



2021 Women in Professional Services: Darya Shneyder, Marks Paneth LLP

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Name: Darya Shneyder

Title: Partner

Company Name: Marks Paneth LLP

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

A career in real estate is a terrific opportunity for women. The real estate industry is very big and there is room for everyone. Marks Paneth has a firm-sponsored initiative called LEADS that is specifically aimed at the recruitment, retention and advancement of the firm's professionals with a positive, supportive and inclusive environment for all.

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

It has been difficult to adapt to a remote working environment while having kids at home doing remote learning. The change of working hours allowed me to adapt my schedule to be more involved in my kids' educational lives. I was able to do this with the support of Marks Paneth.

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

In 2020 I was involved in a first-year audit engagement for a real estate investment for a life sciences building. Little did we know that the life sciences industry ended up having a big boon in 2020. It is an honor to be part of the industry, and I am excited to be part of their success.

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

The past year brought lots of challenges with the firm moving to a remote working environment. Starting in the spring of 2020, I chaired a team that provided virtual webinars to staff to enhance their technical knowledge. This provided much-needed training and the opportunity for over 100 people to be together on one Zoom session. We were able not only to share technical knowledge, but also had the ability to see (virtually) so many familiar faces that we had not seen for some months.

How do you keep your team motivated despite conflicts and obstacles?

Motivating remotely was and still is difficult. The pandemic gave me the opportunity to rethink my management style. The biggest change was identifying a specific approach for each team member. During this remote working environment, every team member is working with different obstacles,

and I was able to determine the most individualized approach for each, which I believe will only help everyone succeed and grow with the firm.

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?

Over the last few years Marks Paneth has promoted a large percentage of women partners, which is terrific to see for the upcoming women in our firm. I believe in leading by example. I think it's important for everyone to know they can rise up regardless of their sex. I annually attend the Real Estate Women's Forum and over the last two years have moderated and/or been on panels to promote female leadership in the real estate industry. In 2020, I also moderated the Commercial Observer's National Women's Forum virtually, which was a great experience and provided an opportunity for fellow women real estate professionals to really shine. Taking an active role in these events truly exemplifies that women have a prominent place in the real estate industry.

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

I try to have a very balanced social media lifestyle and thus truly believe that great thought leadership can come from anyone, regardless what size organizer or the type of influencer they really are. There is no one in particular that I can point to, but a wide range of women who are active in social media and who truly demonstrate that anything is possible as long as we are not afraid to get involved.

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