



Year in Review 2018: Judah Hammer, Meridian Capital Group

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Name & Title: Judah Hammer, Vice President

Company Name: Meridian Capital Group

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What was your most notable project, deal, transaction, or professional achievement in 2018?

My team and I financed the purchase of a \$130 million, 56-property portfolio across Bayonne and Union City, NJ. The package consisted of multifamily and mixed-use assets and was financed in nine tranches with two lenders to maximize leverage and terms.

What was the best decision you made in 2018 and how did it impact your business?

Staying the course and continuing to develop strong relationships with lenders. We have always been a high-volume group, and although the market has become more challenging—both with the regulatory environment at banks and the acquisition market having slowed down—we can proudly say we closed in excess of 10 loans per month consistently throughout the year. We worked with 18 unique lenders and closed on a broad array of asset types in numerous geographical markets throughout the U.S.

What market trend(s) will impact your industry in 2019?

As interest rates continue to rise, creative financing becomes tricky. Lenders tend to be more conservative in their analysis and underwriting tightens, allowing for lower proceeds. In turn, this creates a myriad of challenges as it pertains to refinancing existing debt and maximizing proceeds in order to make a potential acquisition make financial sense.

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