



2024 Women in CRE: Carmen Pagan, Romer Debbas LLP

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Carmen Pagan

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What are the most important factors young women should consider when choosing a firm to build their career with?

Young Women entering the legal profession should choose law firms that are willing to invest in their professional career development and are sensitive to resolving and advancing women issues in the workplace. In my experience, law firms dedicated to promoting and advancing women in the workplace, committed to pro bono work and that are intentionally vested in sponsoring diversity, equality and inclusion programs are great law firms to start a law career.

Who inspires you most? What qualities do they possess that inspire you?

Coming from a family of 12 siblings raised in the country with limited resources, I was always inspired by my parents who worked hard to raise us and instill in all of us strong values and work ethic. My parents always encouraged us to get an education in anything we wanted to do, improve ourselves, be good citizens and contribute our best to our community.

Which professional organization(s) would you recommend to women just starting out in your industry:

I recommend joining bar associations and organizations that help young women develop networking skills, client and career development. Those organizations often offer opportunities to join committees and professional groups that help develop leadership skills and other lawyering

skills that would help young women propel their careers to a high level at an early stage of their professional careers.

What recent project, transaction, or accomplishment are you most proud of?

I am very proud to have recently closed two complex affordable housing transactions for properties located in Texas and Massachusetts and two other transactions for properties in New York. The transactions involved complex organizational structures, ground leases, tax abatements and housing assistance payments under HUD Section 8. Helping these projects obtain the necessary financing to continue providing affordable housing to residents that could not otherwise afford to live in those projects if they have to pay market rents was very rewarding. I am also very proud to have transitioned from a senior associate role to the head of the agency lending and affordable housing department at Romer Debbas LLP. It has been a fantastic and satisfying rewarding experience to lead a group of lawyers, paralegals and legal assistants and position the Firm to top place in this side of the industry while being able to enhance my leadership and mentoring skills in both real estate law practice areas.

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