

# 2024 NATIONAL REAL ESTATE STRATEGIES CONFERENCE

May 1, 2024  
Alumni Memorial Union  
Marquette University

Annual Sponsor:



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**MARQUETTE**  
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Center for Real Estate

# AGENDA

- 8:00 a.m.     **Check-in and registration**
- 8:30           **Welcome**  
Andy Hunt, Vieth Director, Center for Real Estate (CRE), Marquette University
- Opening Remarks**  
Michael Riopel, Chair, Center for Real Estate Advisory Board, Associate General Council, Northwestern Mutual
- 8:45           **Keynote Speaker: “Merging Strengths: Lessons Learned from an Interdisciplinary Career”**  
John Thomas, Vice Chair of the Board, Healthpeak Properties, Inc.,; Former President and Chief Executive Officer, Physicians Realty Trust  
Moderator, fireside chat: Linda Gorens-Levey, General Capital Group
- 9:45           **Student Speaker: Ava Villarreal**  
*Joined by Marquette students, including the Real Estate Asset Program and case competition teams*
- 10:00          **Networking Break**
- 10:10          **Panel: “Leveraging Interdisciplinary Strategies for Real Estate Success”**  
Moderator: Andy Hunt, Marquette University  
Deshea Agee, Emem Group  
Bill Loftus, SPACECO  
Barry Mandel, Mandel Group  
Gina Stilp, Zilber Family Foundation
- 11:10          **Special Announcement**
- 11:40          **Closing Keynote: Shaka Smart, Men’s Head Basketball Coach, Marquette University**
- 12:00 p.m.    **Conference Ends**

# KEYNOTE SPEAKER



**John Thomas** | Vice Chair of the Board, Healthpeak Properties, Inc.;;  
Former President and Chief Executive Officer, Physicians Realty Trust

John was President, Chief Executive Officer and Trustee of Physicians Realty Trust (formerly NYSE: DOC), from 2013 until its merger with Healthpeak in 2024. He was the Executive Vice President – Medical Facilities Group for Welltower Inc. (NYSE: WELL, formerly known as Health Care REIT Inc.) from January 2009 to July 2012. Prior to Welltower, John served as President, Chief Development Officer and Business Counsel of Cirrus Health from August 2005 to December 2008. From October 2000 to July 2005, he served as Senior Vice President and General Counsel for Baylor Health Care System. From April 1997 to October 2000, John served as General Counsel and Secretary of the St. Louis division of the Sisters of Mercy Health System (formerly Unity Health System), from 1997 to 2000. He was a tax attorney at Sonnenschein, Nath & Rosenthal (now Dentons), from 1995 to 1997, where he was elected partner in 1997; at Shook, Hardy & Bacon from 1992 to 1995; and at Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McCoy from 1990 to 1992. John serves on the Board of Trustees for the Jacksonville State University Foundation and the Auburn University Real Estate Foundation. He was a member of the Board of Directors of Education Realty Trust, Inc. (formerly NYSE: EDR).



**Shaka Smart** | Men's Head Basketball Coach, Marquette University

Shaka Smart is currently in his third year as head coach for the Marquette University men's basketball team. In his first season with the Golden Eagles in 2021-22, Shaka helped guide the program to a 19-win campaign, an NCAA tournament appearance and multiple team and individual accomplishments. As a result of the team's success in the 2022-23 season, Shaka claimed national coach of the year honors from the National Association of Basketball Coaches, United States Basketball Writers Association and Associated Press. He also claimed unanimous BIG EAST Coach of the Year accolades. Shaka holds a bachelor's degree in history from Kenyon College, and a master's degree in social science from California University. He is a native of Oregon, Wisconsin.

# SPEAKERS



**Linda Gorens-Levey** | Partner, General Capital Group  
Moderator: Keynote Fireside Chat with John Thomas

Prior to joining General Capital in 2015, Linda was a Managing Director at Stark Investments, a global multi-billion dollar alternative investment firm, where she played a key role on the boards of several portfolio companies. She also contributes her time and talents to numerous boards in the Milwaukee area. Linda holds an MBA in Finance and Marketing from the Kellogg Graduate School of Management at Northwestern University and a BBA in Accounting from the University of Wisconsin – Madison. In 2006, she completed her Real Estate Certification through the University of Wisconsin-Madison Executive Education Program. Linda is a Fellow of the Life Management Institute, a Certified Public Accountant, and a Chartered Financial Analyst. She is the first female Executive in Residence at the Marquette University College of Business.



**Deshea Agee** | Vice President, Emem Group

Deshea is the Vice President at Emem Group. He leads revitalization efforts supporting property owners and entrepreneurs with the BID boundaries. Deshea has been key to over \$50 million being invested since 2016, and critical to organizations committing an additional \$100 million into buildings and people in the district. He oversees implementation of organization's annual operating plan, including its role in implementation of the \$3.5M Brew City Match program, Pop Up MKE, and the restoration of Victory Over Violence Park. Deshea has been a voice for business owners of color. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Marquette University, and a Master of Science degree from University of Wisconsin-Stout. He is a licensed Wisconsin real estate broker and holds two economic development finance professional certifications from the National Development Council.



**Bill Loftus** | President, SPACECO

As President, Bill organizes, directs, and leads the overall operations of SPACECO. He develops and maintains client relationships for the firm and provides technical oversight on all projects. He manages all engineering and surveying activities of the company with the assistance of Vice Presidents, Senior Project Managers, Project Managers, Project Engineers and Design Engineers and Surveyors. In addition, Bill directs projects in the areas of civil engineering, transportation, infrastructure, and site development. He serves on the Marquette University Center for Real Estate Advisory Board and holds a bachelor's degree from Marquette University.

# SPEAKERS



**Barry Mandel** | Chairman and CEO, Mandel Group

Barry is the Chairman and CEO of Mandel Group. Barry previously worked as a real estate attorney before founding Mandel Group in 1992. Mandel Group has become a leader of development and management of luxury apartment buildings, managing over \$1 billion of assets in the greater Midwest. During his career Barry also has received several awards and citations, including awards from the Metropolitan Builders Association of Greater Milwaukee, the National Association of Home Builders and the Building Owners and Management Association. In addition, he was the past chair and a current member of the Multi-family Gold Council of the Urban Land Institute. He also is a member of the National Association of Home Builders and the National Multi-Housing Council. Barry holds an economics degree from the University of Wisconsin and a Juris-Doctor from Georgetown University.



**Gina Stilp** | Executive Director, Zilber Family Foundation

Gina serves as the Executive Director for the Zilber Family Foundation. Her work with the Zilber Family Foundation dates to 2010, and since 2021 she's served as chairwoman of the Community Development Alliance as it seeks to support affordable housing in Milwaukee. Prior to joining the Zilber Family Foundation, she served as social innovation director at Dohmen Constellations. Gina received her Bachelor of Business Administration in Marketing from Loyola University Chicago, and a Master of Business Administration from Marquette University.



**Andrew Hunt** | Vieth Director, Center for Real Estate, Marquette University

Working closely with the real estate program faculty, Andy is responsible for carrying out the mission of the Center and oversight of all day to day administration of the Center's programs, activities and outreach. Prior to joining Marquette, Andy held roles in acquisitions with Real Capital Solutions (RCS) in Boulder, Colorado, investment and transaction management throughout the Americas with Prologis in Denver, Colorado and brokerage with UGL Equis (now Cushman & Wakefield) in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Andy received a B.S. and his MBA from Marquette University.

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## THANK YOU

Thank you to our conference sponsors who continue to be strong partners of the Center for Real Estate. Special thanks to the Advisory Board members listed below who were instrumental in the planning of this conference:

Bill Loftus, SPACECO, Inc.  
David Krill, Marquette University (Associated Bank - retired)  
Perry Vieth, Ceres Partners  
Greg Warsek, Associated Bank  
Michelle Panovich, MichDon Properties  
Mike Riopel, Northwestern Mutual  
Molly McShane, The McShane Companies  
Jen Manna, Healthpeak Properties  
Gina Stilp, Zilber Family Foundation

Thanks to our Marquette team members who made today possible as well!

Melanie Roepke  
Layne Collins  
Ava Villarreal  
Drew Stathus  
Andrew Goldstein  
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## BE THE DIFFERENCE – GET INVOLVED

The Center faculty and staff are always seeking help with job and internship placements, mentoring and shadowing opportunities for students, resume reviews and mock interviews, site tour leaders, Real Estate Club speakers and much more. Email Andy Hunt or Melanie Roepke to discuss getting involved: [andrew.hunt@marquette.edu](mailto:andrew.hunt@marquette.edu) or [melanie.roepke@marquette.edu](mailto:melanie.roepke@marquette.edu)

## SAVE THE DATE

### Chicago Leadership Breakfast

Late September, 2024  
Union League Club of Chicago

### Real Estate Golden Eagle Gala

Friday, Nov. 8, 2024  
Jan Serr Studio (on Milwaukee's East Side)

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