

Developing Leader Profiles . . . People you Need to Know



Name: Ryan Sikorski

Company: Dermody Properties

Position: Vice President – National Accounts

Age: 34

Education: Michigan State University

Years in Real Estate: 8

1. What led you to work in the Real Estate industry? Describe your current responsibilities:

I entered the real estate industry by joining IndCor Properties in 2013 after starting my career with Ernst & Young. I was recruited to IndCor's portfolio finance group by a mentor of mine, Ed Lerum (now with Norges Bank), who was my first manager at EY and had started with IndCor a year earlier. At the time, I was drawn to a rapidly growing company backed by Blackstone in the emerging logistics real estate sector. Shortly after IndCor was acquired by GLP in 2015, I had the opportunity to move into GLP's US investments group, where I worked on new acquisitions and JV developments in key logistics markets across the country.

Earlier this year, I took a new role with Dermody Properties on their national accounts team. My role today is primarily focused on build-to-suit development of logistics facilities for large national customers in the e-commerce, third party logistics and distribution industries. My role spans the entire BTS development process from land acquisition and entitlement through leasing and delivery of the newly constructed building.

2. Who has been the biggest influence in your career?

I've been fortunate to work with many great people in this industry throughout my career. In 2016, I began working closely with Ross Parkin at GLP, who led the company's investment sourcing and execution in the western US. After GLP's business was sold (back) to Blackstone in 2019, Ross was instrumental in bringing me aboard to Modlo, the recently launched US logistics real estate operating platform of GLP Capital Partners. Working alongside Ross, I got exposure to all aspects of the investment process, from deal sourcing and evaluation to transaction execution and leasing.

Though it's only been a few months since I joined Dermody, I've already learned a ton from working alongside Jeff Zyglar, our partner who leads national development, who has become a mentor of mine. As we return to the office, I look forward to spending more time with Doug Kiersey, Tim Walsh, Neal Driscoll and the rest of the Dermody Chicago group.

3. Where do you see yourself in 5-10 years?

I've learned through my experience that things can change quickly in this industry. Prior to joining Dermody, I spent eight years in the same office with three different email domains. I look forward to growing as a real estate development and investment professional with Dermody and hope to take on more leadership responsibilities with the firm over time.

4. How long have you been involved with NAIOP and what do you view as the benefits of your NAIOP Developing Leader membership?

I've been involved with NAIOP the past four years and wish I would have started sooner. I enjoy the networking opportunities with peers in the DL program and industry leaders throughout Chicago. Although I've spent most of my career on deals outside of the Chicago market, NAIOP has provided an opportunity to stay connected at the local level, which I enjoy and is important to me. Specific Developing Leaders initiatives like the Chicago mentorship program and participation in a national forum are great ways to take advantage of the DL membership.

5. What is the best piece of professional advice you have been given?

Be the type of person that other people want to work with. It's simple and goes back to lessons we've learned growing up – treat people with respect and be a reliable team member or transaction partner.

6. Tell about a project or accomplishment that you consider most significant in your career:

One of my most memorable career accomplishments was actually born out of the NAIOP DL program. Andrew Hurwitz at Bridge and I met at one of the DL "Off the Record" events a few years ago and discussed our shared experience working on deals in the Pacific Northwest (rare for a couple guys out of Chicago). After that initial meeting, we stayed in touch and would trade notes on the latest market happenings in Portland and Seattle. When Bridge was looking for a new joint venture partner in Portland, Andrew and I initiated conversations between our respective companies that ultimately led to a new partnership for the development nearly 700,000 SF of industrial space. Although I left my prior company around the time construction of this spec development was complete, I look forward to following the leasing progress and success of the project overall. It was rewarding to be involved on the front end of this deal with a great friend in the industry.

7. What networking advice can you offer young professionals to help advance their careers?

Networking is about more than trading business cards at an event or conference. While getting in the door is an important first step, take the next one to follow up with new contacts to grab coffee or lunch. Building those relationships takes time but will be valuable throughout your career (see above).

Secondly, stay in touch with former coworkers after either of you move on to a different organization. This is a relatively simple way to maintain, and even, grow your network with people whom you've already done business with. Speaking from experience, the two job changes I've made since coming out of school have come through the referral of a former colleague.

8. Outside of work, how do you enjoy spending your time?

I'm getting married this August, so wedding and honeymoon planning has taken up plenty of time lately. My fiancé and I enjoy staying active in the City and while traveling, either to visit our out-of-state families or explore a new vacation destination.

9. What might someone be surprised to know about you?

I am a nationally ranked minesweeper (the game that came pre-installed on Windows computers in the '90s and 2000s). To date, this accomplishment has provided no benefit in my life aside from having an answer to a question like this.

NAIOP

COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE
DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

CHICAGO CHAPTER

1700 West Irving Park Road, Suite 208

Chicago, IL 60613

773-472-3072

773-472-3076 (f)

info@naiopchicago.org

www.naiopchicago.org