Real Estate, Finance and Investment Certificate Q&A with Mark Basgall (BSM ’27)

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Originally from Lake Forest, Illinois, Mark Basgall is studying economics and finance and earning a Real Estate Finance and Investment Certificate from the Freeman School of Business. Below, Basgall provides an overview of the certificate and highlights some of the unique opportunities it offers.

What is the Real Estate Finance and Investment Certificate Program?

The Real Estate Finance and Investment Certificate is a great program that helps Freeman School students segue into commercial real estate. While there are other real estate programs at Tulane, the certificate is unique because it focuses on the

number side of real estate rather than the architectural aspect. The program is perfect if you're interested in capital markets, development or commercial real estate.

What are some of your favorite classes or professors from the program?

I'm currently in Real Estate Private Equity with AJ Brooks. Professor Brooks is the most impactful instructor I've had so far. He's taught me a lot in the classroom, and he has also been an advisor on our group trips to New York, where he helped me connect with people and large institutional firms that have connections nationwide. Connections are everything in commercial real estate, so he's been a life changer for me.

What are some of the trips you went on through the program?

The Real Estate Finance and Investment Certificate has sponsored some outstanding trips, and one of the best was our New York Trek. Through the trek, I was able to network with a lot of firms in New York, as well as Tulane alumni and professionals outside of Tulane's network.

I also took advantage of a trip to Chicago, since that's where I'm from. Because of that trip, I was able to become part of a program that has over 600 professionals in commercial real estate in Chicago.

My network grew so much because of the exposure I've gotten through the certificate program. Ultimately, these connections directly translated into my landing an internship for this summer.

What other real estate clubs or activities does the Freeman School offer?

One thing that's really been beneficial to me is joining the Tulane Real Estate Group, which helped organize some of the trips I mentioned.

In addition, as a Freeman School representative, I participated in the Eisenberg Real Estate Challenge, a case competition in Chicago in which real-life developers, brokers and lenders from commercial real estate serve as judges. It was a beneficial experience, and the judges gave great feedback.

Why should other students consider getting a Freeman Real Estate Certificate?

The Real Estate Finance and Investment Certificate opens doors to so many people — not just Tulane alumni but professionals nationwide. What I've learned is that when you're a student, people in the professional industry are so much more willing to help than someone who is already out of school. Plus, once they see a Tulane badge, people are excited to help.

What are your post-graduation plans?

After graduation, I hope to be on an acquisitions or investments team in commercial real estate. I'm really interested in open air retail and multifamily housing. Open air retail is typically an outdoor strip mall or a single tenant space like a Chipotle or a Lululemon store. Open air retail is a booming asset class because we're moving away from traditional malls, and I'm hoping to capitalize on this transition. And then there’s multifamily housing, which will always be in demand. With the rise of the amenities going into multifamily housing, it's an exciting time for that asset class as well.