

Civic-Minded Leadership in Commercial Real Estate



Wanda Goodloe



Kyle Schoppmann



Robert Stillman

An Interview with
Wanda Goodloe, Senior Vice President and General Counsel, Tri-State Region; Kyle Schoppmann, Executive Managing Director, Advisory and Transaction Services; and Robert Stillman, Vice Chairman, New York Consulting and Agency Group, CBRE

EDITORS' NOTE Prior to joining CBRE as General Counsel for the Tri-State Region, Wanda Goodloe spent 16 years practicing at the law firm Jones Day. As a senior real estate partner there, her clients included owners, developers, pension funds, institutional clients, governmental entities, tenants, and a variety of investors.

Kyle Schoppmann holds multiple roles at CBRE, including management of its New York operation and Head of Occupier Services and Chief Strategist for the Tri-State Region. Schoppmann joined the company as Managing Director, Brokerage Services in 2007, assumed responsibility for Capital Markets as Senior Managing Director in 2009, and in 2014 was promoted to Executive Managing Director. She was previously a partner at PricewaterhouseCoopers and then IBM.

Robert Stillman has been with CBRE since 1994 and is a leading member of the New York Consulting and Agency Group. He has been involved in the development and implementation of strategic real estate plans for several major corporations, regionally and nationally. Stillman has an M.B.A. in finance from New York University Stern School of Business and a B.B.A. in finance from Emory University.

COMPANY BRIEF CBRE Group, Inc. (cbre.com), a Fortune 500 and S&P 500 company headquartered in Los Angeles, is the world's largest commercial real estate services and investment firm (based on 2015 revenue). The company has more than 70,000 employees (excluding affiliates), and serves real estate investors and occupiers through more than 400 offices (excluding affiliates) worldwide. CBRE offers a broad range of integrated services, including facilities, transaction, and project management; property management; investment management; appraisal and valuation; property leasing; strategic consulting; property sales; mortgage services; and development services.

You are all graduates of the David Rockefeller Fellows Program. How has being a part of that program impacted the way you operate within your business?

Kyle: The program is designed to give participants exposure to key leaders and issues that face New York across private and public sectors. It gave me extraordinary access to the people and places that really make New York a unique and powerful city. The program, and the Partnership overall, focuses on driving commerce and innovation, both of which are core to what we do on behalf of clients.

Site visits – especially at places like the MTA Control Center – gave me a deeper appreciation for the inner workings of the city and its underlying infrastructure.

From corporate CEOs to city leadership to our class of fellows, the program delivered an incredible network to tap into – and the opportunity to bring back insight from leaders across New York City and put it into practice here at CBRE.

Robert: We met with the senior leaders of some of the most significant companies in New York and heard their unique perspectives on the businesses they run and their relationships with the city. The program creates a truly invaluable network – in fact, I fostered relationships that led to a fairly significant transaction.

The Partnership is also great about sustaining the “connection.” We’re invited to several functions throughout the year, including graduation for new fellows, the annual board meeting, and presentations given by city leadership.

Wanda: The program gave me a unique opportunity to forge long-lasting relationships that I’ve maintained for 20 years. Some of those connections impact my job daily, and many of those relationships have strengthened CBRE’s legal relationships with clients and entities critical to our business.

The Partnership for New York City brings together business leaders representing the diverse sectors and interests of our city. What makes the organization so effective?

Robert: A big part of their effort is staying connected to business leaders trying to promote business and job growth within New York. They are at the forefront of bridging the gap between our city and state governments and business leaders. There’s also a fund created by some of the Partnership business leaders to invest in New York businesses and nonprofits that create jobs and opportunities for New Yorkers. The fund has loaned money to real estate ventures that also advance the mission.

Kyle: The Partnership has been instrumental in making New York a hub for tech. In turn, it’s fueled our own focus on creating industry-specific expertise and innovative solutions that support growing tech and creative companies, and keep us aligned with their evolving needs.

Wanda: From a legal perspective, the program has given me a better understanding of how to help our clients achieve their business

objectives within the context of the city’s inner workings. Without a doubt, I’ve been able to provide deeper legal advice and find creative solutions for many of the development projects that our clients have undertaken.

The program has a major focus on being civic-minded and engaged with the community. How have you been able to implement these practices throughout your career?

Kyle: From a CBRE perspective, we’re fortunate that our culture is very philanthropic. We’re about giving back to the communities that we live in, and to the people and clients we work with, which includes a significant number of nonprofit clients.

For me, personally, it’s about the work I’m doing now on the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, which focuses on creating public art spaces. The real estate community is keenly aware of how vital these projects are to our communities. I’m referring to things like Related’s recent unveiling of the “Vessel” at Hudson Yards and their plan to develop a five-acre public plaza as part of the site.

The Partnership’s vision is to make New York a great place to live and to bring people together in unique ways. Its alignment with the community is something we support as part of our work with owners and developers to better connect the built environment to the neighborhoods they serve.

Robert: From a giving back perspective, I’ve been fortunate to continue working with the Partnership fund on evaluating real estate loans and on other ventures, too. In the Bronx, the fund lent money to redevelop an old warehouse as space for local businesses and nonprofits to grow and thrive. We’re currently tackling a project in Greenpoint to provide a loan to redevelop an industrial property and revitalize small scale manufacturing in that area. It’s about bringing back and retaining jobs in New York City.

Wanda: CBRE partners with several organizations and, in fact, we’ve had many interns come to us through various programs, including Futures and Options and PENCIL, so young people have an opportunity to gain exposure to what we do. On a personal level, I’ve continued to participate in educational activity because that’s where it all begins. It’s a passion of mine, and something that the Rockefeller Fellowship has absolutely helped me to foster. ●