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C O N N E C T I O N Z





Five Recognized for Outstanding Commitment

Award Winners Reflect on Varied Careers

BY SCOTT VAN VOORHIS



William Wollinger
RHA Industry Excellence Award

William Wollinger went to work in the 1970s for a small real estate startup with a focus on rental properties.

Today, he's president and that little startup has grown up to become one of the giants of residential real estate world.

As president of WinnResidential, Wollinger manages an empire of tens of thousands of apartment and condos in more than 200 residential communities spread across 19 states. He's also heavily involved in the management and development of new housing for the military, overseeing thousands of housing units on bases across the country.

Wollinger is this year's recipient of the Rental Housing Association's Industry Excellence Award.

"Certainly over those decades a lot has happened," Wollinger noted. "There have been certain significant political challenges and tax changes. Some things, though, have remained the same. Basically, people need places to live."

Like a lot of success stories, Wollinger got his start in the business on the ground floor.

A graduate of the University of Massachusetts Amherst, Wollinger flew medical evacuation missions as a helicopter pilot in Vietnam.

Back home in Massachusetts in the early 1970s and looking for work, he began helping a childhood friend renovate apartments in Woburn.

From there, he took a job renting apartments, eventually landing in 1979 with WinnCompanies, a small but growing family-owned company.

Over the next few decades, Winn grew explosively through a mix of acquisitions and new development.

When Wollinger came on board the company had five properties. Today it has more than 400.

By 2001, the company, under Wollinger's leadership, began pushing into the military housing sector as well. It now manages more than 40,000 apartments for military personnel.

With the growth, Wollinger has taken a special interest in recruiting and nurturing new employees. With a payroll of 2,300, Winn now regularly hires as many as 700 people a year.

"Our business is really a people business," said Wollinger, who said he subscribes to the old adage that "you can hire for attitude and train for aptitude."

Over the years, Wollinger has also taken on a leadership industry role as well.

He serves on the executive council and board of the National Affordable Housing Management Association and regional vice president and board member of the National Apartment Association. In addition, he also sits on the board of the Greater Boston Real Estate Board/Rental Housing Association.

"First and foremost it is the right thing to do," Wollinger said of his commitment to industry leadership. "Selfishly, it also allows us to network with other people outside the organization."



Jordan Krasnow
REFA Robert S. Swain Jr. Distinguished Service Award

Ever wondered who put together the financing for some of Boston's landmark developments, from Rowes Wharf to the new Garden?

Look no farther than Goulston & Storrs' Jordan Krasnow. A longtime Hub real estate attorney, Krasnow is the winner of this year's Robert S. Swain Jr. Distinguished Service Award from the Real Estate Finance Association (REFA).



The award is named after another long-time veteran of Boston's real estate finance sector, Robert Swain, who over a 33-year career gained the admiration and respect of his colleagues.

The annual award recognizes a major contribution to the real estate industry, either through a long and illustrious career or a specific act or deal.

For his part, Krasnow certainly fits the bill, with a career as a real estate lawyer with a nose for finance that stretches back to 1969.

One of his first jobs was to serve as development counsel for the developer of 225 Franklin St., one of the first modern high-rises in downtown Boston.

Krasnow helped put together the financing for the Langham Hotel, the Post Office Square Garage and Rowes Wharf. He also represented the three lead banks in the financing of the new Boston Garden.

Krasnow has worked on the acquisition side as well, representing the Leventhal family's Beacon Capital Partners, among others.

He is currently the legal counsel for real estate matters for the new Edward M. Kennedy institute slated to take shape on Dorchester's Columbia Point.

"It's been a fairly varied career," Krasnow reflected. "Every decade was something different."

When he's not helping craft complex real estate finance deals, Krasnow is also active in both industry organizations and in the community.

He's the director of a Roxbury charter school, served as chair of the real estate section of the Boston Bar Association, and has been involved with the National Association of Real Estate Investment Trusts.

"Jordan Krasnow is the 'go to' attorney for many of Boston's top lenders and developers. Jordan has advised his clients on many large, complex and often politically sensitive transactions using his extraordinary combination of legal expertise, interpersonal skills and business acumen," said David Henderson of Allstate Investments and a co-chair of the Real Estate Finance Association awards gala, in a press statement.



Thomas Hynes
BOMA Industry Leadership Award

Thomas Hynes, chairman and chief executive of commercial real estate powerhouse Colliers Meredith & Grew, makes it clear he likes to look forward, not back.

While acknowledging times are tough, he's confident in that Meredith & Grew's balanced approach will see the firm through.

Under Hynes, the top downtown brokerage has maintained a full line of services, from investment sales and leasing to research and appraisals.

Overall, Meredith & Grew has grown from a small shop of 25 when Hynes started in 1965 to 150 today.

He's also a bull on technology, arguing it has made the business, and the office tower owners firms like Meredith & Grew work with, that much more sophisticated and efficient.

It is that unwillingness to rest on his laurels that has made Hynes a major force in the Boston office market.

In recognition of his career and accomplishments, the Building Owners and Managers Association has bestowed its annual Industry Leadership Award on Hynes.



"We are keenly aware of what our clients expect from us today and want to exceed their expectations," Hynes said.

Still, while Hynes may not like to look back, there's much to reflect upon in a remarkable career that spans the history of the modern Boston office market.

Hynes, who grew up in West Roxbury and whose uncle was one of Boston's best-regarded mayors, got his start in the real estate business working on the demolition of the old West End.

He landed a couple years later at Meredith & Grew, just as the office tower building boom that would remake downtown Boston was picking up steam.

Hynes worked his way up to president in 1988 and became chairman in 2007.

He played a key role in getting the Landmark retail and office complex off the ground, helping broker the lease deal



that moved Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Massachusetts' corporate headquarters into a redeveloped Fenway building.

Hynes also looks back with pride on the ability of his firm to navigate a business world that has undergone dramatic changes.

Meredith & Grew helped lease and buy millions of square feet for Wang and Stone and Webster during their boom years, and then helped both firms sell their real estate assets when their fortunes shifted.

The firm also played a key role in helping MIT roll out its stunningly successful University Park research complex.

Along with successfully guiding and growing one of downtown Boston's oldest brokerage firms, Hynes has also played a major leadership role in the industry.

Hynes and Meredith & Grew helped launch the Artery Business Committee, which gave Boston's businesses a crucial voice during the major changes wrought by the Big Dig.

He is a former president of GBREB and former chairman of the Massachusetts Business Roundtable.

Hynes has been guided throughout his career by an abiding love for the city he grew up in and a belief in Boston's potential.

"When we have visitors from out of town, instead of taking them to Faneuil Hall, we take them through the city and drive them through the different neighborhoods," he said. "They are stunned at the vibrancy and multi-ethnicity of the city."

continued on page 12



Outstanding Commitment

continued from page 9



David Friedberg
*Greater Boston
REALTOR® of the Year*

When he was growing up in Wayland, David Friedberg raced home each day after school to catch a glimpse of the construction crews hammering away at new homes in his suburban subdivision.

So began a life-long fascination with real estate, one that eventually led Friedberg into the business not of building homes, but of selling them.

Today Friedberg is a senior vice president at Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage in Brookline and a major leader in the local real estate industry.

The immediate past president of GBAR, Friedberg has sat on the boards of GBREB and the Massachusetts Association of REALTORS®, taking leadership roles on countless committees.

And when he's not working to improve the industry, Friedberg is volunteering in the community, from delivering meals to the homebound with Community Servings to riding in the Pan-Mass Challenge to raise money for Dana Farber and the Jimmy Fund.

In recognition of Friedman's remarkable commitment to both his field and his community, he was named Greater Boston REALTOR® of the Year by GBAR in September.

Still, Friedman's ascent to the top of his profession did not happen overnight and sometimes took a circuitous route.

After attending the University of Wisconsin, he came back to the Boston area in the early 1980s intent on breaking into the commercial real estate market.

Despite wrangling meetings with Don Chiofaro and other local developers, it turned out to be a tough sector to break into.

Friedman eventually found his way into residential real estate market instead, doing condo conversions during the 1980s boom and then shifting to foreclosure sales and management when it went bust.

Friedman then made another jump in the early 1990s that proved momentous for his career.

He shifted from rentals to sales

and went to work for Hunneman in Brookline.

A couple years later, he took over leadership of the office under a co-manager set-up, one that lasted until 2007.

During that time, Friedman helped oversee a dramatic expansion in the office, from 18 brokers to 106 by the time the market peaked in 2005.

He also helped expand the office's sales territory beyond Brookline into Boston and neighborhoods like Jamaica Plain, West Roxbury and Roslindale.

But for Friedman, it has always been about much more than expanding sales.

Since the 1990s, he's made a conscious effort to promote community involvement, from hanging artwork of schoolchildren on the office walls to encouraging employees to pitch in with an array of community causes.

"After focusing on the business part of it, it was just knowing that being a vital part of a community and being a good business is to give back," Friedman said. "We are not selling people houses, we are finding them homes."

He's particularly proud of efforts to bring along new talent, both in his own office and in the industry as a whole.

During his time as GBAR president, he pushed hard to provide all members with two continuing education credits in exchange for their dues.

"That was one of my passions," Friedman noted. "I believe that additional education is critical. It really does set us apart. It gives us what we need to be successful."



Robert Shortsleeve

*Andrew F. Hickey
Distinguished Service
Award*

Robert Shortsleeve's real estate career began with a deal that only a cash-starved college student would have been desperate enough to dream up.

Broke and facing eviction from his Fenway apartment in the late 1970s, Shortsleeve went to his landlord with an unusual offer.

"Hire me or evict me," he recalls telling the company that managed his building.

Instead of booting Shortsleeve, Norman Levenson's Copley Management

put the scrappy college kid to work cleaning out apartments.

More than 30 years later, Shortsleeve is one of the Boston area's top residential real estate executives, while also holding key industry and civic leadership roles.

In recognition of years of service to the industry, GBAR has awarded Shortsleeve this year's Andrew F. Hickey Distinguished Service Award.

It's not a future Shortsleeve likely envisioned as he took out the trash and cleaned apartments for Copley Management during his college days.

But Shortsleeve looks back with gratitude for Levenson and Copley Management, as well as other key figures that gave him important breaks in his career.

"Norman Levenson gave me the opportunity," Shortsleeve said. "He trusted some grubby kid." Shortsleeve eventually moved from cleaning Copley's apartments to renting them.

He later went to work doing condo conversions, bought his own real estate firm, and then sold it to a larger brokerage house.

After climbing up the ranks of the residential sales world, Shortsleeve landed another big opportunity in 2004 when he moved into management for Coldwell Banker, overseeing offices in Boston and the suburbs.

"I had been in brokerage for an awful long time," Shortsleeve recalled. "This was a chance to take it the next level and really see how a successful brokerage operates."

As he has climbed the ladder of his profession, Shortsleeve has taken on leadership roles in both the industry and the community.

He serves on GBREB's board and is on its executive leadership team. He also chairs the real estate board's government affairs committee, while serving as assistant treasurer for the organization.

He has also taken on a major leadership role in the community and was appointed by Mayor Thomas M. Menino to chair Boston's Zoning Board of Appeals a few years ago.

"Bob has an unwavering commitment and dedication to the REALTOR® profession, the Greater Boston Real Estate Board, and the city of Boston," said Greg Vasil, chief executive of GBREB, in a statement. "He is most deserving of the Hickey Award." ■