

Alumni Spotlight: Santoshi Botha (MS in Real Estate, 2016)



I am originally from South Africa and completed the MS Real Estate Program at Baruch in 2016. I worked in financial services and accounting in Johannesburg for several years after completing my bachelor's degree in architecture from the University of the Witwatersrand and a bachelor's in accounting from Brooklyn College.

My corporate experience exposed me to the potential of a career in real estate and, after looking into various real estate programs offered in the city, I chose to enroll in Baruch's MSRE because of the holistic experience it offered students through its structured curriculum and professional resources.

As an International Student, my working opportunities were limited; however, I was driven to make use of every resource that was available to me. The supportive services offered at the Real Estate department far exceeded my expectations. Margo Weaker has established a wonderful program of events for students. Apart from the industry panel events, which were a brilliant way for students to meet professionals working in the industry, the Resume Writing workshop, in particular, gave students incredible access to HR representatives from reputable real estate companies. Not only did we get insights into what employers were looking for in potential candidates, but we had direct contact with decision makers who we could connect with if there were job openings we were interested in applying to.

I served as the Treasurer of the Graduate Real Estate Club in 2016, liaison of the Real Estate Alumni Club, and I was fortunate to have been awarded the William Newman Department of Real Estate Time Equities Work/Study Fellowship for 2015. The position at Time Equities offered me immediate hands on experience into commercial real estate. The experience developed my portfolio management and underwriting skills, preparing me well for my current role at TD Bank. Each of these roles provided me with a platform to be invited into the intimate world of real estate, ensuring that through my growing network I would continually be included in future events. It was ultimately my good fortune in receiving the 2015/16 Commercial Real Estate Women Charitable Fund Scholarship that sparked my opportunity to work at TD Bank: I happened to be seated next to a TD employee at a CREW event where scholarship recipients were being recognized, and she told me to send her my resume in case there was an opening. That was a full year before I landed my role at the company. I have been working as an analyst at TD Bank for almost two years now, specializing in affordable housing. I work with an incredibly knowledgeable team and learn new things about this unique market every day.

I immigrated to the US hoping that the opportunities offered in my new life in America would be better than those available to me in South Africa, and have found this to be true. I am incredibly thankful for all the ongoing support and opportunities the real estate department gives students and alumni alike.