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ACC Real Estate Network Spotlight

Community

Interviews and Profiles





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ROCKFORD, IL

Tell us about your background.

I am assistant general counsel with Infrastructure & Energy Alternatives, Inc. (IEA). IEA is a leading infrastructure construction company with specialized energy and heavy civil expertise. I oversee several operating companies around the United States. Before joining IEA, I was associate counsel at William Charles, Ltd., a holding company engaged in environmental remediation, heavy/highway construction, waste disposal, and real estate development throughout the United States. I joined William Charles, Ltd. in 2007. Before working for William Charles, Ltd, I worked at Hinshaw & Culbertson, LLP and Ernst & Young. I graduated from Saint Louis University School of Law and Miami University.

What interested you in the in-house practice of law and how did you come to be in your current position?

As a transactional lawyer, I am particularly interested in the intersection between business and legal issues and the development of creative approaches to solving complex business and legal issues. In 2018, my prior company was acquired by IEA, and about a year later I was promoted to assistant

general counsel.

In October 2019, you were elected as chair of the Real Estate Network. Tell us how you got involved initially.

About five years ago, I was speaking about my career with my wife's aunt, Margaret Sledge, an oil and gas lawyer and ACC member. She recommended that I get involved with an association such as ACC. Shortly after that, I attended the ACC Annual Meeting in Boston. During the conference I attended the Real Estate Network lunch and met Dawn Haghghi, who had just been appointed chair of the Real Estate Network after taking over from the prior chair, Rudy Rivera. She took me under her wing and appointed me as membership chair. Since 2015, I have had the honor to serve in various positions over the years on the Real Estate Network as the co-secretary, vice chair, and now chair.



What are some of the ways that the Real Estate Network provides value to its members?

The Real Estate Network presents monthly Quick Hits on relevant and current matters such as environmental, diversity, pandemic related topics (COVID-19), professional development, real estate financing, international real estate topics, and large venue security and planning. Many of the Real

Estate Network Quick Hits are co-sponsored with the Financial Services Network, Environmental Network, and the Sports & Entertainment Network. At the Annual ACC Meeting, the Real Estate Network organizes continuing education classes and an annual lunch meeting. All ACC Real Estate Network members are invited to join our monthly phone call and find a way to become engaged with the network.

What substantive practice issues does your network address?

The Real Estate Network is focused on bringing relevant monthly content and annual continuing legal education to its members. The monthly Quick Hits typically consist of environmental, diversity, leasing, professional development, real estate financing, international real estate topics, and other relevant current topics. At the Annual Meeting, we typically present two continuing education classes. This year the Real Estate Network will be presenting “A Practical Guidance to Avoiding Pitfalls That Can Hammer You on Your Next Construction Project” and “Real Estate Law for Non-Real Estate Lawyers.”

How has the Real Estate Network helped you in your career?

The Real Estate Network has provided me the opportunity to work closely with lawyers and third parties from around the United States and the world. The development of these professional relationships would not have occurred without the structure and leadership of ACC. For me personally, the opportunity to work with all of these amazing and talented individuals and form new friendships has been the best part of this experience. The Real Estate Network has helped me become a more effective leader.

The Real Estate Network would like to thank the ACC leadership (Veta Richardson, Tori Payne, LaToya Tapscott, and Keilon Forest) for all of their support and the Real Estate Network leaders (Rudy Rivera of Fidelity National Financial, Dawn Haghghi of PCV Murcor, and Daryl Austin and Raghu Nandan of Nandan Law).

The current Real Estate Network leadership includes Vice Chair Elena Antonetti of Travelers (November 2020 chair of the Real Estate Network); Secretary Erik Valderhaug of Everest Properties; Annual Program Chair William Cotter of Cotter Consulting; E-Groups Raghu Nandan of Nandan Law; Sponsor Liaison Mark Monroe of Infrastructure & Energy Alternatives, Inc.; Communications Chair Jonathan Newberg of Crescent Heights; International Liaison Chair Dawn Haghghi of PCV Murcor; Diversity Chair Colleen Collins of Catholic Health Services; and Membership Chair John Lee of Sonder.

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