

SPOTLIGHT

PREA FOUNDATION AWARDS \$150,000+ IN GRANTS TO REAL ESTATE CLUBS

In 2025, the PREA Foundation launched the Community Grants Program to expand access to careers in commercial real estate by investing directly in college-led initiatives across the country.

“Demand for top junior talent in the commercial real estate industry is at peak intensity. To keep up, we need to widen the funnel and reach students earlier in their collegiate path. Our work on the PREA Foundation Grants Committee, funding over \$150,000 in student-led initiatives, reinforces our commitment to open doors to pathways in commercial real estate for as many students as possible.”


Bryce Robertson, Executive Director, GCM Grosvenor

In its inaugural year, the Foundation awarded more than \$150,000 in funding to 22 student organizations nationwide, providing grants of up to \$10,000 per group. These grants support high-impact programming, including site visits, career readiness workshops, case competitions, technical skills training, and the expansion of campus real estate clubs.


By strengthening early exposure and increasing student engagement, the Community Grants Program is helping build a more accessible and inclusive pipeline into the commercial real estate industry.

The Foundation extends its gratitude to the Community Grants Design Committee: Melinda Ellis Evers, Kimberly Adams, Christina Scarlato, and Ellen Young, whose leadership was instrumental in creating and launching this initiative.


Community Grants Program Committee




Catherine Beaudoin
Principal, Real Estate
Teacher Retirement System of Texas




Michael Chen
Principal
Wellington Management




Heather Fernstrom
Co-Founder, Managing Partner
Alliance Global Advisors



Marcia Glass
Director, Fundraising and Investor Relations
Starwood Capital




Aaron Hancock
Senior Vice President
Artemis Real Estate Partners




Erik Moss
Managing Director
YMCA



Bryce Robertson
Executive Director
GCM Grosvenor



Edyta Riley
Head of Real Estate
Ford Foundation



Renyi Wang
Associate Portfolio Manager
CalSTRS



Neil Zhang
Associate Director
UBS

The Community Grants Program Committee is composed of industry professionals nominated by PREA Foundation Board members and supporters. Together, they reviewed more than 45 grant applications, ensuring funding was directed to high-impact, well-structured student initiatives.

Beyond supporting student pathways, the program has created meaningful opportunities for mid-career professionals within the PREA network to engage directly in Foundation grantmaking. By participating in the review process, Committee members are contributing their expertise to cultivate the next generation of CRE leaders, strengthening connections between industry and emerging talent.

COMMUNITY GRANT RECIPIENT SPOTLIGHT

MARCO FIGUEROA



Co-President, Stern Real Estate Group — NYU Stern

For Marco Figueroa, commercial real estate has long been connected to family and opportunity.

The son of two immigrants from Guatemala, Marco grew up accompanying his father, a home inspector in the Dallas–Fort Worth metroplex, to property inspections. What began as a childhood curiosity evolved into a broader ambition.

At NYU Stern, Marco joined the Stern Real Estate Group (SREG) as a freshman general member. Through weekly industry speakers, firm site visits, and asset tours throughout New York City, he developed a strong foundation in the industry.

The PREA Foundation's Community Grant will significantly expand SREG's ability to provide professional development training and career-advancing opportunities for more than 100 students. Historically, university funding supported general meetings but left limited resources for deeper technical development.

Through the foundation's support, SREG will allocate funding across two primary areas:

- **Technical training and hard skills development**, including Wall Street Prep and ARGUS Enterprise
- **Expanded industry exposure**, enabling students to attend industry conferences and events in New York City

The grant is expected to directly enhance mentorship and professional development programming for student members.

Reflecting on the interview process, Marco shared how meaningful it was to see industry professionals invest their time and experience in supporting emerging talent by creating access to opportunities in Commercial Real Estate.

GET INVOLVED

The PREA Foundation's Community Grants Program represents a strategic investment in the future of commercial real estate, strengthening early pathways and building lasting industry connections.

To learn how you can support emerging talent and engage with the Foundation, visit:

www.prea.org/foundation/get-involved/get-involved/

2025 COMMUNITY GRANTS RECIPIENTS

The following 22 student-led organizations received funding in the program's inaugural year:

Black Real Estate Network (BREN),
University of Southern California

Cornell Real Estate Club,
Cornell University

DAIRE, Morgan State University

Harvard University Graduate School of Design
Real Estate Club, Harvard University

Marquette Commercial Real Estate Club,
Marquette University

Marshall Real Estate Finance Association
(MREFA), University of Southern California

NYU Stern Real Estate Club,
New York University

NYU Stern Real Estate Group,
New York University

Ohio University Consulting Fellows,
Ohio University

Real Estate at Georgia Tech,
Georgia Institute of Technology

Real Estate Club of Notre Dame,
University of Notre Dame

RISE, Southern Methodist University

Ross Real Estate Fund, University of Michigan
(Ross School of Business)

Stanford Real Estate Association,
Stanford University

Temple Real Estate Organization,
Temple University

The Commercial Real Estate Group at GSU,
Georgia State University

UNC Undergraduate Real Estate Club,
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

University of Chicago Real Estate Investment
Group, University of Chicago

University of Connecticut Real Estate Society,
University of Connecticut

University of Oregon Real Estate Investment
Group, University of Oregon

WashU Real Estate Club,
Washington University in St. Louis

Women in Real Estate at Georgetown,
Georgetown University