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2021 Women in Professional Services: Karol Robinson, Herrick, Feinstein LLP

March 23, 2021 - Spotlights

Name: Karol Robinson

Title: Partner

Company Name: Herrick, Feinstein LLP

Real estate associations or organizations that you are currently a member of:

American Bar Association, Forum on Affordable Housing and Community Economic Development, Governing Committee Member

New York City Bar Association, Housing and Urban Development Committee

Association of Black Women Attorneys

New York State Association for Affordable Housing (NYSFAFH)

Institute of Real Estate Management (IREM)

Women have made significant progress in the last year towards equality in the workplace. How do you advocate for your fellow women in real estate?

Diversity of voices, mentorship and sponsorship of up and coming attorney talent is a hallmark of my practice. As such, I sit on the Governing Committee for the American Bar Association's Forum on Affordable Housing and Community Economic Development and am a member of the New York City Bar Association's Housing and Urban Development Committee. I have taken on leadership roles in both organizations and am tasked with helping to organize and plan webinars and conferences. I intentionally search for opportunities for all women, and specifically women of color, who are knowledgeable in relevant subjects to offer them presentation opportunities. I feel it is imperative to support and sponsor women at all levels and to help create a pipeline of opportunities for future generations of these talented women to have a voice.

In the past year, what project, transaction or accomplishment are you most proud of?

Early in the pandemic, I was called on to assist a distressed affordable housing cooperative in Harlem that believed predatory management policies were being enacted with the goal of taking over and converting the units to market rate. The cooperative reached out to HUD and city housing officials seeking assistance. With a new board in place, incidentally completely comprised of

women, I was referred the matter and have been working with the board throughout the pandemic to help stabilize the development. To date, with my advice and guidance, the board has replaced the cooperative's managing agent, stabilized its resident base, addressed its accounts payable and collection issues, and is now in the process of obtaining financing to address extensive mold and other urgently needed repairs throughout the development. In support of the project, I brought together the industry contacts and knowledge I have developed over a career in affordable housing to assist the board and the residents it serves.

How have you adapted and changed in the last 12 months?

I joined Herrick in late 2020, in the midst of the pandemic and remote working. While transitions to a new firm are always challenging, the parties readily adapted to the new realities and challenges created by the pandemic. It is clear that the move was well worth it as it presented opportunities and the possibility for collaboration and growth for myself and my new colleagues at Herrick. The diversity of services at Herrick complements my practice, and working with a larger team with a broad base of capabilities offers opportunities to expand portions of her practice – specifically not-for-profits and affordable housing. My skills also bring new opportunities to Herrick which the full team has embraced and is rolling out to clients.

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