



REBNY Annual event draws capacity audience of top business and government leaders to celebrate shared achievements and civic leadership

January 14, 2025 - Front Section

REBNY president James Whelan

Manhattan, NY The Real Estate Board of New York (REBNY) hosted more than 1,000 leaders from real estate, government, labor, economic development and other leading New York City business sectors for the 129th REBNY Annual—the premier networking event for the region’s real estate industry.

Hosted at The Glasshouse, the event featured the presentation of REBNY’s 2025 honorees for commitment and contributions to New York City and its residents, remarks from New York Governor Kathy Hochul, in addition to appearances by hundreds of top business executives and a wide array of public officials across New York City, State and Federal government. This includes New York Attorney General Letitia James, New York City Mayor Eric Adams and U.S. Congressmembers Ritchie Torres, Gregory Meeks, Adriano Espaillat and Tim Kennedy.

The event kicked off with red carpet press interviews showcasing REBNY’s annual honorees and other industry leaders, followed by a cocktail reception alongside The Glasshouse’s breathtaking skyline and waterfront views. The reception featured culinary offerings by Bar Boulud executive chef Dan Guzman, Hill Country chef Christopher Colon, FEILDTRIP chef JJ Johnson and kosher selections from Le Marais.

Guests then enjoyed a three-course dinner, with the first course by Le Pavillon co-executive chef Michael Balboni, followed by a second course by Ci Siamo Executive Chef Hillary Sterling, culminating with dessert from Le Pavillon executive pastry chef Yohko Ogata.

The program also featured a video produced by REBNY highlighting the vital role that the real estate industry plays in supporting job creation in New York City from development to building management to brokerage to construction. Excess food from the event was donated to City Harvest for distribution to local pantries for New Yorkers in need.

“New York City’s private and public sector leaders once again came together in force at last night’s REBNY Annual to celebrate our shared accomplishments and look ahead to the challenges facing our region’s economy and quality of life in 2025,” said REBNY president James Whelan. “I am extremely grateful for our team for putting together another memorable event, as well as our honorees for setting an example of civic commitment and professional accomplishment that we can all aspire to in the year ahead.”

“The REBNY Annual is an iconic event not only for our industry but all those dedicated to ensuring New York City continues to be an ideal place to live, work, grow a business and raise a family,” said REBNY chairman Jed Walentas. “We must keep the City’s momentum moving forward and the REBNY Annual always presents an excellent opportunity to bring together important stakeholders to make this happen.”

Honoree Recognized at the 2025 REBNY Annual

REBNY recognized seven honorees for their unparalleled commitment to the civic welfare of New York City and its residents, outstanding personal and professional success, and exceptional contributions to the industry. These awards are among the top professional distinctions in the real estate industry.

The Harry B. Helmsley Distinguished New Yorker Award: Presented to Scott Rechler, CEO and chairman, RXR, for exceptional accomplishments in the profession and invaluable contributions to New York’s civic welfare.

The Bernard H. Mendik Lifetime Leadership in Real Estate Award: Presented to Jonathan Mechanic, chairman of real estate department, Fried Frank, for exceptional service to the industry and remarkable professional accomplishments over the course of his career.

The Kenneth R. Gerrety Humanitarian Award: Presented to Michelle Adams, senior managing director, global external relations and business development, Tishman Speyer, for outstanding service to the community.

The John E. Zuccotti Public Service Award: Presented to representative Ritchie Torres, United States Congressman for New York’s 15th Congressional District, for exceptional accomplishments and service to the public’s interest.

The George M. Brooker Management Executive of the Year Award: Presented to Tom Lloyd, senior managing director of investor services, CBRE, recognizing exceptional career accomplishments as well as service to the profession and the broader community.

The Louis Smadbeck Memorial Broker Recognition Award: Presented to Nicola Heryet, principal, Avison Young, recognizing a REBNY broker with personal and professional integrity, long-term leadership and prominence in the brokerage community and participation in REBNY’s committees.

The Young Real Estate Professional of the Year Award: Presented to Craig Waggner, managing director, Cushman & Wakefield, for incredible professional achievements as a rising star of the industry and for civic leadership.

A portion of proceeds raised by the REBNY Annual will go to funding social impact initiatives.

New York Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540