

Delegates Receive Breaking Network News, Discuss 2007 Priorities

Delegates and chapter leaders attending the 2007 CREW Network Winter Meeting recently held in Philadelphia were the first to receive the breaking news that CREW Network has secured its largest sponsorship to date.

Fulbright & Jaworski, one of the largest law firms in the United States, has agreed to become CREW Network's technology partner through a \$225,000 sponsorship, one of the largest ever awarded by the firm. CREW Network will use this funding for the development of a new technology platform to be shared among all 60 chapters across North America.

"Fulbright & Jaworski is an extraordinary law firm with a long time track record of leadership and commitment to advancing diversity," said Gail Ayers, Chief Executive Officer of CREW Network. "Fulbright & Jaworski understands the effect that women have on the bottom line. With the aggressive growth of CREW Network throughout North America, this impressive technology partnership provides the opportunity to sustain our impact and effectiveness."

This technology partnership speaks directly to one of four association priorities outlined by CREW Network President Marianne Ajemian for 2007, which is to expand CREW Network's resources. A newly created Technology Task Force will create an implementation plan for the expansion of CREW Network's technology resources. Further, the CREW Network Board of Directors along with the Resource Development Committee is aggressively working to secure the sponsorship dollars needed to support new programs and initiatives.

Also listed as CREW Network priorities for 2007 include elevating the stature of CREW Network members by expanding professional development programming, exploring leadership opportunities with universities and colleges and creating more networking and business opportunities; acting as a catalyst for change within the commercial real estate industry by releasing the findings from the 2006 Chapter focus groups and setting CREW Network's research agenda for the next three to five years; and elevating the stature of the CREW Network organization by expanding the reach of CREW Network into local business communities during Council Meetings and the Annual Convention, implementing the new CREW Network Awards Program and increasing speaking opportunities and establishing partnerships with other industry associations.

CREW Network's Board of Director nominating process is now well underway with the Delegates' approval of the 2007 Nominating Committee members. Chosen to serve alongside CREW Network Past President Beth Lambert-Saul, chair, CREW Dallas; President Marianne Ajemian, NEWIRE Boston; President-Elect Lynny Osenbaugh, CREW Houston; and CEO Gail Ayers, were the following CREW Network Delegates: Diane Butler, CREW Dallas; Gail von Staden, CREW Detroit; Tonya Creekmore, CREW Atlanta; Peggy Hey, CREW Charlotte; and Holly Nelson, NEWIRE Boston.

An initial call for nominations for the 2008 CREW Network Board of Directors will go out on May 25 with nominations due June 25. Delegates were reminded that only 2007 Delegates and 2007 CREW Network board members are eligible to submit nominations.

CREW members Nina Shallcross and Maria Sicola, both of Cushman & Wakefield provided delegates and chapter leaders with a market overview describing how Philadelphia ranks as one of the top commercial real estate markets in the nation. Many were surprised to learn that Philadelphia has the third largest downtown residential population in the United States, and that the city is ranked seventh in the country in terms of investment sales activity. The central

business district and non-central business district areas both rank as the eighth largest in the U.S. – both were also ranked seventh in terms of new office construction.

Suzanne Bates of Bates Communications provided the Friday afternoon interactive professional development session where attendees learned tips and honed skills to “Speak Like a Leader.” Working from the premise that there is no such thing as a natural born speaker, session participants learned the importance of being prepared, keeping the message simple and communicating big ideas. Slides from this session and the Council Meeting are located in the Chapter Resources section of the CREW Network Web site (www.crewnetwork.org).

Delegates and chapter leaders were invited to extend their stay in Philadelphia to attend a one-day seminar for women on Saturday. Toronto CREW member Delee From, founding partner of the consulting firm Fromm & Goodhand, presented “Getting the Negotiation Edge,” which provided attendees with successful negotiation strategies and insights into socialized habits that may be undermining our success and leadership at work.

The next meeting of the Council of Delegates is scheduled for June 14-15 in Sacramento, California. Mark your calendars and plan to attend!