

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

A MESSAGE FROM OUR MNCREW PRESIDENT

It's been an absolute pleasure serving as your MNCREW President in 2022. As things are wrapping up, I have a huge amount of gratitude to share. For some of you who are newer to the organization you might be surprised by what it has taken to keep MNCREW running since its inception in 1995. It takes a village, and I hope I can include everyone who makes this organization extraordinary.

It was a humbling start to my tenure. I quickly realized how lucky I was to be leading an established organization. How did I realize this, you might ask? In my first few leadership summits with our global CREW Network, I had the opportunity to listen to the aches and pains that newer organizations face. I became very aware that MNCREW didn't have any of these issues, and often I was giving advice to the other chapters on policies and processes our chapter had in place. The reason I could give the advice, and the reason we had the policies and processes in place, was because of our past presidents and committed members who were there in the very beginning. Thank you to all of you. You know who you are!

Thank you to all of our membership, new and tenured. We had 28 MNCREW events and you showed up! From our monthly educational programs to our infamous Handbag Bingo and signature wine event, your attendance brought the energy and is why we are at the highest level of membership to date (278 members). Please keep up the momentum and share the power of CREW with all your peers.

2022's well-orchestrated events don't just happen; there are creative thinkers, project

executors and money managers, who we also call committee co-chairs, that make it happen. Thank you, committee co-chairs!

You kept everyone on task and created some of the best networking opportunities our industry has to offer. MNCREW is the premier networking organization in the metro, and it shows.

If we didn't mention this enough at our new member coffees, joining a committee is one of the best ways to get to know your peers and hone your leadership skills. A huge shout out of thanks to those committee members who brought their time and talents to each meeting and event. Your hard work did not go unnoticed, and our chapter is thriving because of you.

Did you know that we get professional help? What I mean is we work with Harrington Company, who provides MNCREW with board and committee coordination, policy, and procedure execution and, new for this year, marketing and social media strategy. Colleen Ayers, Hadley Bechler, and lone Terrio, thank you for being our partner and never skipping a beat.

To the strategic board this year, what would I have done without you? I am forever grateful for your time, energy, thoughtfulness, and honesty. You were there for me when I needed you. Thank you for executing everything that I asked during a year of reflection and rebounding. I could go on and on!

And last, but certainly not least, thank you to all our sponsors. We would not exist without your generosity, support, and belief in our mission to



2022 MNCREW PRESIDENT

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ignite the commercial real estate industry through the collective achievements and unique strengths of women. As an advocate for MNCREW, you are part of a very special group dedicated to advancing the success of women in commercial real estate.

It is my goal to help each one of you connect with someone new, attain a lead that motivates you, or receive career-advancing advice. Please reach out and let me know how I can help you.

Cheers to an amazing year!

SETTING GOALS FOR THE NEW YEAR (SELF-CARE)



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What does self-care mean to you?

We tend to think of self-care as something that comes after burnout. We think of it as retail therapy or maybe a spa day after a mental breakdown. However, the World Health Organization defines self-care as a daily practice of “[establishing and maintaining](#)” your health. Many of us may not already include self-care practices in our daily routines, but there’s no better time to start thinking about it than right now!

With the new year approaching, many of us are setting goals—both in our personal lives and careers. Yet, self-care isn’t something we often think about. If it is, we end up only doing half of the things we said we’d do. We know the importance of it, but life also moves very fast. One thing leads to the next and before you know it, we’re 11 months into the year.

While self-care usually involves activities you do outside of work, finding ways to incorporate a routine in your workday can impact your overall [productivity, workplace happiness, and personal and professional success](#). With that in mind, here are a few tips to start prioritizing your health this new year:

- **Pack a nutritious and delicious lunch:** Take a few extra minutes at the start of your day to pack yourself a lunch that you can look forward to. Like they say, you are what you eat!
- **Create an ergonomic workspace:** Consider investing in a workspace you can feel comfortable AND productive in—stand-up desk, vitamin D therapy lamp, or some plants.
- **Limit your responsibilities:** Learn to say NO. Respect the capacity of work your body can handle. Taking on more than you can handle not only affects you, but your team as well.
- **Socialize with coworkers:** Engage in activities with your coworkers, whether that be team lunches or puzzle time in the breakroom.
- **Request time off:** Take time away from work to recharge or catch up on personal errands/appointments. Prioritize time to reset and decompress to eliminate burnout.



- **Learn to be present:** Multitasking doesn’t always get the job done. Set time aside to meditate or engage in relaxation techniques when you find yourself struggling to focus on your work.
- **Set healthy boundaries:** However, don’t just set them, follow them! Boundaries are extremely helpful when establishing positive relationships.
- **Go outside more often:** This is easier said than done, especially when we live in a state of four seasons. However, take advantage of the time you can be outside, whether that is taking a walk or enjoying your lunch on the patio.

Remember, self-care is a way to remind yourself that you’re a person before an [employee](#). You’re in control of your own health, and no one can advocate for it better than yourself. Implementing a self-care routine doesn’t mean you have to change your life completely. However, you may find that implementing just a few of these practices can positively impact your personal and work life.

THE IMPENDING ECONOMIC DOWNTURN & WHY THIS TIME FEELS DIFFERENT



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While there is certainly change on the horizon, and an economic correction long-overdue, this go around feels different.

It is no secret that this country has experienced an unprecedented and unnaturally long economic cycle for the past eight plus years. Interest rates have consistently hovered around historic lows, inflation for the most part has been kept at bay, the stock market is in good health, and property values both commercially and residentially have steadily improved year over year, absolutely booming in the past three. However, like all good things, it must come to an end... right?

Investors are repositioning and recalibrating their strategies, growing businesses that were able to refinance are now able to sit on their properties and continue to pay down their cheap debt – seemingly all waiting to see what happens next.

Cyclically speaking we are about three years overdue for a “crash” and have begun to see the signs suggesting such a decline. One might even argue, depending upon which aspect you focus on and how you choose to measure the economy, that we are already knee deep in a recession. Factually speaking, a large majority of people would state that two consecutive quarters of falling real GDP would constitute a recession. However, that is not an entirely holistic way to evaluate the country’s business cycles. Instead, an economist will aim to assess all sectors of the data consisting of but not limited to the labor markets, commercial production levels, income levels across the board, and all consumer and business spending.

To deny that things are changing, however, is also inaccurate. It is true that the price of just about everything has dramatically increased, straining the pocket books of companies and consumers everywhere. Inflationary effects being felt, the Fed increasing their interest rates, and lenders pulling back on their debt has caused serious cause for concern amongst businesses and families alike. In the real estate world, we have seen this result in a downtick of deals being completed, a slight decline in multiple offer situations and demand, and the phasing out of the type of participants in the buyer pool.

Interesting to note is that while a lot of people seem to have yet again hit pause as we saw in the beginning of 2020, it is very safe to say that there is quite a bit of money still out there. Investors are repositioning and recalibrating their strategies, growing businesses that were able to refinance are now able to sit on their properties and continue to pay down their cheap debt—seemingly all waiting to see what happens next.

Also contradictory to a typical recession is the unemployment rate and its historically low percentages both locally and nationwide. Combining this with many strong balance sheets and high liquidity, many companies and commercial real estate users find themselves to be very well-positioned for a strong start heading into 2023.

While there is certainly change on the horizon, and an economic correction long-overdue, this go around feels different. While maybe less knowledgeable upon what is ultimately going to happen in the finer details, there is a prevailing sense that the positives appear to outweigh the negatives in today’s environment. No one carries the ability to look into a glass ball, but many signs point to yet another successful New Year.

MEGAN ROGERS



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I've really enjoyed coming to monthly events—and I played in the golf tournament this summer and had such a great time.

Who or what brought you to MNCREW?

Brandi Kerber recommended that I join, and I am so thankful that I did. I'm relatively new to private practice especially in Minnesota (I worked in Florida for several years before we moved back home). I worked as Bloomington's community development/land use lawyer for three years before joining Larkin Hoffman, and MNCREW has provided me with an opportunity to reintroduce myself to the women I knew and meet others working in the commercial real estate space.

Describe your involvement in MNCREW

I've really enjoyed coming to monthly events—and I played in the golf tournament this summer and had such a great time. I'm looking forward to getting more involved.

Education/Career Path

I went straight to law school after college and spent much of my career in-house with cities in South Florida and Minnesota. I joined Larkin Hoffman's Land Use and Government Relations practice in November of 2021.

Hobbies/Activities

I grew up figure skating, playing hockey and swimming, but I learned how to play golf the summer of 2020. I'm still getting the hang of it, but absolutely love being outside during Minnesota summers. In keeping with being outdoors—I love gardening and all things flowers.

Volunteer Experience

I had the opportunity to work with VEAP while I was with the City of Bloomington and now sit on its board. VEAP was started as a food shelf and meets a broad, unspoken need for food and emergency services in the suburban southwest metro. What really impressed me about the organization was how it saw a need and stepped up to provide rental assistance to residents during the first months of the pandemic. After seeing the ongoing need for this work, VEAP will continue to provide housing stability services to the communities it services. VEAP operates an onsite pantry that works like a grocery store, clients select the food they know their family will eat and enjoy. It's a great place to volunteer for team building—if you are interested please let me know!

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MNCREW became a staple as I found the opportunity to flourish professionally and engage with peers in a safe, fun, and informative way.

Who or what brought you to MNCREW?

Being new to the AEC industry, I quickly looked for member organizations and opportunities to connect to other like-minded professionals. MNCREW became a staple as I found the opportunity to flourish professionally and engage with peers in a safe, fun, and informative way.

Describe your involvement in MNCREW

I have participated in several MNCREW committees and strongly advocate for them. Women Run the Cities was the first I have done, the Rising Leaders Committee, The Mentorship Committee, and now I will co-chair the Communications Committee for 2023 with Isabelle Schwarz. My experience with all these committees has been educational and fun, and I've grown professionally and grown my network alongside incredible people!

Education/Career Path

I took my first summer job at 14 with a small family-owned bagel shop in Anoka, Minnesota. Then, I spent about eight years coaching gymnastics at the club and high school levels. After that, I completed my undergraduate degree with a BS in Environmental Science and Sustainable Agriculture. After college, I spent several years working for environmental agencies, The MN Conservation Corps, as a naturalist for the University of Minnesota with an LTER (long-term ecological research) program and a significant amount of time in forestry and wildland rehabilitation.

In the off-season, I worked for a retail running store where I taught run clinics. Due to an unfortunate injury, I paused my career in forestry. I began working at my alma mater in the graduate nursing programs,

and during that time, I completed my Master's Degree in Strategic Leadership. I was intrigued by the healthcare field and psychology and pursued courses in counseling, specifically, Drug and Alcohol Counseling. Through a tangled web of connections, a former mentor led me to the opportunity I have today with Cushing Terrell. My work is compelling, and no day is ever the same, and I love working with people and for a firm whose values align perfectly with mine.

Hobbies/Activities

When I'm not playing horsey with our 10, 7, 4 and 18-month-old daughters, I love trail running, exploring in nature, gardening, and sewing – typically toys for the girls. Additionally, I have a lot of windshield time and enjoy learning, so I listen to an absurd number of podcasts and audiobooks. My recent favorites are: "Trail Runner Nation" (podcast), "Gardenerd Tip of the Week" (podcast), "How to Talk to Anyone" by Leil Lowndes (book), and "Do Hard Things" by Steve Magness (book).



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**Contributions?
Questions or comments?**

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Thank you to our Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Partners!

As MNCREW embarks on its journey to make our organization a more inclusive and equitable place, we are grateful to the companies who have contributed towards this mission.

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