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REAL ESTATE

POWER 100

Ranking the most powerful players in commercial real estate this year had us thinking of the Roaring '20s.

By Anna Staropoli

No matter the year, Hunton Andrews Kurth's Laurie Grasso maintains the same approach to her work — and, as evidenced by 2024's deal flow, there's a strategy to her consistency.

"Year to year, I always bring the same things, like creativity, resilience, knowing the market," said Grasso, who also attributes much of her success to the relationships she's nurtured. "I know that if I get on a deal and something is problematic or someone needs an introduction, I just have an unbelievable network, and I can help solve for that," she said.

Within that overarching network, Grasso specifically values her connections with the industry's women leaders. This spring, she's even co-hosting a women in real estate retreat that will bring 40 women to the Hamptons, where they'll discuss deals, business relationships and opportunities to move real estate forward.

"That's a super passion of mine," said Grasso, highlighting the importance of building new connections as a pillar of real estate.

Yet, while Grasso doesn't stray in her approach to deals, she's not



#96 Laurie Grasso

Partner and co-chair of global real estate at Hunton Andrews Kurth

afraid to take on newer areas of work, translating that creativity, resilience and market knowledge to debt funds. Over the course of 2024, she's worked on complicated new debt structures, as well as repositioning assets and workouts. These projects have materialized both as entirely new deals and older ones that require problem-solving for clients.

Another distinction in Grasso's year came in the form of data centers, which harken back to Hunton Andrews Kurth's roots. The law firm was founded in Virginia, the world's leading data

center market that lays claim to more than 35 percent of global data centers.

"Since we have this excellent real estate practice — plus we have a top-tier energy practice, plus we have roots in Virginia — we were at the forefront of doing that data center work," said Grasso, "and I feel like my competitors in New York are sort of trying to catch up to us on that."

Beyond these newer areas, Grasso has also prioritized development work — an area of the industry she finds exciting. "That's the stuff that makes New York City go round," she said.