



2020 Ones to Watch: Ryan Severino, JLL

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Name: Ryan Severino

Company: JLL

Title: Chief Economist

Education: Columbia University, master's; Georgetown University, bachelor's

How do you contribute to your community or your profession?

In addition to working at JLL, I have been an adjunct professor here in New York for the last 11 years. In the fall, I will also begin teaching at the Fordham Real Estate Institute. I really enjoy engaging with the students, particularly around some of the more esoteric aspects of finance and economics that many students and even professionals do not often think about, but are vital to the performance of the commercial real estate industry.

What do you like most about your job?

I enjoy the challenge of it. As my grandfather used to say in his slightly imperfect English, "If it was easy, everybody would do it." I am charged with analyzing and forecasting the economy, discretely understanding the implications for commercial real estate, and then explaining that to people in a way that they can easily understand. It must also be why I enjoy teaching so much.

Who or what inspires you?

I have been blessed with great teachers and mentors from elementary school through my career. I would not be where I am without them. I try to pay that forward wherever I can—in the classroom, in the office, or speaking at a conference.

What led you to your current profession?

I have always been a very academic person. In another life, I would have been a full-time professor. My career has increasingly involved academic aspects of real estate. I gained a foundation in commercial real estate by working in functions such as asset management, portfolio management, and acquisitions during the early stages of my career. After graduate school, I transitioned to research and then found my niche in economics. I enjoy that my position sits at the intersection of core knowledge areas such as commercial real estate and economics, technical skills such as coding and mathematics, and soft skills such as speaking and writing.