



Executive of the Month: Siegelman, broker at Winick Realty Group: Rising to the top and setting the bar high; Poised to teach next generation of retail brokers how to change the world one block at a time

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New York City, NY Though barely 30 years old, Joshua Siegelman has excelled in the commercial real estate industry far beyond many of his peers. In the five years since joining Winick Realty Group, Siegelman has risen to the top of his field, amassing an incredible deal volume and harnessing some of the largest landlord and tenant accounts in New York City.

Hard to believe, then, that Siegelman almost missed out on a career in retail real estate entirely. While studying at the University of Colorado Boulder, Siegelman interned as an office broker at Newmark Knight Frank, where mentors Howard Kessler and Jordan Gosin tried to caution him about embarking on a career in brokerage. "They told me it was a very tough and stressful field," said Siegelman, who actually grew up dreaming of being a stock broker. "But I liked the fact that brokerage would allow me to be creative. I'm a people person and I like to hustle, more than I like sitting behind a desk. Brokerage also offered the opportunity to make as much as I was willing to work hard for with no ceiling. Howard and Jordan were great leaders and helped guide me in the right direction."

Following his graduation in 2010, Siegelman tapped into a family connection that led him to then-Winick Realty Group president Benjamin Fox. "He made me feel very comfortable about joining the Winick Realty Group team," said Siegelman. "Two weeks after graduation, I was there in a suit and a tie, working as the only member on his team. He trained me and helped me learn the business from a hands-on perspective."

Success came quickly for Siegelman, who closed his first deal representing both sides in a lease transaction that brought Lux Eye Optical to Bedford Ave. in Williamsburg. Before long, he was representing many of the most exciting up-and-coming restaurant tenants in New York City, including the Meatball Shop and Luke's Lobster, and from that point, the deals were building blocks that continued to net him successful assignments from both landlords and tenants alike.

One such assignment came from Elk Investors, a landlord that historically had worked with Siegelman's former employer, Newmark Knight Frank. Though he was young and relatively new to the industry, Elk Investors gave him a chance to prove himself with an assignment at 577 Second Ave., which had been vacant for over a year. Within a few months, Siegelman had leased the space to a wireless store, gaining the property owner's respect and two additional exclusives to market on their behalf. Siegelman leased both of these long-vacant spaces in short periods of time, bringing Village Steakhouse to the former home of Surya Indian Restaurant at 302 Bleecker St. and Open Kitchen to an 11,000 s/f division of the former DHL at 33 East 33rd St. He is still marketing the remaining space, which consists of 600 s/f on the ground floor and 5,000 s/f in the basement.

Siegelman has left his mark all over New York City with successful leasing efforts that included leasing a 7,000 s/f space for Anna's Tuscany Experience at 146 West 47th St., a 17,000 s/f location for Petite Abeille Group at 4 New York Plaza, and a 6,880 s/f lease for Kosher restaurant Mike's Bistro on East 54th St. He was also involved in strategic concept expansion including multiple locations for Birdbath Bakery, Luke's Lobster, the Meatball Shop, and Chipotle Mexican Grill. He also single-handedly reinvigorated the stretch of Greenwich Ave. between Sixth Ave. and Seventh Ave. South.

"At the time I began working on Greenwich Ave., the block was filled with tired leases consisting of antique stores and neighborhood services. The area was hurting after the closing of St. Vincent's Hospital and there wasn't as much density as hospital workers and patients' families were no longer spending money in the area," said Siegelman. "Many of the old leases on this street were turning over at that time, creating an incredible opportunity for new retailers, full-service restaurants and fast-casual food concepts. If there was ever a shopping street poised for a comeback, this was it."

Siegelman completed four leases on the block, representing both the tenant and landlord in each of the transactions. He brought Le Baratin to 26 Greenwich Ave., Enopi Tutoring Center to 30 Greenwich Ave., Oaxaca Taqueria to 40 Greenwich Ave. and The Meatball Shop to 64 Greenwich Ave. Each lease transaction set a new precedent for retail rents in the market and his efforts helped to brand the block as a hip shopping street for restaurants and retailers alike.

He is presently continuing his efforts to revitalize the neighborhood, marketing retail space at 28 Greenwich Ave., and 142 West 10th St., which sits just off the corner of Greenwich.

Over the years, Siegelman has had the pleasure of working with many of New York City's top companies, including Ascot Properties, Algin Management, Jakobson Properties, Brodsky Organization, Rugby Realty, Klosed Properties and Hakim Organization, as well as some of the city's most popular retailers and restaurants. In 2014, he was granted the highly-coveted assignment of leasing the retail at One Madison on behalf of Rockfeld Group.

Each year, he has increased the volume of deals completed and the industry has begun to take notice. Siegelman has been recognized by such publications as Chain Store Age, who named him one of their 40 Under 40 Ones to Watch in 2014, and the Commercial Observer, who not only named him as one of their 30 Under 30 in 2012 but also invited him to share his retail leasing expertise in an editorial column called "Food for Thought." A CoStar Power Broker, Siegelman has become a go-to columnist for publications including Real Estate Weekly and the Mann Report.

Now a director in his own right, Siegelman is continuing to build a level of respect and expertise in the industry that belies his young age and he is now poised to teach the next generation of retail brokers how to change the world one block at a time.

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