



2021 Women in CRE: Nina Rokat, Olshan Frome Wolosky LLP

November 02, 2021 - Spotlights

Name: Nina Rokat

Title: Partner in Real Estate Practice Group, Leader of the Commercial Leasing Practice and Co-Administrative Partner of the firm

Company Name: Olshan Frome Wolosky LLP

How do you contribute to your community or your profession?

I am actively involved with organizations spanning the legal and real estate industries, and charitable/civic organizations. I serve as a member of WX, NY Women Executives in Real Estate, an invitation-only association of executive-level women actively engaged in the commercial real estate industry in NY and serve as a mentor under WX's mentorship program. Through both formal/informal mentoring, the program provides young women at the start of their careers in the real estate industry the opportunity to leverage the knowledge and experience of WX members and promotes advancement of women in the profession. Additionally, I serve as a member of the Urban Land Institute (ULI) and as a mentor under the ULI Mentorship Program and continue to personally mentor several women lawyers.

How do you advocate for your fellow women in real estate?

I serve in numerous leadership roles and find this to be the best way to effectuate change. I am the chair of Olshan's Hiring Committee and founder/chair of Olshan's Women's Committee, which serves as a networking, business development and mentoring platform for the firm's women lawyers and their clients/colleagues. I am well aware of challenges that women face in a male-dominated industry like real estate, which has motivated me to act as a leader/mentor to female attorneys at Olshan, and to women generally in the real estate industry.

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

From the onset of, and throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, I have tirelessly guided and counseled existing and new clients on the evolving business and legal issues impacting the real estate industry. Acting as both business advisor and lawyer, I have taken a lead in the industry, negotiating the most favorable terms possible with all counterparties on behalf of my clients. As the COVID-19 pandemic has created an immediate hardship on borrowers and lenders alike, I am assisting clients with both lease and debt restructurings, as well as capital raising opportunities. I have actively represented and advised both landlords and tenants in lease restructuring situations across the country and have been providing counsel and innovative solutions to a broad range of clients

including borrowers, investors, lenders, developers, landlords and tenants, with particular focus on restaurants and flex space companies.

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

There perhaps has been no greater obstacle than COVID-19 in our recent memory, and as a leader throughout this difficult period, I have tried to stand as an example of what can be accomplished despite the many obstacles placed in one's path. I do expect as much from the colleagues that I mentor as I give, inspiring them to be their best professionally and personally. I have continued to accept the most challenging projects and have consistently put in 100% so that my team can see that hard work pays off in results for our clients. I have also sought and assumed leadership roles, demonstrating that there is a path forward giving women a voice in shaping the future of the commercial real estate and the legal industries.

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

I would recommend the book, "The Most Powerful Woman in the Room is You, The Confidence Game," authored by Lydia Fenet.

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

In my view, working in the commercial real estate industry as a real estate lawyer is one of the most rewarding and exciting legal career paths that you can choose. I have spent my entire career in New York's commercial real estate market and beyond, and I have seen the number of women in key positions rising. While the commercial real estate market is still a male dominated field, many women continue to pave the way and create opportunities. I have served as a mentor to numerous women lawyers and others in the profession and have tried to serve as an example of the level of grit and hard work required for women to continue to advance.

Tell us a thing or two about you that is NOT on your resume or LinkedIn profile?

I love to travel and experience different cultures through travel. I also enjoy interior design and absolutely love to dance.