



Why now, why CRE?

By Pay Wu - President, MWBE Unite, Inc.



The COVID-19 pandemic brought ESG and DEI priorities to the forefront, with several areas within commercial real estate (CRE) gaining prominence. CRE has a significant role to play in meeting ESG and DEI goals. Here's why:

- Real estate and built environment account for significant portions of an organization's SG&A spend. Using diverse and sustainable suppliers contribute to commitments and social impact.
- Real estate as a sector employs many individuals throughout lifecycle of services and remains a sector that can contribute to generational wealth creation and provide thriving careers for under-represented workforces.
- The construction process and green considerations have a significant impact on carbon emissions. CRE plays a crucial role in installation, investment, operations, and efforts to mitigate carbon emissions.
- Projects undertaken by companies in cities and municipalities contribute to social impact investments, community development, job creation, and improvements in neighborhoods.

ESG and diverse supplier initiatives are subject to significant reporting and regulatory requirements, to report on initiatives and progress. Regardless of where you stand in the lifecycle of commercial real estate, you have a role to play in driving impactful outcomes. The real estate sector has the potential to drive change and create more inclusive practices.

continued on page 2

Diversity/Equity/Inclusion (DEI) Strategic Planning with the CoreNet NJ Board of Directors

On January 2023, The CoreNet NJ Board of Directors met with DEI Consultant Sherry Snipes of Global Diversity Collaborative to set the basis for strategic DEI planning for the Chapter.

We reviewed the DEI goals set by the board's committee chairs.

In summary, Sherry made the following list of recommendations to move forward:

- Hold a Board DEI Brainstorming session
- Review current DEI committee goals and update as appropriate
- Develop metrics to measure progress
 - » Resend and update results of board demographic survey
- Reach out to CoreNet Global HQ to gain access to member demographics
 - » If their demographic profile does not provide what you need then send a membership demographic survey
(*This is, indeed, the case – so keep an eye out for the survey)
- Quarterly review of DEI goals at board level
- Collaborate with any member firms that have an existing DEI program
(We are doing this. Attend the upcoming best practices program.)
- Provide ongoing DEI focused events
(We are doing this. Note the Neurodiversity in the Workplace event that took place on 4/19/23 and the upcoming best practices event.)

And last but not least, Sherry recommends full DEI Unconscious Bias Training for the board of directors (or a combinations of workshops 1 & 2 that were hosted by the DEI committee last year). While the board retreat was a great step, her observation is that there is a need to ensure that the board of directors fully understands and embraces DEI principles as an organizational imperative.

Thanks to Gensler Morristown for hosting our meeting in their lovely office.



Innovating through the downturn requires diversity and creativity

Historically, crises have led to innovation and creativity in building and development. After the Great Depression, the Empire State Building was erected. The Marshall Plan facilitated extensive rebuilding and job creation after World War II. Following 9/11, the Freedom Tower was constructed, transforming Ground Zero into a thriving area. As we navigate the post-COVID era, companies are transitioning from "making do" to innovating with less, fundamentally changing the nature of work through technologies like AI and machine learning. Real estate must also innovate to meet ESG and DEI goals, and companies face pressure to ensure their workforce and suppliers reflect their consumer base.

Diversity and creativity are crucial for progress around ESG and DEI priorities. The future workforce demands inclusive leadership and environments that foster creativity. Ignoring these trends can be detrimental, considering that by 2030, 75% of the workforce will consist of Millennials, Gen Z, and Gen Alpha.

Diverse voices, compelling experiences To address ESG and DEI priorities, the entire industry must actively participate. Let's hear from diverse employers, diverse employees, and allies.

Mildred Tolentino, CEO of M-TO-Pros

"The importance of ESG starts with the vital role of educating across the board. It takes a conscious effort of many to make substantial changes around the globe – government, corporations, education and to our households. Doing better for the next generation and providing a more equitable playing field for the diverse workforce requires social responsibility from all of us."

Diversity and Inclusion is key to economic empowerment. When you have a more equal distribution of wealth each community will benefit. Hiring diverse firms will touch another level of our society. It's proven that diverse leadership attracts a diverse workforce, and the economy by default gets stronger. At M TO-Pros, our workforce is 90% diverse. We attract diversity as our employees can relate to diverse leadership. We understand the challenges around diversity and are driven to be diverse, equitable and inclusive in our business. We live and embody empowerment within our company and that trickles down to our own communities."

Hemanth Setty, CEO of ZeroCircle

"Programs are not enough...Sustainable financing provides the fuel to spark innovative and inclusive programs that drive progress toward ESG and DEI goals in the real estate sector. By investing in sustainable initiatives, companies can build structures and projects that not only benefit the environment and communities but also create thriving careers for the underrepresented workforce. Diversity and creativity are essential in driving progress and demonstrating value alignment with future workforces."

Darlene Pope, President of Planon Corporation

"The real estate industry is in the thick of a perfect storm of regulatory, social, and business pressures to improve both their ESG metrics and facing financial challenges due to decreasing space demand, higher interest rates, and the global economic downturn. If there was ever a need for smarter buildings and more efficient workplaces, it's now. Automating building operations using real time data and analytics contribute significantly to energy and carbon reduction to meet ESG goals. Real estate executives have the tough job of balancing additional investments needed to reduce environmental impact with the long-term benefits to people, planet, and profit.

Letter from the President

Dear CoreNet NJ Members,

As the days become longer and brighter with Spring's long-awaited arrival, our Chapter continues to deliver events, content, and connection across the board.

We look forward to the Eastern Regional Symposium on June 5-6 at GW University in Washington, DC. This year's ERS promises to be an inspiring and dynamic event, so don't miss it!

This quarter's newsletter is dedicated to sharing knowledge and inspiration on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. In its second year with the NJ Chapter, our DEI committee has worked tirelessly to create and share experiences that challenge us all to expand our focus and awareness on this vital topic. We have offered many opportunities to learn more about how DEI impacts us all, and there will be more to come!

Please take the time to read these inspired articles, and as always, don't hesitate to reach out if you'd like to get more engaged with CoreNet, NJ. Our committees are always looking for new participants and fresh ideas.

Check the calendar for upcoming events. I hope to see you soon at the ERS or our Golf Outing on June 27th!



Warmest Regards,

Mary Beth Sullivan
Regional Vice President,
Teknion

President,
New Jersey Chapter
CoreNet Global

Both the real estate and technology industries are areas where significant improvement is needed in the attracting, recruiting, and employment of diverse resources. Planon is committed to advancing awareness and promoting action not only through our own diverse workforce, but also through our relationships with partners and contractors. We support organizations such as MWBE Unite and Women in PropTech as a way to support women and minorities in their efforts to thrive and grow within the real estate industry."

Do now, Do Different, Do Better

Every company and organizations at every level can contribute by doing something now, doing things differently, and doing better for improved outcome. Your clients and your employees value working with companies that care about diversity, inclusion, social impact, community and having cohorts who contribute to an interesting, creative and innovative work environment.

Diversity and RWJBarnabas' Newark Strong Project

By Daniel A. Nathanson, Turner Construction Company

Turner Construction is building the Newark Strong project for RWJBarnabas Health. This historic expansion project of the Newark Beth Israel Medical Center consists of the replacement of an existing emergency generator; an expansion of the housing, clinical, and support departments; reconfiguration of the current vehicular traffic flow off along Lyons Avenue; the fit-out of a lobby and emergency department; a phased renovation of the existing diagnostics, surgical, and critical care spaces; and a 17,500 square foot glass-enclosed lobby.



RWJBarnabas is a strong proponent of diversity. According to Darrell K. Terry, Sr., President and CEO of Newark Beth Israel Medical Center, "Thirty percent of the project is for minority, woman, and veteran-owned businesses. We want to make sure this project benefits the community we are here to serve." There are also goals to utilize locally-based enterprises to support the local economy. For example, the lobby project's glass came from Josloff Glass, a Newark-based, woman-owned business. There was a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the lobby on April 18th, 2023.



Additionally, as part of Turner Construction's approach to supporting the communities where they work, there were many initiatives completed, including: partnering with the Clinton Hill Community Action Association, donations to the CHCA Association to help install new windows for a Clinton Hill homeowner, organized a "shadow day" at the job-site for a graduate of the New Community Career & Technical Institute (the experience was so engaging that Turner made her a full-time offer to join Turner Construction), partnered with a painting trade partner (FCG Group) and volunteered time/donated labor and materials to paint the Avon Avenue School playground wall,

attended the Avon Avenue School Career Day and presented to over 60 elementary students about construction careers; Turner hired a minority-owned janitorial cleaning business to clean the office trailers during construction, and the Turner School of Construction Management class toured the project.

Rendering Credit: FCA

Photo Credit: Turner Construction Company



Meera Bahukutumbi,
CID, LEED AP ID+C, WELL AP,
Studio Manager,
Interior Architecture & Design,
Ware Malcomb

This quote is at the beginning of Meera's LinkedIn profile -

"You can't use up creativity. The more you use, the more you have." -Maya Angelou.

The choice of this quote is a sign of great things to come with Meera joining the Chapter's DEI Committee. Her creativity is needed!

For Over twenty years, Meera has been helping clients achieve their most efficient and functional environment through strong workspace strategy, planning, and design by building spaces that increase productivity and engagement through collaborative, technology-integrated, and healthy-built environments.

She recently took on the role of Studio Manager, having previously served as Senior Project Manager with a great interest in exploring creative design solutions. As a Certified Interior Designer with a LEED AP(ID+C) and a WELL AP certification, she understands the need to create sustainable, safe, healthy environments for her clients.

Meera started her design journey in India, completing a bachelor's degree in business and a diploma in interior design. She then moved to the United States and secured a bachelor's degree in interior design. The last sixteen years have provided her with relevant experience, having worked in design firms such as Studio Eagle, TPG Architecture, Interior Architects, Studio 1200, and Tilton Kelly Bell in Chicago, and has completed corporate, institutional, retail banking and trading firm interiors, and multiple GSA projects.

Event Recaps:

Bring Your Presentations To Life



Now, more than ever, it is critical to make those human connections intentionally. The Women's Group organized this 1.5-hour seminar where participants learned best practices for presenting confidently, clearly, and passionately. Led by Kurt Robbins, Vice President of Graceworks Inc, he dug into the specifics of how to give a presentation in a hybrid world, where in-person and remote attendance combine to create a new dynamic.

CoreNet NJ Gives Back



The Community Outreach Committee, chaired by Perry Cirigliano of Patcraft and Jim Brandt of AMA Group, organized the "CoreNet NJ Gives Back Happy Hour," a fundraising event for the benefit of BeesTreesWater. The event brought together over 60 commercial real estate professionals and design students from Kean University for a friendly social gathering at Dauphin in Boonton, NJ. Visitors were treated to tours of the Dauphin manufacturing facility, led by Dauphin president Matthew Negron. The event culminated with a presentation by Andie Moeder of BeesTreesWater and a raffle fundraiser in which the proceeds will allow BeesTreesWater to build beehives and one clean water well in a remote area of Bangladesh. This endeavor is estimated to help up to 100 women, men, and children gain access to clean water every day.

Event sponsors included Mancini Duffy, Elysium Construction, AMA Group, Studio 1200, THA Consulting, Jones Lang LaSalle, Levine Contract Furniture Group, and Dauphin, who was also the venue sponsor.

End User Breakfast

CoreNet NJ hosted the End User Breakfast at Anywhere Real Estate Inc's global headquarters in Madison, NJ, on April 26th. It featured a highly-engaged group of Member End Users discussing best practices, ideas, and challenges surrounding the workplace, remote/hybrid work, hiring and retaining talent, space utilization, CRE technology, and ESG's impact on CRE responsibilities.

Some notes from the discussion include:

- Don Watson, SVP of Real Estate & Facilities at Oracle, shared insight about current occupancy levels and work patterns differences from domestic and global perspectives.
- John Mathew, Executive Director of Real Estate & Facility Operations for Organon, demonstrated the need for data-based decision-making to tackle today's challenges in CRE.
- Event host Tom McGovern, VP of Corporate Real Estate at Anywhere Real Estate Inc., discussed space optimization in response to changing workforce preferences and company culture.

There were many other active End Users in attendance as well as members of the CoreNet NJ Executive and Education Committees. The roundtable discussion concluded with a brief facility tour.



Member Voices:



Steven Rinn
Managing Director at
American Properties

"As a father, I support diversity because I want a level playing field for my daughter who is in the male-dominated career of sports management. Personally, I celebrate diversity by seeking out dining and entertainment venues that espouse diversity, represent diversity in ownership, or expose me to different cultures."



Karen Krasnomowitz
Senior Vice President,
Creative Office Resources

"Creative Office Resources hosted corporate-wide, in all of our offices from Maine to NJ, a DEI lunch regarding Pronouns. Everyone learned a lot and we had a 20% increase in people putting their pronouns on their signatures."



Matthew Negron
President, Dauphin Americas

"Dauphin is the first-ever 'Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Supporter,' which is a new sponsorship package for the CoreNet NJ Chapter. It just felt right to support this."



Conrad Chang
Principal, AMA Group

"At AMA, we like to celebrate the diversity of our staff. A recent example is that we had two of our senior women in leadership - Celia Dick, Principal and Alyssa Fitzpatrick, Senior Associate - profiled in the New York Real Estate Journal. As an Asian man and a Principal at the firm, I enjoy the trend towards a more inclusive workplace."



Meera Bahukutumbi
CID, LEED AP ID+C, WELL AP,
Studio Manager, Interior Architecture
& Design at Ware Malcomb

"Ware Malcomb celebrated women in design, during Women's History Month, with a live Q&A with a few of our female leaders, followed by a screening of a documentary on women in our industry."

Event Recaps:

Neurodiversity

On April 19th, JLL Workplace leader Lee Daniels gave a captivating presentation about "Neurodiversity in the Workplace" at Bell Works, the venue sponsor, located in Holmdel, NJ. The DEI Committee organized the event. The presentation was well received, and the audience stayed engaged during the Q&A for over 30 minutes. Lee provided an interactive quiz at the end to help the audience retain what was shared. Attendees ranged from students to college graduates to veteran professionals across the commercial real estate spectrum. Neurodiversity is a topic that people are interested in! Thanks to Lee for traveling from the UK to share this exciting topic. Thanks to Jeff Garibaldi and Bell Works for hosting, sponsoring the exciting venue and delicious refreshments, and sharing about the astounding repositioning. The after-tour was great, too!



New Member Orientation

Another great member orientation event, planned by our Membership Committee, represented by Brent Kozlowski Brooke Dubinski, LEED Green Associate. We welcomed our new and returning members with smiles, refreshments and a presentation on member benefits.



State of the Market



Last January 25, the CoreNet NJ chapter hosted its annual State of the Market, organized by the Education Committee, co-chaired by Jennifer Lloyd and Shane Whelan.

Moderator Dana Nalbantian (Gensler), along with guest speakers Stephen Jenco (JLL), Jonce Walker (HLW), Marianne Zeller (ServiceNow), and Jermaine Pharms (NJEDA), eloquently demonstrated why ESG matters in CRE today. Corporate real estate is at the epicenter of ESG, and the decisions made around own versus lease, site selection, workplace design, and more, are greatly influenced by it. As Marianne Zeller pointed out, "ESG isn't a trend. It's here, and it's happening. It's now. We are not facing Climate Change. We are facing a Climate Crisis."

Young Leaders Happy Hour

The Young Leaders Committee hosted a Happy hour and Networking event at Glenbrook Brewery in Morristown! A successful event in collaboration with IFMA New Jersey Chapter & CREW NJ as well as sponsorship by AIS and The Holder Group, Inc.



Membership Networking

On May 10, CoreNet New Jersey hosted another great networking event, organized by our membership committee. The event took place at Flounder Brewing Co. where members enjoyed a beautiful day outdoors, enjoying the sun and local brewed beer.

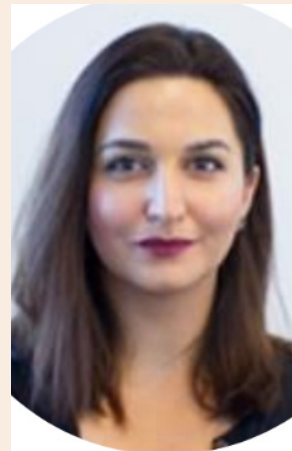


Member News:



Andrea Megnin

Andrea Megnin started a new position with JLL as Northeast Project and Development Services Lead and New York City Markets Lead.



Banafsheh Soltani

Banafsheh Soltani joined New Jersey Institute of Technology as an Interior Design Instructor, and started her own design consulting business Bana Designs.

Lizzie Archer

Lizzie Archer joined Turner Construction Company as Client Relations Manager. She also won a national diversity award with fellow CNG-NJ member, Pay Wu of MWBE Unite Inc. for a program they collaborated on together.



Make the Most of Your Membership... Volunteer Today!

Active members of the New Jersey Chapter will tell you that peer-to-peer networking and gaining value from the chapter starts at the committee level. There are many opportunities to participate no matter how much (or how little) time you have to give. View an active list of Committees and Committee Members [here](#).

If you are interested in joining a committee, please fill out the form [here](#). A Committee Chair will reach out to you and let you know how to get started.



Save the Date!

Annual Golf Outing

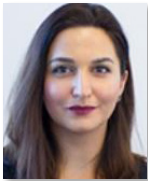
Tuesday, June 27th
11:30AM – 8:00PM
Morris County Golf Club
[Golf Clinic Registration](#)
[Dinner Only Registration](#)



SAVE THE DATE The osCRE Awards

Thursday, November 16, 2023
The Park Avenue Club
Florham Park, NJ

From: CoreNet NJ Communication Committee



Co-Chair:
Banafsheh Soltani



Co-Chair:
Veronica Stampfl



Committee Member:
Karen Ehrenworth



Committee Member:
Kelly Douglas

This Newsletter was done in collaboration between
Communication Committee and DEI Committee.
Thanks to Committe Co-Chairs Liz Archer & Kristine Hurlbut.



Liz Archer



Kristine Hurlbut

Welcome New Members

Meera Bahukutumbi	•	Ware Malcomb
Joseph Carrillo	•	American Express
Paul Cartularo	•	Richard L Hoffman & Associates
Lauren Farrell	•	Creative Office Resources
Al Festa	•	C&C Technology Group
Bonnie Filker	•	UL Solutions
Jana Fisher	•	PayPal
Maribel Guerrero	•	
Deana Jarmolowich	•	WB Wood
Lauren Marquardt	•	
Caroline Mattar	•	NJM LTD.
Steven McKessey	•	Lehrer Cumming
Joseph McMahon	•	The Walsh Company
Aesha Mehta	•	
Graca Paulo	•	Citizens Bank
Craig Plescia	•	Elysium Construction
Jennifer Ramos	•	Turner Construction Company
Ryan Remington	•	Savills
Melvin Rivera	•	Ernst & Young
Joe Rosati	•	Shawmut Design and Construction
Samantha Salazar	•	Verizon Communications Inc
Kathryn Thiele	•	
Richard Wilson	•	Axias Inc
Rick Zients	•	MillerKnoll



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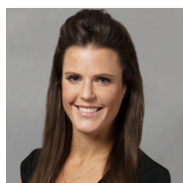
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Mary Beth Sullivan
Teknion



Vice President:
Marianne Zeller
ServiceNow



Treasurer:
Christie Mullen
Structure Tone



Secretary:
Brooke Dubinski
Turner Construction
Company



Past President:
Jeff Weidenborner, SLCR, MCR
Tenant Fusion Advisors



Associate Director:
Dana Nalbantian
Gensler

DIRECTORS

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Alex Goggin, Century Group

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Perry Cirigliano, Patcraft

DE&I

Co-Chairs:

Liz Archer, Turner Construction

Kristine Hurlbut, Denholtz

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