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Touro is new kid on the block



Photo by Marty Heitner

Pictured l-r: Dr. Anthony J. Polemeni, vice president of Touro's Graduate Division; Esther Muller; Professor Ben Wieder, co-founder and chairman, Academy for Continuing Education and professor emeritus, City University of New York; Dr Bernard Lander; Dottie Herman, Prudential Douglas Elliman; Stan Ponte, Coldwell Banker International Previews; and Dr. Michael Williams.

New York brokers just got a new opportunity to stand out in the crowd.

Last week, veteran real estate educator Esther Muller and Dr Michael Williams, dean of Touro College Graduate School of Business, rolled out a new education program exclusively tailored towards residential brokers.

The non-credit course - which will result in a Certificate of Completion - will be directed by Muller, co-founder of the Academy for Continuing Education and a Touro professor. According to Muller, the course aims to not only re-educate those currently making their living in a constantly changing field, but to instruct those first entering the field.

The Graduate School of Business' Residential Real Estate Entrepreneurship Certificate of Completion's professional and academic curricula differ from other real estate education offerings by colleges and universities throughout the United States, Dean Williams said, pointing out that other real estate programs focus on commercial real estate, not residential.

"Our primary goal is to elevate the practice of residential real estate from a mere transactional relationship, to one where practitioners are true advisors to their clients' needs, providing them with relevant data, sound investment strategy, and valuable industry information," said Dr. Bernard Lander, president of Touro College.

Drs. Bernard Lander, Williams and Muller also envision the Graduate School of Business at 65 Broadway as becoming a critical hub of the Wall Street district.

"We see our efforts as part of President Obama's stimulus agenda," Dean Williams said. "Our energies are focused on an underserved population which, in the past, might not have had the opportunity to explore educational pursuits that will open countless doors for them. We are training today's workforce for tomorrow's jobs."

He added that the School of Business's practitioner-oriented faculty, high-tech business school center, and Wall Street location, positions it as an international,

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urban business school of choice.

The lobby of the building at 65 Broadway has undergone a major, two-year renovation. It was officially opened by Dr Landers last week to coincide with the launch of the new program..

The Residential Real Estate Entrepreneurship Certificate of Completion will consist of four courses addressing market topics, such as Trends and Issues in the 21st Century Global Real Estate Markets, Technology and Real Estate and Real Estate Finance for Real Estate Professionals.

Dean Williams said the program is invaluable for those currently working in residential real estate. "The rules of the game have changed," he said. "You cannot conduct business as if you were still in the 20th century and continue to be successful. The public trust has changed, the way the banks and mortgage brokers do business has changed. Everyone is demanding more accountability and transparency."

Herman kicks off new program

By JASON TURCOTTE

Dottie Herman took to the podium as the first guest lecturer at Touro's Graduate School of Business and Academy for Continuing Education's three-day "Tips from the Tops" Urban Retreat Program.

Leading a lengthy list of top industry professionals — including Richard Mack, Adrienne Albert, Fred Warburg Peters, Kent Swig, Stan Ponte, Gary Malin, Jonathan Miller, Barak Dunayer and many others — Prudential's president and CEO called for a return to relationships in the industry.

"We're in a world where everybody's rushing, everybody's e-mailing — and there's no relationships," Herman said.

Herman, who described real estate as "building a business within a business," told the students that too many brokers relive the stresses of their first year in the business during down markets, simply because they're too transaction focused during the prosperous times.

The key to staying successful in tough times is cultivating those relationships that yield referrals and open doors. And the best way to do that, she said,

is by establishing a strong "follow-up system."

Herman encouraged the brokers in the room to not just save client contacts and business cards but jot down personal anecdotes about each person. She also encouraged making a phone call or writing a hand-written note over e-mail, which she often finds too impersonal for relationship building. And even when clients aren't buying, she said to keep in contact (they may have friends and family members looking).

"The whole idea is to leave an impression on someone before they have the need [to buy]," Herman said.

Meanwhile, Touro College president Dr. Bernard Lander kicked off the launch of the school's new residential real estate program with an appearance at last week's event. His goal is for the school to leave its impression on the world.

"Our approach is a global approach..." said Lander, who noted the school plans to expand in South America and Africa next year.

"The time has come for us to professionalize this field." For more on Touro, see Page 9.



DOTTIE HERMAN