PRESIDENT'S LETTER

A MESSAGE FROM OUR MNCREW PRESIDENT.

Hello MNCREW!
This spring was a defining moment for MNCREW. We hosted the **2026 CREW Network Spring Leadership Summit** here in Minneapolis, welcoming leaders from around the world into our market and into the chapter we've worked so intentionally to build.

Hosting the Summit wasn't only about execution — although the execution was exceptional. It was an opportunity to show who we are. The tone and thoughtfulness, the way people engaged with each other - those are the things that leave a lasting impression, and they were evident from the moment the Summit began. And we showed up - in every sense of the word.

The energy for this prominent week was buzzing from the beginning. People came ready to participate, not just attend - which, if you've been to enough conferences, you know is not always a given. That carried through the speaker sessions, where **Danielle Bayard Jackson** pushed us to be more reflective and deliberate in how we build and sustain relationships, and where **Hannah Ubl** offered a candid and revealing perspective on leading across generations. Both conversations felt honest and immediately relevant.

We also grounded the experience in place. The **"Welcome to Minneapolis"** video produced by Vnzo set the tone early, and in my remarks I spoke about the role connection plays in this organization - how the relationships formed through CREW Network shape not just our careers, but how we lead and support one another over time, and become foundational CRE professionals in the process.

I'm incredibly proud of how MNCREW delivered as a host chapter. In particular, our **LAC Committee** and **volunteers** made this Summit what it was. They showed up early, stayed late, handled every detail, and did it with a level of focus and care that never wavered. It was truly extraordinary to watch.

This week did not come together by accident. It came together because a group of people leaned in fully and executed - in a way that made the entire experience feel seamless for everyone else. That kind of effort deserves more than a passing thank you. I am deeply, genuinely grateful.

If you saw that and thought *I want to be part of that energy*, you should be! Our committees are where so much of this work - and frankly, so much of the connection - happens. There is room for you, and there is real impact to be made. So, I invite you (and not for the last time) to step in, get involved, and be part of what makes this chapter work as well as it does.

The feedback we have received so far reflects the incredible passion and energy we put in. Members left with new experiences - from Paisley Park to the Saints and Twins games, Minnehaha Falls, and of course the Mall of America - along with new ideas, but more importantly, with stronger connections - to each other and to CREW Network as a whole.



KATRINA CADALBERT
Assistant General Counsel
Sherman Associates, Inc.

As we move into the second half of the year, keep that level of engagement. Stay close to this network. Take the extra step to connect, to follow up, to bring someone else into the conversation.

The Summit set a standard, and **it's ours to carry forward!**

Sincerely,

Katrina





A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

We want to extend a huge thank you to our Communications Committee for their dedication in bringing this newsletter to life. Our goal is to keep you **informed, inspired, and connected** to the latest industry trends, leadership insights, member spotlights, and professional development opportunities and connections. We are committed to making each issue even better, and we welcome your feedback and ideas for future editions or content contributions.

Thank you for being part of this incredible network and for your continued support of MNCREW. Here's to an exciting year ahead —let's continue to grow, lead, and shape the future of commercial real estate together! Stay connected, stay inspired, and we'll see you at the next MNCREW event!

Thank you to our Communications Committee Members:



Co-Chairs



MARI HANSEN
EVP of Marketing
Cetra Partners



CATIE WHEELER
Director of Marketing & Business Development
BKBM

Committee Members



ESTHER MICHAEL
Social Media Coordinator
Denison Parking



EMILY FELL
Division Manager
Plantscape



CHRIS BLISSETT
Director of Communication & Marketing
Emanuelson-Podas



KRISTINE SALLEE
Business Development Director
McGough

Committee Members



TANYA SCHULZE
Senior Marketing Specialist
HJ Development



MEGEN TEELE
Property Manager
Hines



QUINN JOHNSON
Commercial Market Representative
Cambria

Board of Directors Liason



KATIE NELSON
Project Manager
Frauenshuh

2026 CREW NETWORK SPRING LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SPONSORS, ATTENDEES, AND VOLUNTEERS!























INSIDE THE $263M TERMINAL 2 NORTH EXPANSION

AT MSP INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

MNCREW members got a behind-the-scenes look at one of the most complex active construction projects in the region: the Terminal 2 North Expansion at Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport. The panel, featuring:

Panelists included : Ashley Classic, Metropolitan Airports Commission; Laura Stevie, Miller Dunwiddie; Siobhan Nurse, Kimley-Horn; Nate Eaman, H&U Construction

The project team walked through six-plus years of planning, design, and construction on a 165,000-square-foot expansion that is redefining what a regional airport terminal can be.

The $263 million project adds two new gates, repositions four existing gates, replaces the entire central plant, installs a geothermal system, and brings a significant new concessions footprint online — all while MSP operates 24/7 and passengers continue to move through the terminal.

The design priorities were driven by MAC's passenger experience goals: clear wayfinding, equitable and accessible design, minimized wait times, and a sense of arrival that feels distinctly Minnesotan. From a green roof planted with native species to a wood curtain wall with 17-inch-deep mullions, the building makes a deliberate case for place.

The project is targeting LEED Gold certification and is expected to open new gate hold areas in spring 2027, with full reconfiguration complete by summer 2027.



Key Takeaways

- **Rainwater reclamation,** a 50,000-gallon underground tank collects roof water and uses it to flush concourse restrooms, directly supporting MAC's goal of reducing water use per passenger.
- **Sensory and quiet rooms,** designed in partnership with Frasier, the expansion introduces MSP's first dedicated sensory space and a separate quiet room with full-height doors and adjustable lighting.
- **Mass timber in an airport,** the design team made the case for a wood curtain wall and exposed CLT ceiling panels by running their own durability tests, including a month-long desk experiment involving Hi-C and coffee rings on a wood mullion sample.
- **24/7 construction complexity**, H&U Construction described coordinating with TSA, CBP, the airport police department, and MAC's own building authority, all while keeping planes moving and passengers unaware of the work happening around them.
- **Sustainability at scale,** MAC is currently at 51% of its goal to reduce emissions 80% from its 2014 baseline by 2030, with this project's geothermal system and electrical infrastructure upgrades contributing meaningfully to that number.

WHY WE SHOW UP FOR MNCREW PROGRAMMING!

- See how the biggest deals get built. Inside access to a $263M project — owner, design, and construction, all in one conversation.
- Learn how sustainability gets funded. Real numbers, real decisions, and a roadmap you can bring back to your own projects.
- Build relationships across the table. MNCREW brings the full project team together — so you're not just networking within your lane.
- Bring inclusive design thinking back to your work. Sensory rooms, accessible restrooms, equitable staff spaces — a replicable framework from a project that got it right.
- Hear from women leading complex projects. Senior owners, designers, and engineers navigating one of the most demanding construction environments in the metro.

ARTICLE BY:
CATIE WHEELER

SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION

PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE



On Earth Day, April 22, MNCREW members gathered at Westminster Event Center for a conversation that reframed sustainability in commercial real estate — not as a design-phase checkbox, but as a **lifecycle strategy with financial, regulatory, and community dimensions at every stage.**

Panelists included: Kevin Bright, Kraus-Anderson Construction; Carrie Cegla, Fluid Interiors; Hannah Jenkins, North Star Sustainability; Kyle Thompson, Michaud Cooley Erickson.

The panel opened with a clear-eyed message: the most impactful decisions happen before a shovel hits the ground. Setting measurable goals at project kickoff — an energy target, a greenhouse gas metric, an EV charging commitment — gives design teams the direction to make every downstream decision count. But panelists were equally pointed about what comes after: **occupancy changes, tenant transitions, and end-of-use planning all create sustainability resets** that owners, managers, and advisors can shape — if they're asking the right questions.

For MNCREW members across disciplines, the takeaway was the same: this is no longer just an engineer's conversation. It's a deal, asset management, and liability conversation — and the professionals who get ahead of it will have a real advantage.

Real Numbers, Real Decisions

One of the panel's sharpest moments was the reminder that the **Inflation Reduction Act is still delivering real money** — for now. Kevin Bright of Kraus-Anderson shared a project example where geothermal tax credits generated $600,000 back to the owner. For developers and owners not yet asking about incentives at project kickoff, the message was direct: you're leaving capital on the table.

Key takeaways for owners, managers, and advisors:

- **Ongoing commissioning pays fast,** one case study found $60,000 in savings within two days of launching a building automation review — covering the full-year program cost on day two.
- **Minnesota has a regulatory floor,** properties generating four or more cubic yards of solid waste weekly are required to recycle; Hennepin County adds an organics mandate for covered commercial generators.
- **Tenant transitions are an opportunity,** every occupancy change is a chance to right-size waste systems, recommission equipment, and evaluate reuse — not just refresh finishes.
- **Simple systems outperform complex ones,** bypassed equipment and ignored controls quietly drain efficiency for years when operators don't understand what they're managing.

Decommissioning Is Becoming a Differentiator

The panel closed with a case study that reframed what end-of-use can look like. A 400,000 SF commercial decommissioning — completed in under two months — diverted **73% of materials from the landfill** through donation partners, reuse vendors, and creative problem-solving. Fifty-five displays went to a local rage room at $10 per TV instead of paying e-waste recycling fees. Medical supplies went to nonprofits. Furniture found second lives through pre-owned dealers. Over 15,000 hours on site, the team turned what could have been a straightforward disposal into a community impact story.

For members who manage dispositions or advise on end-of-use strategy, **this is a conversation to be ahead of**. Client expectations are rising, and the tools — salvage partners, county grant programs, reuse networks — already exist in the Twin Cities.

Resources highlighted by the panel:

- Metro county recycling programs — free bins, site assessments, and grant funding
- Energy Spark (MN Chamber) — free commercial energy audits
- Reuse Minnesota — donation and salvage partner connections
- DSIRE.org — state-by-state energy incentive database

Sustainability in commercial real estate is no longer a design-phase conversation. It's a deal, asset management, and liability conversation — and the professionals who get ahead of it will have a real advantage.

ARTICLE BY:
CATIE WHEELER

2026 & BEYOND

COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE OUTLOOK.

On May 20, members joined colleagues from five commercial real estate associations and Spencer Levy, Global Client Strategist and Senior Economic Advisor at CBRE and host of The Weekly Take podcast, structured his entire talk around one central argument: **the industry is shifting from a capital-markets-focused model to an operations-focused one,** and that requires the same fearlessness Bowie showed every time he abandoned his most successful characters at the height of his fame.

His framework for navigating today's uncertainty was characteristically direct. One hand holds the scary news — wars, inflation, late-night tweets from Washington. The other holds one word: math. "If this hand does not impact this hand, don't worry about it." Most people consistently overestimate the impact of headline risk — and in doing so, create opportunity for those who don't.

On interest rates, Levy was candid. Inflation is staying sticky. The 10-year treasury hovering above 4.5% is the number that matters most. Cap rates compressed more than 400 basis points from 2012 to 2022 and are now staying flat for five or more years. The era of riding a lower exit cap rate to a return is over. Operators win. Cash wins.



Levy was bullish on the Twin Cities and specific about why — starting with his **five factors of awesome: capital, human capital, infrastructure, live/work/play, and foreign money.** Minneapolis has most of them.

- **Human capital** first. Levy pointed to Arizona State as a case study: when ASU launched an honors program and kept top students in-state, Tempe became the number one market in Arizona. "The U of M should be doing the same thing."
- **Foreign capital** second — and urgently. Japanese investors can finance U.S. assets using domestic debt 200 basis points cheaper. Foreign students bring parents who invest locally. His advice to anyone in economic development: get on the next plane to Tokyo.
- **On infrastructure**, Levy connected Minneapolis directly to a new U.S.-Canada-Mexico rail corridor with a Minneapolis-St. Paul spur — paired with a strong airport. "You know what I'm recommending now? Minneapolis."

Manufacturing was a conviction call. His tenants cover rent 13x over. Industry standard is 2x. On data centers, he was direct: Minnesota is a no-brainer — cold weather, water access, proximity to Canada.

Levy's closing argument tied everything back to his opening muse. Bowie didn't just reinvent himself — he made everyone around him better. He gave Stevie Ray Vaughan his first major platform. He pulled Peter Frampton out of retirement. He co-produced Lou Reed's Transformer. And five days before he died, he released Black Star, which swept the Grammys.

The lesson for commercial real estate: greatness is not a reason to stop changing. It's a reason to change faster.

Levy pointed to REITs trading at 20–40% discounts to NAV as opportunity hiding in plain sight. He cited Detroit's Renaissance Center redevelopment, Cleveland's Rock and Roll Hall of Fame district, and the potential of a Timberwolves arena district in Minneapolis as proof that concentrated development beats dispersed investment every time.

Levy closed with a horse racing analogy: the favorite is always mathematically overbet. People want to win, even when it costs them money. The better question — in racing and in real estate — is best risk-adjusted return. Bet on the jockey. Bet on the operator.

"Real estate is not a cost center. It's a revenue generator. The average occupier pays 4–5% of their top line in rent. Help them grow that top line by 20%, and suddenly no one is negotiating over the last dollar."

ARTICLE BY:
CATIE WHEELER

SPACES THAT HEAL

THE BUSINESS CASE FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH IN REAL ESTATE.

MNCREW's June program brought together a licensed counselor, an interior designer, a healthcare real estate broker, and a construction industry leader to examine how the built environment shapes behavioral health outcomes — and why that conversation now belongs at every CRE table.

Moderator Susan Kimbrel of Mohagen Hansen Architecture | Interiors — whose firm has been designing behavioral health spaces for over a decade — shaped a conversation that was equal parts human and strategic.

What the Panelists Shared

Four perspectives. One clear through-line: environments are not neutral.

- **Courtney Hintermeyer** emphasized that well-designed spaces help people feel the right thing at the right moment — activated for collaboration, calm for focused work. Choice and flexibility aren't perks. They're tools for regulation.
- **Tiffany Skorey of ATS&R** shared research-backed school renovations built around student voice, prioritizing natural light, belonging, staff wellness, and flexible learning environments — principles that translate directly to workplace design.
- **Misty Bowe, SVP at Colliers,** surveyed healthcare providers actively making real estate decisions. Their top priorities weren't square footage or location — they were calm, privacy, comfort, and healing. Staff well-being ranked as high as patient experience.
- **Kristine Sallee of McGough** showcased their WELL Platinum-certified headquarters: 94% of employees feel productive daily, and employee retention sits at 84% — outcomes tied directly to intentional, human-centered design.



Every Space You Touch is a Behavioral Health Decision

Whether you're designing, leasing, managing, or financing commercial real estate, the environments you help create directly influence how people think, work, recover, and stay. This panel made the business case clearly:

- **As a broker or advisor,** understanding what tenants actually value — calm, privacy, natural light, responsive ownership — sharpens your counsel and strengthens client relationships.
- **As a designer or architect,** the research is now in your corner. Wellness-driven design isn't an upcharge conversation. It's a retention and recruitment conversation.
- **As an owner or landlord,** deferred maintenance and poor wayfinding cost you tenants. Intentional environments create loyalty.
- **As a developer or lender,** WELL certification and wellness amenities are increasingly tied to occupancy rates, employee productivity, and measurable ROI.
- **As a leader in your own organization,** look around. Are there underutilized spaces that could support your team's wellbeing — and your bottom line?

The building isn't just where work happens. It influences how work gets done.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH IS EVERYONE'S STORY

In any room of 100 people:

- 1 in 6 is navigating anxiety
- 1 in 8 is dealing with depression
- 1 in 5 is managing addiction
- 1 in 10 struggles with ADHD
- 1 in 20 has experienced suicidal ideation at some point in their life

ARTICLE BY:
CATIE WHEELER

MAY WAS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

A REMINDER FOR CORPORATE WOMEN TO PRIORITIZE THEMSELVES

In the fast-paced, high-performing environments many of us operate in, it's easy to place everything and everyone above our own well-being. Deadlines, team leadership, family responsibilities, and the constant drive to "do more" can quietly take a toll.

May was **Mental Health Awareness Month**, a timely reminder that caring for your mental health is not a luxury. It's essential to sustaining your performance, leadership, and overall quality of life.

For corporate women especially, who often carry visible and invisible expectations, this is an opportunity to pause, reflect, and reset.



Why this Matters

Mental health isn't separate from professional success - it directly impacts it. Clarity, resilience, decision-making, and leadership presence all depend on your well-being. Yet many high-performing women push through stress until it becomes burnout.

Taking care of yourself isn't stepping back. It is strengthening your ability to lead, contribute, and grow.

Practical Ways to Take Care of Yourself

You don't need a complete life overhaul. Small, intentional actions can have a meaningful impact:

Create Boundaries Around Your Time

- Block time on your calendar for focused work or for breaks.
- Protect your personal time as intentionally as you protect meetings.
- Give yourself permission to disconnect after hours when possible.

Check in with Yourself Regularly

- Ask: How am I actually feeling today?
- Notice signs of stress, fatigue, or overwhelm early.
- Journaling or even quick mental resets can help bring awareness.

Move Your Body

- A short walk, stretch, or workout during the day can shift your mindset.
- Movement isn't about performance - it's about energy and mental clarity.

Prioritize Rest

- Sleep is one of the most overlooked drivers of mental health.
- Even small adjustments to your night routine can improve focus and mood.

Stay Connected

- Reach out to a colleague, mentor, or friend.
- You don't have to navigate challenges alone.



MAI VANG
Senior Asset Manager
Mortenson

A Leadership Perspective

If you're in a leadership role, your actions set the tone:

- Model healthy boundaries: eat lunch away from your desk, end the workday at a reasonable time.
- Encourage open conversations about well-being.
- Create space for your team to prioritize their mental health.

When leaders normalize these behaviors, it creates a healthier, more sustainable workplace culture for everyone.

A Simple Reminder

You are not just your role, your title, or your output.You deserve the same care, attention, and investment that you give to your work and others every day. This month and beyond, take a moment to invest in yourself. Even small steps matter.

Because when you take care of yourself, everything else you care about becomes stronger. If this resonates, please share how you prioritize your mental health.

GROWTH & COMMUNITY RELATIONS OVERVIEW

GET INVOLVED IN THIS NEW COMMITTEE.

One thing I love about MNCREW is we are always looking for new ways to add value for our members, through business connections, leadership development opportunities, and access to the national CREW network. That's why I'm excited about the new **Growth & Community Relations Committee.**

The Growth & Community Relations Committee focuses on strategically expanding MNCREW's reach and visibility through meaningful connections to our current members, new and potential members, and community.

This new committee was formed in 2025, and is led by co-chairs **Jacqui Plasha**, Business Development Manager with Caesarstone and **Melissa Early**, Asset Manager with Inventure Real Estate.

Jacqui Plasha

In Jacqui's new role with Caesarstone, she is constantly meeting new people in the architecture, design, construction, and real estate world. This is the perfect platform to promote MNCREW, generate excitement, and attract new members to the organization. Jacqui is a people person. If you attended MNCREW's Annual Party in March, you would remember Jacqui as she danced to her walk-up music as she took the stage to accept her Volunteer of the Year award.

Melissa Early

Melissa is excited to build this new committee from scratch, reaching out to potential new members, and attracting people early in their career to provide an opportunity for professional growth. If you know of anyone who may be interested in attending a MNCREW event, connect with Melissa for a free event pass.

The goal of the Growth & Community Relations Committee for this year is simple:

We are trying to expand who sees MNCREW to get a wider variety of people with different experiences and engage with potential members at various stages of their career.

If you are interested in becoming more involved with MNCREW, consider joining the Growth & Community Relations Committee. Jacqui and Melissa are currently a committee of two; they would love more voices to help drive this new committee!

Why Get Involved?

- **Collaborate** with MNCREW Member Engagement
- **Visibility** for MNCREW
- **Professional growth**
- **Expand** your professional and MNCREW network



KRISTINE SALLEE
Business Development Director
McGough

COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS:



JACQUI PLASHA
Business Development Manager
Caesarstone



MELISSA EARLY
Asset Manager
Inventure Real Estate

MEET THE SPONSOR ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

A GLIMPSE INTO THE COMMITTEE CONNECTING MEMBERS, SPONSORS, AND LASTING PARTNERSHIPS.

Behind the Scenes

Behind every successful MNCREW event, educational program, and networking opportunity is a group of members working behind the scenes to make it all possible: the Sponsor Engagement Committee.

With one clear mission—to build the partnerships that fuel MNCREW—the committee serves as a vital connection between the organizations and the companies that invest in its continued success.

Through thoughtful outreach, meaningful conversations, and relationship-building, committee members invite organizations to support MNCREW's mission and the work being done throughout the year.

That support has a direct impact. Sponsorships help power the events, programming, and professional development opportunities that members rely on.

It creates an experience that strengthens both individual careers and the commercial real estate community as a whole.

A Committee Built on Connection

While sponsorship is the committee's primary focus, the experience of serving on Sponsor Engagement often becomes much more than that.

Committee members have the opportunity to connect with professionals across the commercial real estate industry, learn about different companies and career paths, and expand their networks along the way.

The committee is especially well-suited for individuals who enjoy meeting new people, building relationships, and finding ways to contribute to the success of the organization behind the scenes.

Whether you're new to MNCREW or a longtime member, Sponsor Engagement offers an opportunity to make a tangible impact while growing your own professional network.

Join the Conversation

As the committee continues working toward this year's sponsorship goal, there is an open invitation for members and organizations to get involved.

Whether it's becoming a sponsor, helping with outreach efforts, or simply learning more about sponsorship opportunities, this is a place for everyone to be curious and get involved.

As the committee continues its work, committee chair leaders Jenni and Damon encourage members to explore ways to get involved. Whether that be through sponsorship, committee participation, or simply learning more about the organization's efforts.

Every conversation, introduction, and partnership plays a role in strengthening the community that makes MNCREW so valuable.

Interested in learning more? Be sure to check out the Sponsor Engagement web page to get involved today!

Together, we can continue building partnerships that support today's members and create opportunities for the next generation of women in commercial real estate.



ESTHER MICHAEL
Social Media Coordinator
Denison Parking

"Together, we can continue building partnerships that support today's members and create opportunities for the next generation of women in commercial real estate."

COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS:



JENNI MONOGUE
Service Operations Manager
Mint Roofing



DAMON PETERS
SVP, CRE Manager
Bell Bank

LEADERSHIP IN THREE SIMPLE IDEAS

CHOOSE ACTION. EMBRACE DISCOMFORT. BRING YOUR AUTHENTIC SELF.

As of this writing, we're deep in the heart of graduation season — a time to celebrate achievement, look ahead with optimism, and reflect on the lessons that help people grow into leaders. But while graduation season naturally puts the spotlight on commencement speeches, some of the most interesting leadership ideas aren't tied to a podium or a diploma. They're coming from women leading companies, building brands, serving on boards, and shaping industries right now.

With MNCREW's **Spring Leadership Summit having passed,** the insights from these three leaders feel especially timely as they continue to shape business, leadership, and culture.



CHRISTOPHER BLISSETT
Director of Communications + Marketing, Associate
Emanuelson-Podas

Nobody is Coming to Choose You

Emme Grede, co-founder of SKIMS and founding partner of Good American, has built a reputation for cutting through excuses and focusing on action. One of her recurring themes is simple but powerful: stop waiting for permission.

Whether it's starting a business, pursuing a leadership role, sharing an idea, or taking on a new challenge, many of us spend too much time waiting for someone else to tell us we're ready. Grede's message is that leadership often begins when we stop looking for approval and start taking ownership.

Growth Begins Where Comfort Ends

As an investor, business executive and co-founder of Ariel Alternatives' *Project Black*, **Mellody Hobson** often speaks about the importance of embracing discomfort. Growth, she argues, rarely happens when we're operating entirely within our comfort zones.

For those in CRE, discomfort can take many forms: pursuing a promotion, speaking in front of a crowd, asking for new business, accepting a board position, or taking on a project that stretches our abilities. While discomfort isn't always pleasant, it is often a signal that we're learning and growing.

Don't Shrink to Fit the Room

Throughout her career, **Bozoma Saint John** – an accomplished marketing executive that has spent time at Netflix, Uber, and Apple Music – has encouraged professionals to stop hiding the very qualities that make them unique. Her leadership philosophy is rooted in authenticity—not as a buzzword, but as a competitive advantage.

In environments where it's tempting to blend in, Saint John advocates for bringing your full perspective, experience, and personality to the table. The goal isn't to become the *loudest* voice in the room. It's to become the **most genuine.**

Why This Matters

Commercial real estate is ultimately a people business. Success often comes from stepping forward before you feel completely ready, embracing opportunities that stretch your abilities, and bringing your own perspective to the work.

Whether you're leading a project team, pursuing a promotion, mentoring emerging professionals, building client relationships, or serving in a volunteer leadership role, the same themes emerge again and again: **ownership, growth, and authenticity.**

RECOMMENDED LISTENING

If Emme Grede's message about ownership and initiative resonates with you, consider checking out her new podcast, ***Aspire with Emma Grede.***

The show features candid conversations with founders, executives, creators, and business leaders about what it actually takes to build a career, grow a business, and lead effectively. Grede has a knack for cutting through buzzwords and getting to practical advice, often asking the questions many listeners are already thinking.

SUSAN KIMBREL

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS THAT STICK (AND A BETTER SOURDOUGH!)

Susan Kimbrel, Senior Associate and Marketing Director at Mohagen Hansen Architecture | Interiors, has built her career around relationships. Whether she's collaborating with colleagues, mentoring others, or volunteering through MNCREW, Susan believes authenticity, positivity, and connection are the foundation of long-term success.

What Brought You to MNCREW?

Susan's path to MNCREW came through her involvement with the Society for Marketing Professional Services and encouragement from colleagues who were already active members. They shared that MNCREW offered an incredible opportunity to build meaningful relationships within the commercial real estate industry while also growing professionally.

"I immediately became involved at the committee level, which allowed me to quickly engage with members, contribute to the organization, and develop valuable professional relationships," Susan shared.

How Are You Currently Involved in MNCREW?

Susan's involvement quickly grew from committee participation to leadership opportunities. Co-chairing the Communications Committee alongside Val Doleman became a pivotal moment in her MNCREW journey. "That experience was incredibly fulfilling and informative," Susan said. "It also led to many meaningful relationships, including co-chairing the following year with Julie Esch."

Susan credits much of her continued involvement to the encouragement of fellow members who inspired her to step outside her comfort zone.

ARTICLE BY:
MARI HANSEN

A personal call from Claire Roberts encouraging her to pursue Board involvement gave Susan the confidence to take the next step. As a Director on the Board, she found herself learning from many accomplished women within the organization, including Mary Jo Kelly and Shari Bjork.

Today, Susan serves on the Programs Committee, a role she says continues to challenge and inspire her in unexpected ways. Looking back, she believes some of her strongest professional relationships and friendships have come from getting involved beyond simply attending events. Susan's advice to all members is to "**jump in, volunteer, and say yes to opportunities** - it is one of the best ways to build lasting connections and truly experience the value of the organization."

What Do You Enjoy Outside of Work?

Susan enjoys spending as much time outdoors as possible, whether that means golfing, playing pickleball, gardening, or taking long walks with family, friends, and her dog Frankie. Susan is also part of a summer golf league made up of women she originally met through work and MNCREW—a testament to the **lasting friendships** built through the organization. She also enjoys cooking and baking, though she admits she is still working on mastering the perfect sourdough loaf.

Favorite Place You Visited or Have Traveled to?

Travel is another passion for Susan and her family. While they've enjoyed vacations everywhere from North Carolina to Cabo San Lucas and Whistler, Arizona remains especially meaningful because of the family home they now own and have cherished for more than 40 years.



SUSAN KIMBREL
Senior Associate | Marketing Director
Mohagen Hansen Architecture I Interiors

This fall, Susan is also looking forward to a Rhine River cruise from Basel, Switzerland to Amsterdam, Netherlands. Italy also ranks high on her future travel bucket list.

Any Career Advice?

Throughout her career, one principle has remained constant: relationships matter. "People genuinely want to work with those they trust and enjoy," Susan shares. "You don't have to lead with toughness to be successful. You can be collaborative, fair, approachable, and still be highly effective and respected. I truly enjoy connecting with people, learning their stories and building relationships that extend beyond a single project or transaction. **Professionalism and kindness are never weaknesses** - they are qualities that create trust, strengthen teams, and lead to lasting success."

Susan also credits her dad as a major influence/mentor, having instilled in her the power of positivity—a mindset she carries into every relationship and opportunity.When asked about the best career advice she has received, Susan reflected on lessons learned from her father. "He strongly believed in the power of positive thinking," she shared. "I was raised to believe **positivity is everything**."

That mindset continues to guide both her personal and professional life. Susan believes "positivity in how you approach others and the work you do is infectious, creates stronger relationships, and ultimately leads to better and more successful outcomes."

KIERSTIN SCHILLING

NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT. ASK THE QUESTION. OPEN THE DOOR. SEE WHAT FOLLOWS NEXT.

What Brought You to MNCREW?
Several colleagues at her company who were active MNCREW members encouraged Kierstin to join the organization. Having heard about the organization before, she was already interested in getting involved.

"So with their encouragement, I decided to take the leap," Kierstin says. "I'm glad I did. It has been a great experience. MNCREW has given me the opportunity to meet and learn from an incredible group of women, gain new perspectives on the commercial real estate industry, and build relationships with people I may not have crossed paths with otherwise."

Describe Your Involvement in MNCREW?
As Kierstin continues to become more involved with MNCREW, she actively attends panel discussions to deepen her knowledge of the industry and participates in events to build relationships and connect with fellow members. "I've enjoyed attending events, hearing from industry leaders through panel discussions. It has reinforced the importance of getting involved, stepping outside of your comfort zone, and saying yes to opportunities that can help you grow both personally and professionally."

Education/Career Path:
After earning her degree in accounting from the University of Minnesota Duluth, Kierstin launched her career in property accounting before discovering her passion for property management. She began by managing a small industrial portfolio, later expanded her expertise through the management of an office portfolio, and now oversees a large retail portfolio, drawing on experience gained across several sectors of commercial real estate.

What Do You Enjoy Outside of Work?
When she's not managing her retail portfolio, Kierstin enjoys spending time with her two young children, who keep her on the go with their active schedules and sporting events.

She also appreciates life's quieter moments, whether that's playing a round of golf, discovering a new favorite restaurant, or relaxing with a good book.

Career Advice?
"My career advice is simple: **don't be afraid to ask.** It may sound cliché, but the worst someone can say is 'no.' Whether it's asking for a new opportunity, seeking guidance, requesting additional responsibility, or simply introducing yourself to someone you admire, putting yourself out there can open doors you never expected.

In property management specifically, I've learned that relationships are everything. Take the time to truly get to know your clients, tenants, vendors, and the people you work with every day. The **trust and rapport** you build through those interactions often become just as important as your technical skills.

People remember how you make them feel, and strong relationships can carry you through challenges, create new opportunities, and make you more effective in your role. **Invest in people**—they're the foundation of a successful career."



KIERSTIN SCHILLING
Senior Property Manager
HJ Development

"Putting yourself out there can open doors you never expected."

ARTICLE BY:
TANYA SCHULZE

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

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Contributions? Questions? Comments?

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