

FEATURED ARTICLE

Founding the Next GENERATION

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SIOR and the SIOR Foundation Intensify Efforts to Attract Next Generation Professionals to the Commercial Real Estate Industry

By Gary Marsh

Whether it's Millennials, Generation Z, Generation Alpha, or as some want to be called, "The Founders," SIOR and the SIOR Foundation have accelerated their actions to attract young professionals, by introducing new initiatives, programs, and policies. SIOR recognizes the value and importance of fostering a new wave of educated and passionate commercial real estate professionals, and its latest initiatives showcase this commitment.

The Member Associate Program was developed to attract SIOR designees who are very early on in their careers.

Alma Cuevas-Griffis, a director in the industrial group of Cushman & Wakefield in Las Vegas, is a new Member Associate. In her third year as a brokerage professional (yet with 16 prior years of

commercial real estate experience with Harsch Investment Properties) Cuevas-Griffis says that achieving the SIOR designation is important to her.

"The long-term relationships that I've developed over the years are largely built on sincerity and authenticity," says Cuevas-Griffis "I am genuinely interested in my clients and their respective businesses, and work tirelessly to protect their interests. It is of utmost importance for me to earn my SIOR designation and to leverage all the resources available through the SIOR platform," she said.

The Member Associate program provides mentorship, resources, and networking opportunities to help brokers qualify for the designation and set them on the right path.

SIOR and other industry associations are working to fill the talent pipeline by partnering in the launch of Careers Building Communities, a web-based initiative and collaboration to highlight the diverse career paths within the real estate sector. This new website allows visitors to navigate through the scores of career paths across all sectors of real estate. For the first time, students in high school, college, technical programs, and community colleges can explore possible career pathways by taking an interactive quiz and discovering career opportunities. As the industry seeks to fill millions of jobs, this site serves as an all-inclusive resource for students, educators, career changers, and other stakeholders to explore the unlimited opportunities in the field of real estate.

In addition to SIOR, other industry associations supporting the career development program include CCIM, BOMA, IREM®, CREW, NAIOP, ULI and many others.

Matching Funds, Student Experience Programs Continue to Drive the SIOR Foundation's Success

In September the SIOR Foundation launched a new scholarship program with Portland State University's Center for Real Estate in the Schools of Business and Urban Studies and Planning. The SIOR Oregon Chapter, along with matching funds from Washington, D.C.-based SIOR Foundation and Portland State University, established a \$24,000 fund through the Portland State University Foundation for the 2018-2019 school year. The scholarship will create four, \$4,000 scholarships for graduate students, as well as \$8,000 in fellowship grants for a student writer and a graphic

designer to produce the Center for Real Estate Quarterly Report.

It is the fourth matching funds program established by the SIOR Foundation, in which the local chapter pledges the first \$6,000 and the Foundation matches that to create a \$12,000 scholarship. Additionally, a foundation associated with the school, trustees, alumni, or a local corporation provides \$12,000 in matching funds to accomplish the \$24,000 in grants. Other matching funds programs are in place at St. Louis University, University of North Carolina, Charlotte, and the Mays Business School at Texas A&M University.

Started by David Hagan, SIOR, with CBRE in Greensboro, N.C. and past-president of the SIOR Foundation, the Student Experience Program continues to grow and now consistently draws six or more students per national conference. Chapters nominate a student from their region, pledge \$1,000, and the Foundation matches that \$1,000 to cover travel expenses, lodging, and meals, including deeply discounted registration fees.

During its recent Fall World Conference in Denver, SIOR hosted seven students, including undergraduates from UNC Charlotte, UNC Chapel Hill, University of Connecticut, Cal Poly Pomona, University of Reading (in the U.K.) and the University of Southern California. Phallon Bullard, a senior property manager in Broward County, Fla., and a M.S. Real Estate Development graduate student at Nova Southeastern University, H. Wayne Huizenga School of Business and Entrepreneurship, was also in Denver.

L-R: Cailen Roth, Daniel Vincent, David Hagan, SIOR, CCIM, SIOR Foundation Trustee and Foundation Past President, Mathis Nedell, Stanford Shell, Pierce Schneider, Heyward Rogers, Caci Rhuda, Ashleigh Turner and Lu Zhao at the Denver World Conference in October.



“Engaging with elite commercial real estate professionals and having in-depth conversations with individuals who have amassed a high-level of success was beyond inspiring,” said Bullard. “These interactions are critical to my outlook of how to align my goals with the predictions of the real estate market. I was occasionally approached by women in attendance that were delighted at the site of me being in the room. They strongly encouraged me to pursue commercial real estate as a broker or on the management side. Overall, I am so grateful to have been so nicely received by SIOR members. This experience was life changing.”

An undergraduate real estate club from Tennessee initiated its own attendance to the Fall World Conference in Denver, after the suggestion from one of its professors and a phone call to the SIOR Foundation in Washington, D.C.

“We work really hard to get our students out of the classroom and meet with industry professionals to give them exposure to the real world and introduce a network of contacts in the industry that could lead to job opportunities,” said Dr. Philip Seagraves, director of the real estate program at Middle Tennessee State University. The university awarded the real estate club \$15,000 for this school year, some of which covered

traveling expenses for five students to Denver.

“As the Treasurer of Tennessee’s only collegiate real estate club, I am very grateful to Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) for sending us to the SIOR conference, and SIOR for making us feel welcome and sharing their knowledge of commercial real estate,” said Cailen Roth, MTSU Entrepreneurship student and Blue Raider Real Estate Club Treasurer. Middle Tennessee State University is less than an hour south of Nashville.

“Taken together, the programs SIOR is doing independently or collaboratively with our industry partners and other associations are absolutely essential for the commercial real estate industry as a whole,” said SIOR CEO Tom McCormick, SIOR. “In particular, the SIOR Foundation’s mission to attract young professionals and support them is more important than ever. The generation that is just about to leave college or begin their careers are more experiential than we were when we got started. Showing them our industry and engaging with them one-on-one or in small groups is the best way to attract the next generation of commercial real estate service. ♥

L-R: Phallon Bullard, Caci Rhuda, Lu Zhao attended the Fall World Conference in Denver

