



## 2021 Women in CRE: Leslie Harwood, Newmark

November 02, 2021 - Spotlights

Name: Leslie Harwood

Title: Managing Director

Company Name: Newmark

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

This past year has been tough on everyone, and it's been a challenge navigating how to respond to the events. My biggest accomplishment over the past 12 months has been helping my long-term clients through this difficult time. I served as a real estate advisor to them as they needed help restructuring their leases, changed their space requirements and revamped their physical spaces to encourage their employees to return to the office and make them compelling to attract and retain talent.

How do you contribute to your community or your profession?

I have been very committed to the commercial real estate profession and elevating women's voices within the industry throughout my career. I have served on the boards of YM/WREA, REBNY's Commercial Real Estate Group, and have started women's networking organizations while at Newmark. Outside of the professional space, I'm involved in advocating for women's health in NYC and nationally. I'm also involved in philanthropic programs at Keane University in NJ that offer scholarships to underprivileged youth to further their higher education goals.

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

Women should consider a career in commercial real estate as there is no ceiling to their earning potential and gives them the freedom to drive their careers. Today many clients and others in the industry realize that the different points of view that women bring to the table are invaluable. The addition of more women to the industry further reflects the makeup of commercial real estate clients and that of the overall population. The growth opportunity for women in the business is solid.

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

Now more than ever, there have been many obstacles to keeping teams motivated and feeling part of something bigger. The pandemic caused a lot of forced isolation and fear surrounding the uncertainty of the virus. I used this time to double down on proactive communication and leading with empathy and kindness. Ensuring I'm going into any interactions with my team positively has helped increase their motivation as it shows we're all in this together. As commercial real estate

professionals, we all have a personal stake in the success and come back of NYC, so that was an added motivator to get back to work and help the city thrive.

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

Through the years, I have hosted several women's networking events at my home. These were gatherings to exchange ideas and figure out areas in which we could collaborate to do more business and advocate for the increased visibility of women in the industry. I was also highly involved in the debut of NOW (network of women) at Newmark a few years ago. It's been a great place to discuss business ideas and serve as mentors to the younger generation of women.

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

I like to recommend the journalist and host at NPR named Guy Raz. He has a great podcast called "How I Built This" that talks to both men and women who are innovators and entrepreneurs, and the podcast goes through their journey on how they became successful. I find it genuinely inspiring hearing personal stories on how these innovators were brought up and how they got to where they are today.

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

One of the things to know about me that you won't find on my resume or my LinkedIn is how I've been inspired watching my kids grow with their significant others. I'm finding that interacting with younger people in both the office and my personal life is eye-opening to see how they think differently and their worldview. Watching my kids succeed and take the knowledge we've given them over the years gives me tremendous pride and a continuous learning opportunity. I like to be an open book when interacting with the younger generations because it's in my willingness to learn that I find new ideas and ways to work.

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