

CREW



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CREW Network CEO Gail Ayers to Retire at the End of 2016

DETROIT (June 17, 2016) – Commercial Real Estate Women (CREW) Network today announced that the organization's Chief Executive Officer and CREW Network Foundation President, **Gail S. Ayers, Ph.D.**, will retire at the end of 2016. Ayers' decision to retire will bring to a close a remarkable career of 11 years of service to CREW Network and more than 25 years as an organizational leader.

An executive search firm will be hired in the next few months to proceed with the hiring of a successor. Until then, Ayers will continue to serve CREW Network through the end of the year when a new CEO is expected to be hired. The announcement was made at the 2016 CREW Network Spring Leadership Summit, where 250 CREW Network leaders gathered to network, conduct business and engage in professional development.

"Gail's visionary leadership and her ability to take big ideas and turn them into actionable initiatives will continue to have a long and lasting impact on the commercial real estate industry," said **Laurie Baker**, Senior Vice President of Fund & Asset Management at Camden Property Trust and 2016 CREW Network President. "She has been a leading voice in promoting the benefits of diversity and gender equality, which ultimately leads to better decision making and overall success for organizations and the industry."

CREW Network is the fastest growing organization in commercial real estate, with membership doubling in the last 11 years under Ayers' tenure. Counted among her many accomplishments at CREW Network include the organization becoming a member of the Real Estate Roundtable; and establishing an executive-level mentoring program designed to help high-potential women reach the C-Suite. In addition, Ayers led the development of CREW Network's thought-leadership white paper initiative, which addresses issues directly impacting the advancement of women in the industry.

In 2016, Ayers launched the CREW Network Certificate in Leadership program, a year-long specialized leadership development, industry training and self-directed mentorship for women in commercial real estate, and an International Agenda sponsored by Cushman & Wakefield to expand the CREW Network mission and business network globally.

"The impact of Gail's leadership on CREW Network and women in CRE has created incredible momentum that will strengthen the industry and the stakeholders in it forever," said **Diane Butler**, CEO of Butler Burgher Group, Inc. and 2012 CREW Network President.

As President of CREW Network Foundation, the philanthropic arm of CREW Network dedicating its resources solely to advancing women in commercial real estate, Ayers developed a Scholarship Endowment which has benefited more than 90 women to date. She was also an inaugural inductee of the CREW Network Foundation Women of Vision program established in 2007 to recognize donors who personally reach \$10,000 in cumulative giving to CREW Network Foundation.

Prior to leading CREW Network, Ayers was the CEO of Houston READ and President of Ayers Consulting Services where she led multi-million-dollar development campaigns. Earlier in her career, she founded two successful organizations – Interagency Policy Board, which established rental polices for properties throughout suburban Maryland-Washington, DC area, valued in excess of \$800 million, and Woman’s Place, a resource center for women. She has consulted with numerous clients including Space Center Houston, around issues of resource development, relevant strategic realignment of resources and implementation plans.

Ayers was named a Woman of Influence by *Real Estate Forum* in 2008, recognized by *National Real Estate Investor* in 2010 as an Outstanding Woman in Commercial Real Estate and awarded the Yellow Rose of Texas in 2011 in recognition of her outstanding achievements. Most recently, she was named a 2016 Best Boss in the Business by *Real Estate Forum* for her efforts to help break down barriers and advance women’s roles in commercial real estate.

In retirement, Ayers plans to spend more time with her grandchildren, and travel the world with her husband, Armin Cantini.

What others are saying about Gail

“Gail has been the perfect CEO for CREW Network – starting with her belief in our mission, her advocacy on behalf of women in CRE, her tenacity at fundraising, her knowledge on engaging members, her rigor with research and follow-up, and her insights regarding board and member dynamics. All have contributed to her growing CREW Network into the successful and meaningful organization that it has become.” - **Judy Nitsch**, *Founding Principal of Nitsch Engineering and 2014 CREW Network President*

“Working with Gail Ayers was one of the most rewarding experiences in my career. Her leadership, passion, integrity and strategic thought has taken CREW Network to the next level and made it *the* organization to join for commercial real estate women. Her legacy of advancing women in commercial real estate will continue and grow as she has propelled us all to succeed and break barriers. She will be missed but certainly never forgotten.” - **Susan Hill**, *Senior Managing Partner at HFF and 2013 CREW Network President*

“Gail’s clear view of how CREW Network could make a long-term impact on the commercial real estate industry was manifested through her guidance and vision for the Foundation. With Gail’s leadership, the Foundation moved from being merely a philanthropic aspect of CREW Network to being the premier philanthropic effort focused on women in real estate. Her energy behind our scholarship program has helped us build the pipeline of future leaders for the industry. CREW Network Foundation is a change agent, and Gail’s leadership got it there.” - **Collete English Dixon**, *2009 CREW Network Foundation Chair and 2011 CREW Network President*

About CREW Network

CREW Network is the industry’s premier business networking organization dedicated to advancing the achievements of women in commercial real estate. CREW Network members comprise nearly 10,000 professionals worldwide and represent nearly all disciplines of commercial real estate – every type of expert required to “do the deal.” Follow CREW Network on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Instagram](#), and visit us at www.crewnetwork.org.

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