



2021 Women in Professional Services: Deana Wetzel, Marks Paneth LLP

March 23, 2021 - Spotlights

Name: Deana Wetzel, CPA

Title: Partner

Company Name: Marks Paneth LLP

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

NYSSCPA – Nassau Chapter – Real Estate Committee – Co Chair

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

2020 has been a challenging year to say the least. The COVID-19 pandemic has created a new level of demand for consulting services. Many of my clients in the real estate industry sought timely guidance and insight as they grappled with decisions such as whether to accept SBA loans through the Paycheck Protection Program or how and where they could apply for Payroll Tax Credits. My staff and I were committed to serve as a resource to our clients and help them fully understand each new development. Our continued goal is to assist them in any way possible to get through these challenging times.

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

There is no doubt that the last 12 months have been extremely challenging for everyone. Work life and home life have become one. For me, the adjustment of juggling working from home and managing my children who were also learning remotely was difficult. Over the course of the year, I have learned several things about balancing the two. First, having a designated workspace where I could work in peace without constant interruptions was key. Next, having a start and end date to my workday was also important. I found that I was always working and not dedicating enough to family time. One year later, the juggling has become successful even during an accountant's busiest time.

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

Marks Paneth LLP is a premier full-service accounting firm. We pride ourselves on the expert knowledge that we provide to our clients. The key to maintaining our success is to continue to hire the best professionals and provide the best training to our employees. I believe that it is important to

share the knowledge that I have obtained through my years of experience and exposure to different types of transactions, as well as the guidance that I received from my mentor.

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

The real estate industry is an exciting and ever-evolving industry with so many different facets. While the real estate market is constantly changing, it has also proven to be resilient. The New York City market, for example, has bounced back from catastrophes such as the Spanish flu, the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and the financial crisis of 2008. The real estate industry is a rewarding career path for anyone to choose, and I am encouraged to see more and more women entering its ranks and climbing the corporate ladder.

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

Motivating your team can be difficult during normal times but even more challenging during a pandemic. I believe the key to keeping your team motivated despite conflicts and obstacles is constant communication. When everyone is in the office, you can have in-person meetings and collaborate on different assignments. Even though we are not always in the office now, my team and I have weekly meetings to discuss the status of assignments, any issues or concerns that they might have and just to check in and see how everyone is doing. At the end of the day, we are all working together with one common goal--to provide the best client service possible!

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?

I am very proud to have been a part of the launching of the LEADS (Leadership| Empowerment| Advancement| Diversity| Success) women's initiative at Marks Paneth. LEADS was created to promote the retention and development of women in the firm. We have been able to do and accomplish so many exciting things, like organizing volunteer opportunities and social gatherings as well as educational and professional development seminars. As a Partner at Marks Paneth, I am very dedicated to supporting my fellow women in the firm.

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

LinkedIn is a great resource for keeping up with the latest news in the real estate industry and for sharing articles and blogs that I have read or written for Marks Paneth's Real Estate Perspectives newsletter. It also a great tool for networking and sharing all the exciting things that are happening at Marks Paneth.

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