



COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE
DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

NEW JERSEY CHAPTER

For Immediate Release

CRE Deal of the Year Winners Announced at NAIOP New Jersey Gala

Sold-Out Event Celebrates Outstanding Industry Leaders and Transactions

SOMERSET, N.J. (May 22, 2023) – The Garden State’s commercial real estate community recognized the achievements of its industry leaders and the state’s most impactful transactions as [NAIOP New Jersey](#) hosted its 36th Annual Commercial Real Estate Awards Gala. The sold-out, black-tie event was held at the Palace at Somerset Park on May 18.

In his opening remarks, NAIOP NJ President Mark Shearer, senior managing director for Rockefeller Group’s New Jersey and Pennsylvania region, said, “It is a joy for our extended commercial real estate family to gather, reconnect and share this evening. It is truly an honor to celebrate this year’s honorees and their achievements, and we extend our heartfelt gratitude to each of you for all you have done for our industry.”

2023 COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE AWARDS HONOREES

The **Charles Klatskin Lifetime Achievement Award** was presented to **Robert Donnelly Sr.**, executive vice chairman of Cushman & Wakefield, in recognition of his distinguished career in service to the commercial real estate industry and the community. **Christopher Paladino, president of New Brunswick Development Corp., and George Jacobs, president of Jacobs Enterprises Inc., accepted the Impact Award**, which honors firms and/or individuals that have had a significant impact on New Jersey’s commercial and industrial real estate development industry.

The **Industry Service Award** was presented to **Meryl A.G. Gonchar, Sills Cummis & Gross PC**, in recognition of her considerable contributions in support of the industry’s goals. **New Jersey’s Lieutenant Governor, the Hon. Sheila Y. Oliver, received the Caren S. Franzini Public Partner Award**, which honors champions of economic development that inspire and transform communities. Oliver’s chief of staff, Terry Swanson-Tucker, accepted the honor on her behalf.

2023 DEAL OF THE YEAR AWARDS

In addition to celebrating the achievements of leading CRE professionals and organizations, NAIOP NJ recognized the year’s most impactful real estate transactions.

Office and Industrial Deal of the Year winners, along with a special Transformation Award were chosen by a panel of judges based on impact on the community and marketplace, degree of complexity and/or uniqueness, innovative strategies, and creative problem solving.

- **Office Deal of the Year: Avis Budget Group at Latitude, Parsippany.** Avis Budget Group relocated its world headquarters to the state-of-the-art, 700,000-square-foot office complex. The creative office condominium transaction resulted in the retention of 600 New Jersey jobs and significant financial benefits to the occupier, owner and the state. Involved in the deal: Vision Real Estate Partners, Rubenstein Partners; Newmark; CBRE; Charles Applebaum, Esq.; Fox Rothschild; Greenbaum, Rowe, Smith & Davis LLP; and Giordano Halleran & Ciesla.
- **Industrial Deal of the Year: Monroe 8A Logistics Center – Home Depot, Monroe.** One of the largest warehouses in New Jersey, the 1.28 million-square-foot industrial development was able to secure a long-term lease with Home Depot, which was represented by CBRE. Involved in the Deal: Brookfield Properties, JLL, Sansone, QuadReal Property Group, Colliers, Apollo, CSG Law, ARCO Design/Build, Langan and Bob Smith & Associates.
- A special **Judges' Transformation Award went to Fiserv New Jersey HQ at Connell Corporate Center, Berkeley Heights.** The firm's 411,954-square-foot, long-term lease at The Park was New Jersey's largest new office lease in 2022, and its financial technology hub is one of the largest on the East Coast. Involved in the deal: Cushman & Wakefield, The Connell Company, Fiserv, VVA Project Management Company, GS Ferguson Group LLC, Mancini Duffy, Ted Moudis & Associates, Structure Tone, Robert Derector Associates, and Husch Blackwell LLP.

CEO McGuinness Recognized for 26-Year Legacy

NAIOP NJ CEO Michael McGuinness, who announced that he is retiring in July, received a special Leadership Legacy Award and a standing ovation from the audience of nearly 700 Gala attendees.

Peter J. Coccoziello, founder and CEO of Advance Realty Group, presented McGuinness with the honor recognizing his more than 26 years of service to the organization and the CRE development community. Coccoziello cited McGuinness' inspirational leadership and contributions to growing the chapter's size and platform for education, advocacy and networking. "There's a legacy here that Mike McGuinness leaves to this organization that will always be remembered," he said.

McGuinness will be succeeded as CEO by Dan Kennedy, who was introduced to Gala attendees. He will join the organization on June 19 after serving as the senior director at the Utility and Transportation Contractors Association of New Jersey.

PHOTO CAPTION: NAIOP NJ 36th Annual Commercial Real Estate Awards individual and Deal of the Year honorees and presenters
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