

Fortitude and Optimism Embody NAIOP's 2009 Developing Leaders Award Winners

In its fourth year, NAIOP's **Developing Leaders Award** honorees are proving that success and professional growth are fully attainable in spite of challenging industry conditions and uncertain financial markets.

The annual award recognizes Developing Leaders (NAIOP members age 35 and under) for their extraordinary talent and contributions to the industry. NAIOP applauds these Developing Leaders (DLs) for continued dedication to their organization, community, association and personal development. Sixteen individuals were honored with the 2009 Developing Leaders Award, and their achievements were recognized at NAIOP's Development '09 conference in Chicago in October.

Applications were received from DLs from across the United States and Canada, and the honorees were chosen by a selection committee comprising NAIOP members and industry leaders. Each DL was judged based on six criteria: leadership, professional competency, career goals, education, NAIOP participation and community involvement. Additional merit bonus points may be awarded at the judge's discretion.

Meet the 2009 Developing Leaders Award winners

(and soak in a little of their industry knowledge)...



Tony Carlson

Associate, Grandbridge Real Estate Capital, Minneapolis, Minn.
NAIOP Minnesota

Q: *Who is your professional mentor, and what can you share that you've learned?*

A: One of my bosses, Dave Rasmussen, taught me to "anticipate, communicate and take ownership" of every facet of every transaction. This is valuable advice I utilize daily.



Megan Creecy

Principal, EJM Development Company
Scottsdale, Ariz.
NAIOP Arizona

Q: *What top trends do you see impacting the industry in the next five years?*

A: A combination of increased vacancy, decreased rental rates, tightening lending standards and disposition of distressed properties will create the most challenging environment this industry has seen.



Jeff Davis

Principal, Davis Property & Investment
Kent, Wash.
NAIOP Washington State

Q: *What do you see as the biggest opportunity when the markets rebound?*

A: The acquisition of existing, underperforming assets with above-market vacancy will be the biggest opportunity as we turn the corner into another expansion cycle. I believe the trick will be underwriting accurately the length of time the asset will be held in the portfolio before demand begins to translate into occupancy.



Laurel Edwards

Associate, Colliers International Realty
Advisors, Calgary, Alberta
NAIOP Calgary

Q: *What do you see as the biggest opportunity when the markets rebound?*

A: As the markets rebound, lending activity will increase, facilitating a higher volume of investment opportunities. Secondly, in Canada, changing government regulations related to the adoption of International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), which requires public companies to transition to the new standards by 2011, provides an opportunity for the valuation industry to assist in the this implementation.



Ashley Grigsby

Associate, MidFirst Bank
Houston, Texas
NAIOP Houston

Q: *What motivates you?*

A: In today's economy, it is hard to stay motivated; however, I am driven not only by economic success, but also by making a positive impact on customers, peers and superiors.



Brian Hall

Associate, Lee & Associates
Riverside, Calif.
NAIOP Inland Empire

Q: *What's the best NAIOP event you've attended?*

A: My chapter's annual bus tour has to be my favorite event. With an attendance of more than 400 professionals, you're bound to run into many you know and also meet a few you don't.



Jon Kelty

Associate, RCDolner LLC
Newark, N.J.
NAIOP New Jersey, NAIOP New York

Q: *What's the best benefit of NAIOP membership for you?*

A: Having an established local and North American platform from which one can participate in the development process through volunteer work, committees, business development, education programs or advocacy for the development industry.



Alex Kopicki

Principal, Manekin LLC
Columbia, Md.
NAIOP Maryland

Q: *What lessons have you learned from weathering today's economic climate?*

A: Unfortunately, I don't think the lessons are over; I know mine aren't. However, I've learned that there is no substitute to understanding market fundamentals and what drives value. Basically, old school is new school now.



Morgan Landers

Principal, Brownfield Partners
Denver, Colo.
NAIOP Colorado

Q: *What are you doing to stay successful during these challenging economic times?*

A: I take on tasks not part of my traditional job responsibilities that increase my knowledge base, ultimately broadening the areas in which I can contribute to my company.



Scott Maloney

Associate, Mbi • k2m Architecture Inc.
Cleveland, Ohio
NAIOP Northern Ohio

Q: *Now that you've won the 2009 Developing Leaders Award, what's next?*

A: As a consummate volunteer, I look for opportunities to invest my time and positively impact businesses, organizations, people or other areas of life. There is no shortage of opportunity.



Jason Newcomer

Principal, Natural Capital Management
Westminster, Colo.
NAIOP Colorado

Q: *What have you learned from your professional mentor?*

A: My mentor taught me that treating people right in your career will create more value and rewards than looking out only for yourself.



Gabriel Philibert

Associate, First Commercial Bank
Bloomington, Minn.
NAIOP Minnesota

Q: *What advice would you have given your younger self when you first entered the commercial real estate industry?*

A: It's okay to not know it all day one. Those that are the most successful are disciplined in their approach to business, create sustaining relationships and develop themselves as leaders.



Scott Schwendiman

Associate, Kennecott Land/Rio Tinto
South Jordan, Utah
NAIOP Utah

Q: *What do you see as the biggest opportunity when the markets rebound?*

A: Asset class and quality will increasingly be distinguishable as demand has an advantage on supply for the foreseeable future. The cream will rise to the top.



Troy Smothers

Principal, Wrightwood Capital
Chicago, Ill.
NAIOP Chicago

Q: *What advice would you have given your younger self when you first entered the commercial real estate industry?*

A: My advice would be to take on the most difficult projects. Those are the experiences that teach answers to questions that one wouldn't have even thought to ask.



Nils Snyder

Principal, Welsh Companies
Minneapolis, Minn.
NAIOP Minnesota

Q: *What's the name and URL of your favorite business blog?*

A: I currently enjoy reading the Freakonomics blog on the New York Times opinion page: <http://freakonomics.blogs.nytimes.com/>. I find it both amusing and educational.



Michael Weishaar

Associate, Colliers Turley Martin Tucker
Indianapolis, Ind.
NAIOP Indiana

Q: *Why did you decide to enter the commercial real estate industry?*

A: The autonomy that this industry brings clearly stands out as my number one professional motivator. ■

By **Sarah A. Milans**, marketing manager, NAIOP.