, Tracey Gamble, Managing Director at Apollo Global Management, and Jackie Renton, Senior Director at Atlas Capital Group, shared best practices for developing, operating and maintaining real estate assets. The small group

## WX NETWORKING RECEPTIONS



format elicited wide-ranging dialogue, covering real life examples of what works and why, lessons learned, and pitfalls to avoid.

**Making it in Real Estate** | Held on March 29th, this program was designed to offer Mentees an intimate environment to ask questions, discuss issues and seek advice from WX Mentors and WX member Dana Roffman of Angelo, Gordon & Co., who hosted the open-mike roundtable. Mentees submitted questions in advance that provided the springboard for active conversations on how to navigate being a woman in the workplace and, more specifically, in the real estate business.



**SPIN** | The Mentoring Program capped-off the year with its final event at SPIN New York on May 1st. Mentors and Mentees celebrated at SPIN NY with a combination of competitive ping-pong matches, networking and refreshments. Participants stepped up their games with tips from ping pong professionals, with some Mentors and Mentees taking home prizes. This popular event was the perfect way to celebrate the relationships built over the last year. **WX**

## NETWORKING: WINTER EVENTS RECAP

The WX Networking Committee had an active winter hosting various events for members to get to know each other and to hone various skills, including networking capabilities and effectively promoting oneself for career advancement. We kicked off 2019 with the WX Post-Holiday party on January 8, 2019. The event was well attended and offered an opportunity for members to mix and mingle while having a professional headshot taken and enjoying tarot card readings. The venue was terrific, thanks to KPMG, which generously allowed us to use their entertaining space on Park Avenue.

In February, we hosted a Moderator/Panelist Training program. This program was led by professional development coaches Steve Felix and Liz Weiner of Felix/Weiner Consulting. The program, which comprised two days of training in a small, interactive setting, focused on developing and enhancing presentation skills in a panel

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setting. The goal was to help participants build confidence while learning specific techniques for powerful presentations.

On April 1st, the Committee hosted its first WX-sponsored Advocacy Panel, which focused on compensation, promotion and professional success. The panel was led by WX Member Marjorie Tsang and included Suzanne West of Epic Advisory, LLC, whose consulting practice focuses on these areas of expertise. Other panelists and co-hosts included Eliza Kaiser, Emily Von Kohorn, and WX members Beth Demba, Onay Payne, and Gemma Burgess. We would like to thank the participants and guests for offering great tips and discussion around how to better promote ourselves to achieve our desired success.

In an effort to provide our members the opportunity to learn valuable networking skills, WX hosted its second speed networking event on May 15th. With help from The Latimer Group, the attendees learned techniques for working the room, finding common interests to spark conversations, and ways to communicate effectively in short periods of time. This event has been very well attended for the past two years and will likely be part of our networking program next year as well.

Finally, we look forward to hosting the WX Summer Outing again at the Westchester Country Club on June 11, 2019. The Summer Outing will begin at 2:30 pm, with guests' choice of two hours of golf or tennis clinics with experienced professionals, or a round of golf. The day will conclude with a cocktail reception at the Club. The event is open to members, Scholars and guests (both men and women). Invitations have been sent and we hope to see you all there!

If you have any questions about the Networking Committee, please contact Amy Boyle at [aboyle@gtispartners.com](mailto:aboyle@gtispartners.com) or Jean Marie Apruzzese at [jmapruzzese@draadvisors.com](mailto:jmapruzzese@draadvisors.com). **WX**

## PHILANTHROPY COMMITTEE UPDATE:

WX continued to support and engage with Non-Traditional Employment for Women (NEW) in a networking event held at the end of February 2019 in NEW's classrooms. WX members learned how to properly saw wood cuts (with band-aids at the ready) and listened to the stories of NEW students in informal conversations as well as solo speeches. The students relayed extremely moving stories of hardship and determination as low-income women of color who found a new life trajectory with the encouragement, training and construction-industry connections provided by NEW. All of us who attended the event were very proud that WX supports NEW and the opportunities NEW creates for these women. NEW was also present at the WX May breakfast, represented by Micheline Hill, an electrician, and Erik Antokal, Assistant Vice-President of Programs at NEW, who gave a brief presentation about NEW and encouraged everyone to attend NEW's upcoming luncheon on June 20th, 2019. We will continue to look for ways to engage with NEW, including inviting NEW to participate on a panel at a WX breakfast in the Fall or Winter.

We invite you to suggest other organizations that fit WX's philanthropic mission of promoting the development, hiring and advancement of women in the real estate industry, while also being able to offer activities that foster meaningful engagement

with our membership. Please forward any suggestions to Livia Corredor at [livia.corredor@brookfieldproperties.com](mailto:livia.corredor@brookfieldproperties.com). **WX**

## MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

**WE ARE SO PROUD OF OUR ACCOMPLISHED MEMBERS AND WANT TO SHARE THEIR SUCCESSES WITH YOU. HERE ARE A FEW STANDOUTS:**

**Terri Adler, Sonia Kaur Bain, Nina Rokat, Karen Scanna, and Elise Wagner** were named in Crain's New York in their feature "Notable Women in Law 2019."

**Hope Knight** was named to the Census 2020 Action Committee of the Association for a Better New York (ABNY).

**Christine Chipurnoi**, Senior Vice President, USI Insurance Services, was honored on March 28 by the Long Island Business Journal as one of the Premier Business Women of Long Island.

**Suzanne St. Pierre** was named to Law360's Real Estate Editorial Advisory Board.

**Sonia Kaur Bain, Kate Bicknell, Meg Brod, Julia Butler, MaryAnne Gilmartin, Laurie Golub, Marion Jones, Lesley Lisser, Rachel Loeb, Joanne Podell, Laura Rapaport, Nina Rokat, Amy Rose, Darcy Stacom, Robin Topol and Beth Zafonte** and were named as Bisnow's Power Women New York 2019.

**Carri Lyon, Nina Rokat, and Elise Wagner** were honored at the 2019 The Mann Charitable Foundation's Annual Leading Ladies event.

WX President **Beth Zafonte** will be speaking at the inaugural GlobeSt Women of Influence conference in Broomfield, Colorado on June 10th. Beth and other influential leaders will be speaking about the critical issues facing commercial real estate today.

## MEMBERS ON THE MOVE

**Lola Bellini** was promoted to Director from Vice President of Acquisitions at Wafra Inc.

**Catherine Chen** was promoted to Managing Director at Apollo Global Management.

**Clare Newman** was named President and CEO of the Trust for Governors Island. Clare was previously Chief of Staff and Executive Vice President of the Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation (BNYDC).

**Terri Herubin** was named Managing Director, Portfolio Management at Greystar Real Estate Partners, where she will head up the Firm's U.S. open-end fund practice. Previously, she was Managing Director and Real Estate Senior Product Specialist at Angelo Gordon.

**Ione Wilsman** was named Managing Director at USAA Real Estate. She was previously Head of Real Estate Investments at U.S. Steel and Carnegie Pension Fund.

**We congratulate all of these women for their success and leadership in the industry.** Do you have a new job, promotion or position you'd like to share with the WX membership? Have you heard of other members we might highlight in the next newsletter? Let us know by emailing [info@wxnyre.com](mailto:info@wxnyre.com). **WX**



## 2019 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- 1: Steve Felix and Liz Weiner of Felix/ Weiner Consulting Group facilitated a Moderator/ Panelist Training for WX Members in February.
- 2: WX new member, Clare Newman, poses with WX member Sara Tranter at the 2018-19 Board of Directors New Member Reception in March.
- 3: WX Past President, Suzanne St. Pierre, WX President, Beth Zafonte, Speaker Bob White and WX Member, Elise Wagner at the January Breakfast.
- 4: WX Members discuss Capital Markets at the Mentoring Career Panel Night in January, held at JPMorgan.
- 5: WX Members Joan Matera and Elaine Kleinberg have their tarot cards read at the WX Post-Holiday Party.
- 6: WX Members joined Nontraditional Employment for Women (NEW) for an evening of construction and job skill training.
- 7: WX Board Member, Miriam Harris, WX Member Rachel Loeb and Ana Ariño spoke at the March Breakfast program.
- 8: WX members discuss Compensation, Promotion & Professional Success at the April Advocacy Panel.
- 9: Speakers: Charles Bendit, WX members Sara Tranter and Karen Scanna, Gigi Li and Margaret Chinwe Anadu pose with WX President, Beth Zafonte at the April Breakfast.
- 10: WX Mentees Maibi Rojas, Luiza Loureiro and Wei Zhang pose at the final Mentoring event at SPIN.
- 11: WX May Panelists: Colleen O'Connor, Doug Thiede, Susan Solomon, Steve Purpura and Nancy J Kelley with WX President, Beth Zafonte.
- 12: WX member Jennifer Stewart poses with Speed Networking Moderators Whitney Sweeney and Amy Fenollosa of The Latimer Group in May.

To view all WX event photos, please visit:  
[wxnyre.com/galleries](http://wxnyre.com/galleries)



### WE WELCOME YOUR INPUT

The leadership of WX is committed to providing its membership with new opportunities to network, connect with colleagues, and hear stimulating speakers at breakfasts and other programs. We look forward to your attendance at events and, as always, we welcome your input. Please feel free to contact us at [info@wxnyre.com](mailto:info@wxnyre.com) with your ideas and thoughts as to how we can make WX even stronger.

