

# MID ATLANTIC REAL ESTATE JOURNAL

NEW JERSEY-PENNSYLVANIA-DELAWARE-MARYLAND-VIRGINIA

April 9 - 22, 2010

Volume 22, Issue 7

## PENNSYLVANIA

### By Sharon Humble, Linebarger Goggan Blair & Sampson **CREW Philadelphia: foundation for exceptional professional sourcing**

**M**y firm, Linebarger Goggan Blair & Sampson, LLP, holds a deep commitment to diversity, not just in our workforce, but in our business relationships as well. Our legal practice is focused on the niche area of property taxation, and we represent only governments. We have long recognized and valued the contributions and talent that women and minorities bring to the table. Whenever possible, we seek to grow and strengthen these relationships. Commercial Real Estate Women Network (CREW) has provided an excellent resource for facilitating those relationships.

In early 2004, I announced at a CREW-Philadelphia board of directors meeting that my law firm was looking to relocate its office. We had narrowed our choices of buildings. I asked the board for recommendations for a firm to help us with our planning. Laura Prickett, of Blackney Hayes Architects, assisted with the test-fit for one building we were considering, Suburban Station. Floss Barber, CEO and principal designer of Floss Barber, Inc., assisted with the test-fit for Four Penn Center.

Ultimately, our firm went with Four Penn Cen-



Sharon Humble

ter. Floss Barber worked rapidly to adjust and refine our design for construction. She suggested a fantastic floor plan and energizing color scheme, continuously holding my hand and providing confident reassurance about the use of non-traditional, bolder colors to accent interior spaces.

Pat Patrick, then with Turner Construction but now with the Brickstone Companies, brought in the expertise of Turner Construction to build out of the office. Her team led me on weekly tours of the construction project to explain what they had completed and what they would do next. Floss and Pat worked hard to accommodate our firm's change orders and stay on schedule.

Simmer Dougherty, of

Kershner Office Furniture, came on-board for our furniture needs. Simmer met with me and my top staff often; took us to tour a workstation-manufacturing plant; took us to a showroom to test chairs and get a first-hand look at the furniture; and suggested various pieces to accommodate our personnel's different work styles and needs. I did not want to part with my own office furniture, with which I had become quite comfortable after ten years. Simmer suggested sprucing up the solid walnut pieces to give them new life. She coordinated the entire refinishing job. Kershner Office Furniture provided all our new furniture for twelve individual offices, three meeting rooms, the reception area, the conference room, and the kitchen; thirty workstations; and file-shelving for the file room.

We moved in to our new digs in October 2004. The space turned out far better than I had visualized during the planning stages. And, through the years as the building's ownership changed hands, attorney Tina Makouljian, Partner at Ballard Spahr, assisted our firm with review of all new documentation affecting our lease.

We recently used Floss

Barber, Inc. again. This time, Rebecca Udell, President of Floss Barber, Inc., assisted us with interior design planning needs for expansion space, as well as planning a renovation of two offices in our existing space. Bettyann Silvius, of The Sullivan Company, handled the construction and renovation of the two offices. As our firm is presently examining its future office space options, Kathie Carr, of CB Richard Ellis is assisting us as our tenant's agent. Rebecca Udell is performing the evaluation of our existing space and test fits for potential new space.

For my firm, working with CREW members hasn't ended just at the provision of a beautiful, efficient, and functional office. I sponsored Jacqueline Roberts, president of Global Abstract Agency, Inc., as a new member of CREW in 2005. Global Abstract has supplied title work for my firm for over twelve years. At my suggestion through the years, various attorneys associated with my firm, such as Susan Rose and Francine Donato, also joined CREW to take advantage of its leadership and community involvement opportunities. Our firm's Philadelphia office administrator, Laura Evans, is also a

CREW member.

CREW relationships have even helped with my personal business needs. While serving as CREW-Philadelphia's chapter representative on the CREW National Grant-making Committee in 2005, I had the pleasure of meeting attorney Amy Durfee West, of CREW-Denver. She assisted my husband with the deed work for a sale of property he owned in CO. Amy is now in Philadelphia responding to a new calling in seminary, and she and I have remained friends.

Have I left anyone out? Probably so. Since getting involved with CREW-Philadelphia eight years ago, networking within the group has helped me refer others for jobs with other CREW companies, brainstorm ideas with experts, trade information, support our local community charitably, and develop true friendships. Without my involvement in CREW, I would not have had the pleasure and benefit of working with so many highly skilled professionals to help provide an exceptional foundation for my firm's provision of services to its own clients as well as enriching our corporate citizenship opportunities. Thank you CREW! ■