

## CREW-CT holds 24th Annual Blue Ribbon Awards Showcase

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Shown (from left) are Courtney Hendricson, Jennifer Marks, Patrick McMahon, Rebecca Nolan, Melissa Roy and Jamie Brätt.

**Hartford, CT** The Real Estate Exchange (CREW-CT) held its 24th Annual Blue Ribbon Awards Showcase to celebrate the region's 2018 real estate accomplishments. Since its founding in 1987, the organization has been living out its mission to support and advance the achievements of women in commercial real estate. CREW CT is one of more than 75 chapters of the 11,000 member, global CREW Network. CREW's commitment to providing business networking, leadership development, industry research and career outreach is at the heart of Awards Showcase. Event co-chairs Melissa Roy, associate and director of business development at Tecton Architects and Jennifer Marks, principal at BL Cos., said, "We were honored to receive a record number of nominations for real estate projects from throughout the region and to have a record number of attendees, including the mayor of Hartford, Luke Bronin, the mayor of East Hartford, Marcia Leclerc and the director of development for the town of East Hartford, Eileen Buckheit."

To further capture the excitement of the evening, we gathered thoughts from the master of ceremonies, judges panel and special guest Tara Piurko, visiting from Toronto and representing the CREW Network.

“The vibe at this year’s event felt like a great big family reunion. What a wonderful feeling to celebrate a diverse array of commercial real estate projects. It’s a sign of regional growth and mutual support,” said Jamie Brätt, engagement manager at Infosys and former city of Hartford director of planning and development. Brätt is well-known in greater Hartford as a champion for downtown revitalization, spearheading dozens of commercial real estate and economic development initiatives. For her accomplishments and volunteerism on several non-profit boards, the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) selected Brätt as the 2018 recipient of the Young Economic Developer of the Year award.

“As a municipal economic developer and past CREW CT president, I am so impressed with all the meaningful A/E/C projects that are happening here in our region,” said Courtney Hendricson, vice president of municipal services for the Connecticut Economic Resource Center (CERC). Hendricson regularly conducts municipal trainings across the state and currently serves as the board president of the Connecticut Economic Development Association (CEDAS).

“As a statewide nonprofit that promotes investment and vitality in downtowns, it was heartening to see the transformative nature of these projects. Several of the projects relate to the innovation economy and this bodes well for the future of our state and region,” said Patrick McMahon, CEO, CT Main St. Center. McMahon brings a wealth of experience in neighborhood and downtown revitalization, small business development, historic preservation, land use planning, community facilities, infrastructure development and housing services.

“Each project showcased the best in CT and Western Mass. design, sustainability and innovation. The Awards however are not just for the buildings themselves; it is for all the talented designers, engineers and builders behind each winner that makes the Blue Ribbon Awards special,” said Rebecca Nolan, vice president of global business development for the MetroHartford Alliance.

Nolan’s global work has established Connecticut as a location of choice for foreign direct investment.

“CREW CT’s Blue Ribbon Awards event was a wonderful opportunity to visit Hartford, CT. The quality of the projects nominated, and the award winners, were all spectacular examples of City and community building. In terms of community, I especially enjoyed connecting with the over 170 attendees.” said Tara Piurko, partner, Miller Thomson LLP, municipal, planning & land development and immediate past-president, 2019 global board of directors, CREW Network. Piurko has over 15 years of experience in the CRE industry, and in 2016 she was selected as a member of the Urban Land Institute Toronto Women’s Leadership Initiative Championship Team.

With thanks to Melissa Roy for facilitating this article.