

# Marquette University: College of Business Administration launches groundbreaking Real Estate Asset Program

Posted on Monday, Sep 13, 2021

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MILWAUKEE — The College of Business Administration at Marquette University has announced the launch of a groundbreaking Real Estate Asset Program, a real-world, student-focused investment program in commercial real estate. It is the first classroom-based, student-run real estate investment program for undergraduate students in the nation.

Marquette's REAP will welcome its first cohort of 8-10 students in spring 2022, offering students the opportunity to work with an investment committee of seasoned professionals with a starting fund of \$1 million for investment in real estate deals across the country.

“Applied learning is the future of education in real estate, and Marquette is the first program in the nation offering this at the undergraduate level,” said Andy Hunt, director of the Center for Real Estate. “REAP’s applied learning model will further set Marquette’s real estate program apart from other undergraduate programs, leading to more successful graduates, more engaged alumni and more supportive industry partners.”

Vito Taphorn, instructor of practice in finance, will serve as director of REAP, providing support and mentoring, investor relations, and oversight to all investment activities. He brings over 20 years of experience in various roles in commercial real estate finance, most recently as managing director at CIBC US, where he originated commercial real estate loan activity, managed customer relationships, and monitored credit quality.

“This is such an exciting opportunity for Marquette students to pair with a group of investors and gain real world experience in the field of commercial real estate,” Taphorn said. “Working with an investment committee of industry professionals, we will be targeting a wide array of real estate assets, allowing students to engage in the process of pitching and evaluating deals, as well as managing investments.”

“We believe participants from this program will be among the best in the country in analyzing commercial real estate transactions upon graduation,” Taphorn added.

Marquette’s Center for Real Estate aims to deepen commercial real estate knowledge at Marquette University, in Milwaukee, across the Midwest and throughout the nation. REAP joins the center’s other nationally renowned initiatives, such as the Associates in Commercial Real Estate (ACRE) training program for men and women of color, as well as the highly successful real estate strategies conference held every fall on Marquette’s campus. Historically ranked among the top undergraduate commercial real estate programs in the country by U.S. News and World Report, Marquette’s is the only commercial real estate program offered at a Catholic, Jesuit university, uniquely grounding everything the center does in a solid foundation of business principles, ethics, and an environment that engages students, professionals, and academics alike.