



Kimberly May
Acquisitions Associate
CenterSquare Investment
Management
MHIC YLG Representative
YLG “Fun” (Social) Events Committee
OC/IE Membership Committee

How did you find your way into the industry?

I grew up with my father being a retail real estate developer so real estate was an industry that always intrigued me. I was an undergrad business major at The University of Pennsylvania in The Wharton School and decided to concentrate in Real Estate and Marketing. Upon graduation, I did not go into Investment Banking in NYC like most of my peers, but found an Acquisitions Analyst opportunity in August 2007 at UBS Realty Investors in San Francisco so I moved back to the west coast and I have been in the industry ever since.

What advice would you give to an emerging young leader just starting their professional career?

Get involved with local networking groups like ULI and develop friendships with your peers in the industry as these folks will “grow up” with you in the industry. The real estate community is actually very small and ULI has helped shape my career in so many ways especially through programs like the mentor program where it provides access to some of the best leaders in the industry. Now I have developed personal relationships with some of the most well respected individuals in the industry who continue to provide advice as I grow in my career.

What traits do you think define a successful leader?

A successful leader is hardworking, accountable, acts with integrity, and is passionate about what they do. A successful leader is also one that does what they say they are going to do and leads by example.

What is your current job and what types of projects are you working on now?

I work in acquisitions in the real estate private equity space. Before CenterSquare Investment Management, I worked at TIAA-CREF and UBS Realty Investors in San Francisco. Both TIAA-CREF and UBS generally focused on core real estate acquisitions, but now at CenterSquare, I have the opportunity to work on value-add investment opportunities where we provide joint venture equity and work with local operating partners in major markets on the West Coast. I recently worked on an office transaction in downtown Denver with an operating partner out of San Francisco. We purchased a brand new office asset at construction completion, however during due diligence, we signed a lease with WeWork for 2/3 of the office space.

What do you find most challenging about your profession on a day-to-day basis?

One of the more challenging things about my job on a day to day basis is finding value-add deals, especially at this time in the cycle. It has been a change not working in the core space with what seemed like endless deal flow and just paying market value but rather having to really turn over a lot of rocks to find the right deals to execute a business plan on.

What are you looking for in terms of career development - OR In what areas would you like to professionally develop further?

Well, I want to finish my MBA at USC. It has been a great experience thus far being in the part time program at Marshall and I feel that the experience has really been beneficial to me especially when it comes to personal / profession development. I have been able to take classes that I think will help me in the future and actually pay attention this time now that I have had some real life work experience and I know that I might actually learn something in a negotiations class!

Describe a situation that was a great learning experience.

The whole downturn of 2008/2009 was a great learning experience, especially as an analyst at that time. I was lucky that I was very young and was in a secure position, but I learned a lot in realizing that it was ok to loose deals and that being conservative with assumptions and just waiting for the right deal to invest in was not always a bad thing. You want to make the right decisions for your clients and in the long run this mentality will make you more successful and able to bounce back from those downturns.

How do you deal with stress at work?

You really need to work with people that you like because you spend a lot of time with them. Usually it involves ordering not so good for you food because any excuse for CPK or a burger and fries is a good way to deal with stress!