



## **2021 Women in Professional Services: Kyla Gessin-Stern, Chatham Development Company / First Dunes**

March 23, 2021 - Spotlights

Name: M. Kyla Gessin-Stern

Title: Principal

Company Name: Chatham Development Company / First Dunes

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

We acquired a bay side waterfront property in Westhampton with eight bungalows at 496 Dune Rd. in April of 2020 and quickly renovated and refreshed the property, relaunching them as Beach and Bay Bungalows in June 2020. We are experienced developers, property owners and managers and our team pulled together to quickly and seamlessly update these exceptionally well-located buildings and we were fully leased for the 2020 summer and fall seasons.

Why should women consider a career in commercial real estate and related services?

Commercial real estate is an industry that can provide a very fulfilling and rewarding career to anyone, not just women, who have been historically under represented. As a developer, it is an amazing experience to see a building or house under construction. We spend a tremendous amount of time planning and thinking through every aspect of a project and to see the pieces come together and to work collaboratively during construction to solve issues that arise are both great aspects of my role.

What books or social media influencers would you recommend to other women?

I am an admitted Peloton junkie and have turned my whole family on to the platform. As such, I follow a lot of the Peloton instructors on social media as I truly find their motivational and inspirational stories uplifting and helpful as we confront the day-to-day challenges of life. The most important messages they convey is to be grateful for every breath, show up, and do good.

What steps have you taken to ensure the continued success of your firm?

We do not deviate from our investment thesis when evaluating deals which has allowed us to appropriately match our skill set and return requirements with projects. This has been a fundamental principle for our firm over time. Recently, we have added new employees to help manage the multiple jobs we have going on as well as invested in additional project management software and hardware so we can be "in the field" from anywhere and review things like material orders and sub-contractors' work in real time.

