

February 21, 2019

Boston Business Journal: Related Beal president on cities, mentorship and building things

By **Catherine Carlock**

Impressions: 3,575,683

<https://www.bizjournals.com/boston/news/2019/02/21/related-beal-president-on-cities-mentorship-and-building.html>



Kimberly Sherman Stamler, president Related Beal. W. MARC BERNSAU

Title: President

Company: Related Beal

Residence: Beacon Hill

Education: Bachelor's degree in urban studies, University of Pennsylvania

It's lucky Kimberly Sherman Stamler loves cities and learning new things — both passions come in handy in her professional and civic life. As president of Related Beal in Boston, Stamler oversees a powerhouse real-estate development firm that's involved in nearly every aspect of development, from affordable and luxury housing to mixed-use projects to life-sciences facilities. Stamler, whom the Business Journal named one of 11 business leaders to watch in 2019, was tapped to join the board of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston earlier this year. She's also one of a handful of high-ranking women in Boston's commercial real estate development industry. Stamler recently sat down with Business Journal Real Estate Editor Catherine Carlock to discuss her rise in real estate, her interest in cities and her role in mentorship.

How did you get into the business? I was always fascinated by cities very early on. What sparked my interest was the dynamism in cities, and how much energy there was in every city we visited, large or small. I grew up in northern New Jersey and my parents both worked in the city, and I found that every time I went into New York I just noticed something new and something different. I was fascinated by the buildings, the architecture, the transportation, the people on the street. Every city has a story. I declared my major early when I went to college and majored in urban studies right away.

You interned at Related Cos. in college and then joined the company straight out of school — making you something of a Related lifer. There are so many terrific things about the company. It is constantly growing and evolving, just as real estate is growing and evolving. I don't even know if I had a title when I started, but if I moved up to a title, I moved up to analyst.

What kept you at the company? There's a seat at the table for everybody who's working on a project. In an industry like real estate development, where there are so many components of any given development, I think getting a 360-degree exposure — especially at a young age — allowed me to understand real-time and learn real-time what goes into a project. Real estate development is not just the four walls of the building. It's who are the users, who's coming in, what's happening on the streets, within the community, with the industry, with the green space, with the transportation. I love being in an industry that allows you to see so many components of growth.

How did the move from New York to Boston come about? Related and Beal had worked together on The Clarendon starting in 2002, so we all knew each other well. In addition, Bruce Beal Jr., who's the president of Related Cos. out of New York, is the son of Bruce Beal Sr., who's chairman of Beal and the nephew of Robert Beal. We're like-minded companies, and when we became Related Beal in 2013, I moved up here the next year as COO. I had been going back and forth from New York to Boston, Boston to New York, and so I felt very fortunate that when I moved to Boston, I had already been working in Boston for a long time and had been working with the Beals.

Related Beal has tackled almost every type of development class, from affordable and luxury housing to biotech, mixed-use, repositionings and redevelopments. Is

that exciting as a developer? That has been wonderful and very exciting for us as a company, because a lot of the different asset classes inform each other. Whether it's housing informing office or office informing life sciences — what are residents seeking, what are tenants seeking, whether it's outdoor space or amenities or desk count — and so being able to execute various asset classes has been very exciting. It's a culmination of what both companies were doing, and now we get to do it together, as one.

You were named president of the firm in 2016. Was it nerve-racking to take the reins of such a longstanding Boston company? I have so much respect for the Beals and everything they've done here and how they've done things, within the community and philanthropy and real estate and the arts. I did feel that, you know, coming into the organization together, Related Beal, that it was very important the legacy is continued the way it started. I've been fortunate to have great mentors in Robert (Beal) and Bruce (Beal) and in our company. But it is something that the foundations of both companies are steeped in: doing great things. So it was nice that collectively, and as one company, we have that foundation. But it was important to me to focus on that and to learn from what had been done in the past.

What's the importance of that mentorship relationship in your career? I've been fortunate to have consistent mentors who want to see people thrive. For me, when I'm looking for mentors or guidance or leadership, I'm looking to people that have qualities I want to learn from. And maybe there is something I resonate with and I say, 'Gee, I have a connection with the person.' Or maybe it's, I'm seeing someone doing something I think to myself, 'that's an interesting way of doing things. I'd like to learn more.' So, while I've been very fortunate to have individual mentors, I think I've kept my eyes open for qualities of different people and connections with different people

What else do you look for in a mentor? When I started to grow throughout my career and to learn new things and see new things, the net widens in who you meet, in your company or not. You can form a connection with somebody who can be a mentor or if you don't know somebody well, seeing qualities of that person and how they've done things in their career — even though it might not be a direct mentor and that person doesn't necessarily know that they've mentored me, per se — I've paid attention, so how they've done things, or why they've done things, and it's sort of just sat with me.

I really like learning from other industries, whether it's being involved in organizations that cast a wide net to other industries, reading about other industries, learning from either best business practices or leadership or connectivity, whatever it is. I think that's another piece that then allows you to widen your net even more to learn new things and learn from different people.

What are you most excited about with your work at Related Beal? I'm excited about getting further into the community. Last year we did a partnership with the Dearborn Stem Academy where each week we brought members of our team into an eighth-grade classroom, focusing on development and planning and other tracks. I saw that as an opportunity to talk to students about, A, how diverse the real estate industry is; B,

what you need and what you don't need in order to start in the real estate industry; and, C, if you have an interest in any one of these things, then pursue it. At one point there was a student drawing on an iPad, it was the most amazing sketch, and at the end I went up to him and said, that building we showed you a case study of — that building started just like the picture you just drew. It's really making the connections and connecting the dots. To be able to break (the industry) down into different segments and have our team talk real-time about what we're working on and what we're doing, what the challenges are — it was really interesting.

What do you like to do when you're not working? I love being with my family. I have two boys, 8 and 11, and it's very fun to follow their lead. That takes us in many different places. This weekend, we had a bunch of sports, and my older son really wanted to create a birdhouse that also had a squirrel deflector. I think we were at the hardware store three or four times, minimum, and we did a lot of measuring and planning, and it was great.