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2018 Ones to Watch: Kaunteya Chitnis, Vice President – Acquisitions/Development at MCR

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Name: Kaunteya Chitnis

Title: Vice President – Acquisitions/Development

Company: MCR

Address: One World Trade Center, Floor 86, New York, NY 10007

Year that you entered your current field? 2010

How did you get your start in your current field?

I started early in high school, first cutting my teeth in the real estate industry working summers at a luxury hotel near my hometown in Orange County, California. At the time, the hotel was owned by an industry leading hospitality REIT, and I was fortunate enough to establish a relationship with senior management and investment teams (who seemed to appreciate my curiosity). I took every opportunity to ask questions about how hotel investments are approached and executed, and was fascinated by the business. On the back of that experience, I enrolled at the School of Hotel Administration at Cornell University, and graduated in 2010 with a minor in Real Estate.

How do you contribute to the future of your industry?

MCR is making an impact across a variety of different projects, the most iconic of which is an adaptive reuse of Eero Saarinen’s TWA Flight Center. I am responsible for leading the development with 22 government agencies and 150 firms.

, located at John F. Kennedy International Airport, into 505-room world class hotel. I am responsible for leading the development, which is a landmark public private partnership involving 22 government agencies and 150+ firms. More information on the project can be seen at www.twahotel.com. Slated to open in early 2019, the TWA Hotel will leave a lasting impact on the real estate industry (the TWA Flight Center is one of the most iconic buildings in NYC and is a city, state and national treasure) and will be the “gateway” to New York for the over 60 million passengers that travel through JFK Airport each year.

Who or what do you attribute to your success?

I'm lucky to have had countless mentors who have helped shape me both personally and professionally. I attribute a lot of my professional success to MCR's CEO Tyler Morse, who I have the privilege of working alongside and learning from daily. Since joining MCR in 2014, I have seen the company grow (which was relatively small then) into the seventh largest hotel owner operator in the US, with over 102 hotels acquired or developed. Tyler has challenged me to take on big projects, make big decisions, and has shown me how to think "outside the box", all of which has been crucial to my development and advancement.

Where do you see yourself in five years?

Professionally, I see myself as an industry leader and investor in high-quality projects, products and people. I intend to continue growing MCR's investment platform across a variety of strategies and opportunistic ventures, and in turn, continue to provide MCR's investors with terrific returns. I would like to be an active participant in the investment community. Personally, I see myself becoming more involved in the both the local and far-reaching community, leveraging my skills and position to drive positive change wherever I can.

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