



Meet the BMAR Member: Brian Lewis

January 13, 2014 - Front Section

Brian Lewis earned his degree in Public Accounting and Finance from New York University. He was the recipient of the covered Hayward Holbart Memorial Award for academic excellence. He was elected to Areopagus the Pre-Law Honorary Fraternity. He did graduate work in Federal Taxation at Pace University and in Real Estate Finance at the New York University School of Real Estate.

He worked his way through school by working in heavy construction, experiencing almost every phase of new construction technology. He gained most of his hands on experience with a national syndicate in the mid-1970's working closely with engineers, developers, attorneys and other real estate professionals. By 1978 he was personally responsible for the management of almost 15,000 residential units nationwide.

In the late 70's he began managing distressed properties in receivership throughout the Bronx and Manhattan. He served as a member of the Board of Governors for the Bronx-Manhattan Association of Realtors and served on the Management and Banking committees. He earned the designation of Certified Property Manager from IREM in 1979 along with Mark Engel. In that same year he successfully converted many apartment buildings from rentals to Cooperative apartments. When the co-op market changed in the late eighties, Lewis joined one of New York's most prestigious family owned real estate organizations. Their impressive portfolio was composed of high rise luxury properties in Manhattan and included office buildings and other commercial properties. He was Chief Operating Officer. He resigned his position to again encounter the satisfaction and rewards experienced by rebuilding and revitalizing distressed properties.

Lewis accepted a position with Donaldson, Lufkin and Jenrette, one of the nations leading Wall Street underwriters. They are industry leaders in the field of mortgage backed securities. As Senior Asset Manager for problem properties he was responsible for a major portfolio along the East Coast. He has been credited with the successful drug abatement and revitalization of the Florida portfolio as well as a major property in upstate New York.

In 1994 he was cited by the NYPD for his work in reclaiming drug-infested property in the Mott Haven section of the South Bronx. He has been involved in similar drug and anti crime projects in Washington Heights, Manhattan Valley and other areas. He was a member of the 14 St. Development Corp; Anti Crime Committee, which was headed by former City Council Member, Antonio Pagan. He has worked closely with the Bronx and Manhattan District Attorneys.

Lewis has been the subject of several media events, which involved his work in saving one of the last affordable rental complexes in the North Bronx. Lewis is credited as being the major force behind, what some community leaders have called, "a miracle." Drug dealers had controlled 132 apartments in the five square block complex of 1400 units. Vacancies exceeded 500 units. Services were almost non existent. By uniting community activist, working with the community board, a dozen different city agencies, including the police and Bronx District Attorney's office, he managed to gain

control of the property. He restored service to the remaining tenants and started the community's transition to once again be a place where people can be proud to live and feel safe. The remarkable success story has been reported in news articles and was presented on cable television news.

In April 1999 he was presented with the "HERO'S AWARD" by the Department of Housing and Urban Development for his work in reclaiming properties in the Bronx. Mr. Lewis participated in a program sponsored jointly by Channel 12, the Bronx cable news station and Court TV, called "Bridging the Gap". The program focused on Police relations with the Bronx community.

Lewis served on the Board of Directors for Lehman College, Center for Performing Arts; is a member of the Bronx Realty Advisory Board, which negotiated industry wide labor contracts, was the Bronx Advisor to the New York City Department of Probation and served on the Board for the Bronx District Attorney's Crime Victims Committee.

He continues to be active in anti crime activities with Elite Investigations, is a member of the NYPD Hispanic Society, has been recognized by the NYPD Honor Legion, the DEA and other law enforcement agencies

New York Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540