



REBNY announces new government affairs and communications department leads

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Manhattan, NY According to The Real Estate Board of New York (REBNY), the City's leading real estate trade association, two new leaders will lead its government affairs and communications departments. Aravella Simotas joins as senior vice president, government affairs and Kay Sarlin Wright as senior vice president, communications.

"Aravella Simotas and Kay Sarlin Wright join REBNY with significant experience and an exceptional track record of accomplishments throughout the state," said REBNY president James Whelan. "Their expertise will be invaluable as we continue to advocate for policies that support the future prosperity of our city."

As senior vice president, government affairs, Simotas will oversee REBNY's government relations and advocacy efforts across the City, State and Federal government. This includes engaging members, analyzing legislation and testifying on behalf of the industry at public hearings.

Simotas joins REBNY from BNY, a global financial services company and America's oldest bank, where she applied her experience in her role as head of state and local government affairs. A former elected official, Simotas represented Northwest Queens for 10 years as a member of the New York State Assembly and served on the Speaker's Board of Economic Advisors. Simotas also served as a policy and strategic advisor to a member of Congress and began her tenure in government as an aide to the NYC Council Speaker. An attorney specializing in complex commercial litigation, Simotas received her law degree from Fordham Law School and undergraduate degree, summa cum laude, from Fordham University.

With more than two decades of communications experience, Wright recently joined REBNY as senior vice president, communications, leading REBNY's organizational messaging and all external communications and marketing. Wright was most recently the head of impact communications at Audible, where she worked closely with the Newark community. As co-creator of Newark Working Kitchens, she helped to infuse more than \$16 million into the local restaurant economy, sustaining businesses while creating and preserving jobs.

Prior to Audible, Wright held key positions in city and state government, including at Empire State Development as the executive vice president of public affairs & strategic initiatives. Wright led communications for the New York City Department of Transportation and the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs. Wright, a former Congressional chief of staff, also served as a vice

president at the Glover Park Group. Wright received her Masters of Science from the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism and her Bachelor of Arts from Hobart and William Smith Colleges.

“The real estate industry is instrumental in driving the socio-economic progress of our city and state,” said Simotas. “At REBNY, I am eager to leverage my experience in government and the private sector to help find solutions to New York’s housing crisis and support the growth of our real estate market which is a backbone of our urban success.”

“Returning to my roots in New York City economic development has been a welcome homecoming and it’s inspiring to be a part of this top-tier team,” said Wright. “Having spent two decades championing crucial public policy, I am eager to once again contribute to the continued growth and success of New York City. “

Both Simotas and Wright will report to REBNY president James Whelan.

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