Students network their way through Manhattan in annual Real Estate Trek

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Students in the Freeman School's Real Estate Club traveled to New York to gain insights from professionals working in one of the world's most important real estate markets.

The New York real estate market is one of the hottest in the world, and students in Freeman's Real Estate Club are getting in on the action, with 15 club members traveling to New York City for an inside look at the industry.

Made possible with the help of Tulane parents Adam Altman and Martin Nussbaum, Freeman alumni, and the Career Management Center (CMC), the second annual Real Estate Trek included site visits, meet-and-greets, networking dinners and a chance to attend CREtech, one of the real estate industry's largest conferences.

“Being in New York City, walking through offices, touring properties and speaking face-to-face with professionals provides context that simply can’t be replicated over Zoom,” said Bella Cukrowski (BSM ’26). “The trip helped me visualize different career paths, understand how firms operate, and build genuine relationships with alumni and industry leaders.”

“It was clear that there was a need for Tulane students to have increased exposure to senior real estate and finance professionals,” said Altman, managing member of KABR Group, who partnered with Freeman’s CMC to arrange the trip. “We curated meetings and events to provide an opportunity for the students to create professional connections and make a personal impression.”

Preparations for the trip began well before students landed in New York.

“We wanted to make sure that all the students selected to go on the trip were prepped and ready for networking,” said Bill Hudlow, assistant director of the CMC. “We coached them on networking and finance terms as well as key topics that might come up in conversations. We also talked to them about asking good, in-depth questions during meet-and-greets.”

Once the students had a networking strategy in place, their trek officially kicked off with a welcome dinner at Carmine’s Italian Restaurant in Times Square. Hosted by Tulane Family Leadership Council members Alan and Kara Mindel, the dinner gave students the chance to converse with real estate professionals, discuss career paths and learn about trends shaping the industry.

Over the next four days, students visited top firms, including Slate Property Group, BRIXMOR Property Group, Ripco Real Estate Corp., and Welltower. At Welltower, they had the opportunity to speak with Freeman alum David Renbaum (BSM ’23), a senior analyst, who offered his perspective on capital allocation, asset management and development strategies within the industry.

“Students on the trip got a no-nonsense education on what it's like to work at the largest real estate company in the world and what we're focused on in our day-to-day duties,” said Renbaum. “It’s all about learning.”

Renbaum said that as an alum, he felt called to show his support for current Freeman students.

“I'm only three years removed from the Freeman School, and I have such a fondness for Tulane,” he said. “It feels good to reconnect and give back in any way I can.”

“The strength of the Tulane network really stood out to me during this trip,” Cukrowski said. “Everyone was eager to give advice, share experiences, and support current students, which made the industry feel both exciting and accessible.”



During the NYC trek, students met with real estate professionals and participated in networking activities.

Nicholas Falbo (BSM ’28), a finance and real estate double major, whose goal is to work in real estate development, said the trip fostered personal connections he can draw on when he begins applying for jobs.

“The networking events were great,” said Falbo. “I definitely picked up some contacts and am planning to stay in touch with the people I met.”

A highlight of the trip was a visit to Rockefeller Plaza and a tour of Tishman Speyer, one of the world’s leading real estate conglomerates. During the tour, students met with Tishman Speyer team members from the acquisitions, leasing, marketing, and debt and equity capital markets departments.

Falbo, who grew up in Manhattan, says that touring these iconic NYC sites hit home.

“I grew up going to Rockefeller Plaza and seeing the Christmas tree there every year,” he said. “But I had never gone into the building itself. When we were inside, I got to see the Rainbow Room, which is a wedding venue where my parents got married. It was a full circle moment for me.”

For Cukrowski, visiting Rockefeller Center was a learning experience that brought classroom concepts straight into the real world.

“Seeing such an iconic property firsthand brought to life the thought, coordination, and long-term strategy that goes into operating and repositioning a complex of that scale,” she said. “Learning about design decisions, tenant mix, capital planning, and day-to-day operational considerations helped me better understand how truly multidisciplinary real estate is.”

Following the tour of Rockefeller Center was a trip to Hudson Yards, New York’s sprawling shopping center with more than 100 shops and restaurants, and insightful discussions on the transformative role of AI in real estate at the CREtech conference.

Hudlow says that taken together, these experiences gave students a fuller perspective on career possibilities within the real estate industry.

“This trip complemented the conversations that go on in our classrooms,” Hudlow said. “It allowed students to make connections with working professionals and envision the kind of career they want for themselves.”