



Donovan of Meridian: Proud of \$215m multifamily portfolio

June 23, 2015 - Spotlights

Name: Heather Donovan

Title: Analyst/Underwriter

Company Name: Meridian Capital Group, LLC

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What year did you start your career in commercial real estate: 2011

What recent project or transaction are you most proud of?

The team I'm a part of manages the transactions for several of Meridian's top clients. We spent Q1 focusing on the refinance of a \$215 million multifamily portfolio, which we previously financed the purchase of in 2013. It's gratifying when our clients are working to obtain and enhance valuable real estate and we can leverage our solid banking relationships to produce win-win outcomes for all. Without a strong understanding of the strengths and upside of the Manhattan market, and a seamless execution of a 31-property portfolio, the transaction would not have been such a great success.

Who or what has been the strongest influence on your career and why?

The strongest influence on my career has been the advice to take big risks. The trajectory of my career has made sense in hindsight, but when opportunities presented themselves along the way, they didn't always seem logical or possible. At the time, I considered the worst case scenario, and if it wasn't too bad, I jumped. So far, a few key risks have led me in a very positive direction.

What is the first thing you do when you arrive in the office in the morning?

The first thing I do each morning is review each deal and prioritize my action items for the morning. The afternoon is usually filled with tasks I can't anticipate or items that need my full attention, right away. If I address the most important items upfront, they're less likely to fall to tomorrow's to-do list.

What time management strategies do you find to be the most effective for you?

Prioritization and flexibility are the most important. I understand that certain tasks can have unforeseen obstacles and delays, so I always leave room for error and adapt to whatever issues arise. I like to have all possible pre-work completed far in advance and never wait to move forward on an item. While acting as a liaison between clients, lenders and other third parties, keeping the timeline moving forward is crucial.

What is the best advice you have received and who was it from?

The best advice I've heard actually refers to non-work life and knowing when to call it a day. I heard this from my first boss in a very competitive college-hire program with AT&T Corporate. "The workload is never-ending and although it's many times necessary to go beyond typical work hours, it is also important to balance that time outside of work and make it possible to continue to go give 100% in the office."

List 3 women that you would like to have drinks / dinner with and where would you go?

Sheryl Sandberg, Arianna Huffington and Melinda Gates. I'd go to my favorite steakhouse, Old Homestead.

What is your favorite quote?

"Every day is a new day. It is better to be lucky. But I would rather be exact. Then when luck comes you are ready."

• Ernest Hemingway, *The Old Man and the Sea*

7. What did you want to be when you grew up?

As a child, I wanted to be a History teacher.

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