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## **2016 Women in Real Estate: Janice Mac Avoy**

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Janice Mac Avoy, Fried Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP

Name: Janice Mac Avoy

Title: Partner

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Years in real estate: 25 years

Company Name: Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP

Year Founded: 1890s

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How did you get your start in real estate?

I joined Fried Frank in 1988 as a litigation associate. During the real estate crash of 1991, I had the opportunity to work with the Firm's Real Estate Department, which had a large volume of real estate related litigation work as deals fell apart during the crisis. I worked closely with the Real Estate department's chairman Jonathan Mechanic and "fell in love" with the work. That experience led me to pitch launching a real estate litigation practice at the Firm, which I now head.

What real estate associations or organizations are you a member of?

I am a member of American Law Institute, Commercial Real Estate Women and CREW New York. I am also a member and voting representative of CRE Finance Council and a board member of Sanctuary for Families.

What recent project or transaction are you most proud of?

I recently won a significant victory for Richard Cohen of Capital Properties in New York Federal Court. A lender attempted to hold my client, the guarantor, personally liable for \$110 million under a "bad boy" guaranty signed by him in connection with a non-recourse mortgage loan. The decision was one of the few pro-guarantor cases involving bad-boy guaranties and significantly changed the law in the area of guarantor liability.

What recent honor, achievement or recognition has meant the most to you and why?

I have been named by The Women Lawyers Association of Los Angeles as a recipient for The Courage Award which honors exceptional dedication and commitment in the fight to protect women's reproductive freedom. This award is important to me because it recognizes my pro-choice advocacy. I have been able to use my unique position as a lawyer to speak up for the reproductive rights of all women in a "friend of the court" brief to the Supreme Court in a recent reproductive rights case.

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

While I have had many excellent mentors, Jonathan Mechanic, chair of Fried Frank's Real Estate Department, has been my most important mentor and sponsor as well as the strongest influence on my career. He helped me discover my love of real estate and real estate law. He has taught me how to be an excellent advisor—to not only be an excellent lawyer and answer my client's questions but also to be a part of their team and help them achieve their business objectives.

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

When I had my first child as a young partner, I was struggling with trying to have everything done perfectly. It was Jean Hanson, who is now of counsel in Fried Frank's Bankruptcy and Restructuring Department, who told me that I needed to learn two words: "good enough." She explained that I would have to learn to pick certain things that should be perfect and let the rest be good enough. This advice has been a powerful tool in helping me prioritize work and family life.