

# URBAN LIGHT

The ULI Chicago Newsletter

## ULI Chicago Transitions to New Leadership for FY15-16



ULI Chicago welcomes Joseph L. Wisniewski, *Partner*, Deloitte, as the new District Council Chair for FY15-16. Joe has been a long-time Advisory Board member and has held the position of Treasurer for eight years. He takes over for Paul W. Shadle, DLA Piper LLP (US) who served as Chair from July 2012 through December 2014. The District Council presented an award in recognition of service and commitment to Mr. Shadle at the January breakfast meeting. Paul was instrumental in launching ULI Chicago's **Infrastructure Initiative** that received both local and national attention. He also led the District Council in hosting the 2013 ULI Fall Meeting here in Chicago. We thank Paul for his guidance and leadership in moving ULI forward in Chicago.

The ULI Chicago Communications Committee recently sat down with new Chair, Joe Wisniewski, to learn more about his involvement with ULI, his new role as Chair, and his goals for the

District Council.

### **What is your history with ULI and what inspired you to first become a member?**

I've been a member since 2003. I joined ULI to gain a better understanding of the real estate industry. I saw ULI Chicago as a platform for me to gain a perspective on how all the various aspects of the local real estate industry come together.

### **How have you been involved with ULI?**

My involvement in ULI nationally has included membership on several flights of the National Urban Development/Mixed-Use Product Council as well as being the Treasurer on the Advisory Board for ULI Chicago for the past 8 years. I've also been fortunate enough to chair the Young Leader Mentorship program.

### **What do you see as your leadership strengths?**

I've always enjoyed being part of a team. My time at Deloitte has offered many opportunities to lead teams and encourage collaboration. I believe that as a leader it's important to recognize that everyone

has a voice and perspective. I've become a good listener as a result. I want to hear what other people think and understand how others see a situation. I'm also a strong believer in empowering other members of the team.

**How have you seen ULI grow/change over the last 5 years?**

Engagement has expanded. ULI Chicago has done a great job of getting its members involved, especially with young leaders.

**What is your vision for ULI Chicago in the near term?**

Thanks to the great stewardship of Paul Shadle, ULI Chicago is in great shape. I feel very fortunate to be entering this position with a high degree of momentum established by recent leadership. My vision for the future is to continue to help grow membership and engagement. I'm also very excited to see the young leaders group expand and evolve. Thanks to great leadership and members, I believe ULI will continue to flourish. I'm also excited to see programming and public policy panels continue to grow in order to solve the problems faced by our region, such as use of vacant land and further development of workforce and affordable housing. ULI Chicago has recently embarked on a regional **Great Lakes Initiative**. I'm excited to see how the collaboration of six district councils throughout the region will come together to further this great vision.

**What do you see as the biggest challenges the Chicago region is facing and how can ULI help?**

Chicago continues to face issues around affordable housing and transportation. As urbanization evolves, Chicago faces a tremendous opportunity to meet this with better transportation and affordable housing options. At ULI, we're "conveners", bringing great minds together. I think ULI will be a great participant in the public and private real estate challenges that Chicago faces.

**What do you do in your spare time?**

Well in the past I spent a lot of my time coaching my kids' softball and baseball games. My children are now grown up and lately I've been spending a lot of time cooking. I love cooking Cajun food and BBQ. It's a very creative activity that gives me a great sense of accomplishment. I was recently given a Big Green Egg for Christmas so I'm looking forward to smoking some beef brisket or pork shoulder. I also love to ski and recently returned from a great trip to Beaver Creek Colorado.

**What is the latest book you've read?**

My nephew gave me a book called "A Death in Belmont," a murder mystery set in the 1960's in a Boston suburb, which was particularly interesting as it offered an historical and societal perspective along with the story of the mysterious crime.

We wish Joe well in his new position and look forward to working with another dedicated, committed, and smart ULI volunteer.

*Thank you to ULI Chicago Communications Committee members K.C. Wigle, WE O'Neil Construction and Martin Hansberry, Cushman & Wakefield, for conducting this interview.*

## ULI Chicago Kicks Off Women's Leadership Initiative

The **Women's Leadership Initiative** (WLI), established by ULI, has officially launched locally within the Chicago District Council. Its core mission is to raise the visibility and number of women leaders in ULI and the real estate industry. WLI will achieve this mission by organizing events and programs that will:

- Promote the advancement of women, throughout their careers, as leaders in the real estate industry.
- Increase the number of women who serve in leadership positions in the real estate industry and in ULI.
- Increase the visibility of women leaders in the real estate industry and in ULI.
- Increase the number of women who are active ULI Full Members; and support the development of young women members as leaders in ULI and in their professions.

Recognizing WLI's value, one of ULI Chicago's leaders, Kelley Smith, Principal at Kensington Realty Advisors, took the lead in bringing the WLI to Chicago. Following phone surveys with several women members of ULI Chicago, Kelley along with ULI Chicago staff, organized the first ULI Chicago WLI meeting, a kickoff/brainstorming session that was held on December 10, 2014 at DLA Piper.

The objective of the initial brainstorming session was to discuss how the women members of ULI Chicago would like the WLI to be integrated within the District Council. A staff member from ULI was present to help provide case studies and examples of how other District Councils have incorporated WLI. From the meeting, it was clear that the twenty-plus meeting attendees wanted the WLI of ULI Chicago to promote the integration and participation of women into ULI Chicago, but not by excluding the male members. As Smith notes, "One of the benefits of ULI Chicago membership is the diversity and access to our male members, so the WLI is not meant to be exclusionary. In essence, WLI's goal is not to replicate other female-only real estate groups, but to bring focus to our women members and facilitate their integration into ULI Chicago." By the end of the meeting many of the attendees selected to join a sub-committee that aligned with the ULI Chicago committees including Membership, Programs and Communications. Following the meeting, Sayiddah McCree, Koenigsberg Engineering, P.C., an Under 35 ULI Member and Co-chair of the ULI Chicago Mentorship Program, stated, "It was very inspiring to see women from several fields and leadership levels express a deep interest in starting the WLI in our District Council."

During the meeting, Kelley Smith also shared the exciting news that the **Goldie B. Wolfe Miller Women Leaders in Real Estate Initiative** (GBWM Initiative) will provide financial support to ULI Chicago in order to promote ULI membership for all current GBWM Initiative scholars and alumnae and program assistance for ULI's WLI efforts in Chicago. Goldie stated that she is "...excited about this new alignment with the ULI Women's Leadership Initiative in Chicago and I am looking forward to the collaborative opportunities it will provide for the expansion and enrichment of the GBWM Initiative mission." She also hoped that, "we could provide these women some of the things I didn't have when I started in the industry – like mentors, a good support system and networking opportunities."

The WLI within the ULI Chicago District Council is off to a great start, procuring a high amount of interest among the women members of ULI Chicago, and will announce the next scheduled event in the first quarter of 2015. The initiative will be co-chaired by Suzanne Martinez of LaSalle Investment Management Client Capital Group and Kate Moran of Cohen Financial. A **WLI Governance Committee** will provide guidance and input. If you would like to join ULI Chicago's WLI, please contact ULI Chicago at [Chicago@uli.org](mailto:Chicago@uli.org).

Learn more about [ULI Chicago's Women's Leadership Initiative](#)

## COMMITTEE UPDATES

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Our committee update section highlights some of the most recent committee activities. Contact [ULI Chicago](#) to get involved with a committee or initiative.

## Communications

ULI's social media channels are alive with news, events, resources, research and new and ongoing programs. Don't forget about this valuable line of communication. You can set your own notifications and control the flow of information so you won't be overwhelmed. Visit us on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), and our own [ULI Chicago Newsfeed](#) ... and Get Connected!

## Programs

### Upcoming Events

February 4, 11, 23, 2015

#### **YL Small Group Discussion Series – SOLD OUT**

Deloitte, 111 S. Wacker Dr., 24th Floor

5:30 pm – 8:00 pm

*\*this series is SOLD OUT*

February 5, 2015

#### **YL Site Tour – CBRE's New Office Space**

321 N. Clark Street, 34th Floor

7:45 am – 9:15 am

[Register Now](#)

February 20, 2015

**Nominations Due 2015 Vision Awards**

**[Submit a Nomination](#)**

Mark your calendar to celebrate with us on June 3, 2015 at our **[2015 Vision Awards](#)**

March 12, 2015

**Monthly Breakfast Meeting**

Union League Club of Chicago

7:45 am – 9:15 am

*\*registration opening soon*

March 2015

**ULI Chicago TAP**

Old McHenry County Courthouse – Opportunities for Future Use and Ownership

Woodstock, IL

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*This issue of Urban Light has been edited and designed by the ULI Chicago Communications Committee, including: Mark Hahn (chair), Mike Anguiano, Eric Turrin, K.C. Wigle and Martin Hansberry with assistance from the ULI Chicago staff.*