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From: kathryn.oleary@uconn.edu
Subject: FW: UConn Real Estate Center September 2025 Newsletter



CENTER FOR REAL ESTATE AND
URBAN ECONOMIC STUDIES

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September 2025 Edition

Transfer Act Conference 2025



Closing the Deal: Transfer Act Transformation & Property Transactions

Join us for a timely discussion on the upcoming sunset of CT's Transfer Act in 2026 and the new legislation (Bill 1404) set to take its place. We'll explore the evolving regulatory landscape and what it means for:



Redevelopment



Due Diligence



Future of Real Estate in CT



09.19.25 | 8:30am - 12:30pm



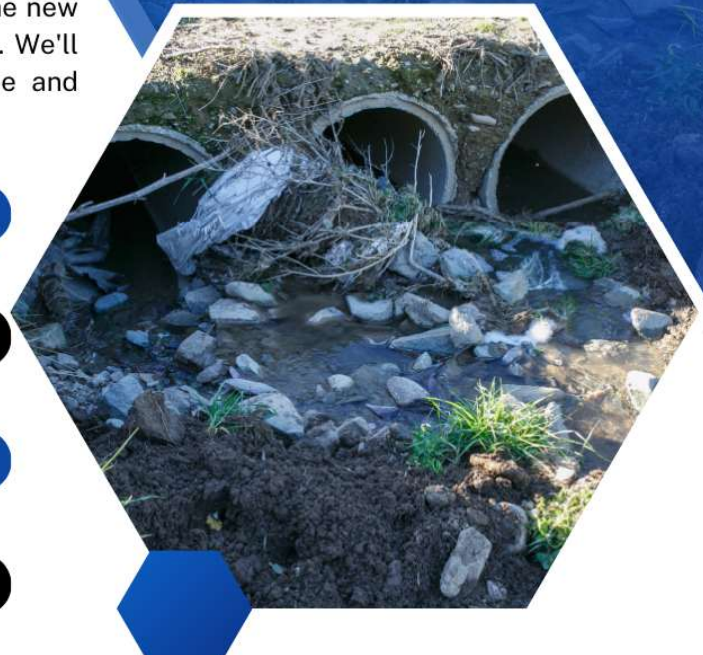
UConn Storrs, Student Union Ballroom
2110 Hillside Road, U-3008



860.486.3227



realestate.business.uconn.edu/



On the agenda:

1. State Agencies Perspective

- **Matthew J. Pugliese**, Deputy Commissioner & Chief Investment Officer, Department of Economic and Community Development
- **Brendan Schain**, Legal Director, Environmental Quality Branch, Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection

2. Broker Perspective

- **Bryan K. Atherton** CCIM, SIOR Atherton Real Estate Advisors
- **Frank Hird** SIOR, Realtor® Vice President, O,R&L Commercial, LLC

3. Developer Perspective

- **Jason Rudnick**, Principal & COO RJ Development & Advisors LLC

Register Online

Sponsor the Event

Can AI Replace the Crisis Manual?



Article from:
ICSC Commerce + Communities Today

Article by:
Rebecca Meiser, Contributor,
Commerce + Communities Today and
Small Business Center

Gregory FCA’s new CrisisCalm platform promises to help shopping centers, property managers and retail teams respond faster and with more clarity — tailored to their brand’s voice.

When disaster strikes — whether it’s catastrophic flooding, a major technical outage or an on-site incident — businesses often scramble to respond. For shopping centers, where public perception and rapid communication are everything, those first few hours can make or break a brand’s reputation. And artificial intelligence, it turns out, can keep a cool head and work pretty quickly.

The Crisis That Sparked CrisisCalm

Public relations agency Gregory FCA developed CrisisCalm after the team guided a technology client through a major crisis. “Our team helped them through it, giving them statements to media, tracking all of that,” recalled Gregory FCA executive vice president Heather Crowell, who spent 16 years in communications and strategy at PREIT before starting at Gregory FCA in 2022. “Afterwards, they mentioned to our CEO that they had this manual and they never even touched it.”

The client asked for an updated, more practical guide, and Gregory FCA CEO Greg Matusky floated a bold idea: What if we created something better: something dynamic, powered by AI? He thought AI could make crisis response faster and more efficient.

Backed by decades of experience across mall management, corporate communications and crisis PR, the team began development in late fall 2024. They tested CrisisCalm with beta users through the spring and officially launched it in July 2025.

Real-World Use Cases: From Tech Firms to Shopping Centers
Gregory FCA is pitching CrisisCalm, which is designed for immediate usefulness rather than theoretical checklists, to a range of sectors from tech companies to multifamily real estate operators to retailers because its strengths — flexibility and speed — are universal. “It’s kind of like your SWAT team in the moment,” Crowell said. “You can have a draft almost instantly.”

The platform addresses a persistent communications problem that occurs during crises: Companies panic, delay their responses and

inadvertently let others control the narrative, often leaving key internal and external stakeholders in the dark. CrisisCalm aims to replace that chaos with structured clarity. Users input a scenario — say, flooding at a mixed-use property in Texas or a data breach at a retailer — and receive a customized, AI-generated crisis response kit: press releases, internal memos, social posts and stakeholder messages. “You can have a draft that may not be perfect, but it’s a solid start within minutes,” Crowell said.

[Read more >](#)

Real Estate Leadership & Learning Luncheon

UConn
Center for
Real Estate



Leadership & Learning Luncheon

Join us for a luncheon that brings together alumni, industry leaders, and real estate students to strengthen connections and share insights. This event underscores our commitment to student success, career development, and ongoing collaboration with the real estate community

Space is limited;
Advance registration is required

**Date:**

Friday, September 19, 2025

**Time:**

12:30pm - 2:00pm

**Location:**

UConn School of Business
2100 Hillside Road, Room 116

**Questions?**

860.486.3227



recenter.business@uconn.edu

Official Sites

www.realestate.business.uconn.edu



www.hillsideventures.uconn.edu/real-estate-investment-fund/

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Final Call – Just 2 Weeks Away! 🤖



🏆 The **20th Annual UCRECC Golf Tournament** is almost here, and there's still time to join us:

Don't miss your chance to be part of this milestone event on September 16th!

Join alumni, industry partners, and friends of UConn Real Estate for a day of connection, competition, and celebration.

- ✓ Register as a single player or foursome
- ✓ Become a **sponsor** and showcase your brand to a targeted industry audience
- ✓ Support the UConn Real Estate Center while enjoying one of our most anticipated annual traditions

💎 Not a golfer? No problem! You're warmly invited to join us for the cocktail reception and dinner, where you'll still have the chance to network and celebrate with colleagues.

Spots are limited—[secure your place today](#) and help us make the 20th our most memorable tournament yet!

👏 Thank You to Our 2025 Sponsors 👏

We're proud to recognize the generous companies helping bring this year's event to life:

- **Northmarq:** *Tournament Co-Sponsor*
- **SitusAMC:** *Hat Sponsor*
- **Acadia Realty:** *Dinner Sponsor*
- **Altus Group:** *Shirt Sponsor*
- **Newmark:** *Closest to the Pin Prize Sponsor*
- **LoopNet Auction by Ten-X:** *Putting Green Sponsor*
- **Horvath & Tremblay:** *Driving Range Sponsor*
- **SIOR CT/W. MA Chapter:** *Driving Range Sponsor*

Join this outstanding group of supporters. Contact the Center for Real Estate about remaining sponsorship opportunities or [click here](#)! The deadline to sponsor is this Friday, September 5th at 12pm.

Building Connections. Sharing Opportunities.



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Where emerging talent and industry leaders
come together to connect, collaborate, and grow.

Join our LinkedIn group today

Be part of the conversation

Your network starts here

Our group unites UConn students and alumni in real estate—across industries and around the globe. Connect, collaborate, and expand your network. If you're a current student or alum, [click here](#) to join.

Elite Aspirations



Pamir Alpay, UConn's vice president for research, innovation and entrepreneurship, says the school's research productivity is comparable to about 25% of Association of American Universities members. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Access to top talent, more federal funding fuel UConn's ambitions to join to association of research universities.

There are a variety of reasons why the University of Connecticut wants to be recognized as a superior research institution.

But beyond the prestige and recognition of its academic rigor, the bottom line for President Radenka Maric is this: Like Aaron Burr in the Broadway musical, "Hamilton," UConn wants to be in the room where it happens.

A key part of UConn's ambitions hinge, in part, on one day joining the Association of American Universities, an elite consortium of the nation's top research institutions.

Currently, only 71 colleges — including Yale University and the nation's seven other Ivy League schools — are members of the Washington, D.C.-based group, which was founded in 1900.

Membership brings not only prestige, but also potential improved access to federal research funding and greater influence in shaping public policy.

The topic was brought up during this year's legislative session, and a new law recently signed by Gov. Ned Lamont (House Bill 7095) requires UConn to develop "an action plan" to join such an association.

Schools, however, do not apply to join the AAU; membership is by invitation only. Because of that, campaigning for membership is frowned upon.

“Yes, we’d love to get invited to AAU, but I think at no point should we be saying that we’re pining for it,” said Pamir Alpay, UConn’s vice president for research, innovation and entrepreneurship. “That’s not a good look for the university.”

He noted that the bill passed by the legislature does not mention AAU specifically. Regardless, Alpay said, “We certainly would like to be recognized as a top research university.”

Both Maric and Alpay strongly believe UConn has achieved that status, and they made that case to the school’s board of trustees during a retreat on July 16. At that meeting, Alpay presented a 10-page study outlining why UConn qualifies and what membership would mean for its future.

‘Really at the table’

Both Maric and Alpay agreed to discuss the effort in an interview with Hartford Business Journal.

Maric said an invitation to join AAU would signify UConn’s standing as a leading research institution, and recognize “the breadth and quality of a research and graduate education.”

She noted that the state has invested over a billion dollars into infrastructure improvements at UConn’s Storrs campus over the past two decades to support engineering and science research.

Being an AAU member would further strengthen UConn’s research efforts, Maric said.

“So, you are really at the table,” Maric said of being an AAU member. “If you look at AAU institutions, they collectively secure a large portion of competitive awards from federal funding — from the National Science Foundation (NSF), the National Institute of Health (NIH) — because they are drafting those policies. They are at the table before things happen ... so they have that advantage.”

While AAU officials declined to comment for this story, the nonprofit organization’s website states that its member universities “earn the majority of competitively awarded federal funding for research that improves public health, seeks to address national challenges, and contributes significantly to our economic strength”

It adds that its members also “collectively help shape policy for higher education, science and innovation.”

A third benefit of AAU membership would be to improve UConn’s ability to recruit talent.

“If you want to recruit and retain the top talents, they need to know that you have the funding, that you have the infrastructure, and then the students want to come,” Maric said.

An increasing number of students enrolling at UConn want experience in the research lab as freshmen and sophomores, she said, “because many of them are looking for graduate school or going to companies like Google, like Apple, like Nvidia, and without that research experience, you are not competitive enough.”

‘An aspiring goal’

UConn officials, however, are convinced the university is already on par with some AAU members.

In fact, Alpay said he completed a study in 2023 that shows UConn’s “overall research productivity is comparable to about 25% of AAU members,” as well as to “the 15 other universities identified as competitors for AAU membership.”

For the study, Alpay said he reviewed “a lot” of data, including Higher Education Research & Development (HERD) rankings, state and federal research funding, as well as publication records.

The latter shows “how many papers, how many books, how many scholarly works we are putting out, and how other institutions are doing that,” he said. The study also looked at the impact of those publications by examining how often they are cited in other works.

The most important criteria, though, is research funding, he said.

“To get the research dollars, you have to have great ideas that the federal agencies will support,” Alpay said. “The research awards turn into inventions, papers, books, and then their impact is felt down the line through citations or national awards or international awards. So, all of that tells a comprehensive story.”

UConn has made significant strides in obtaining research dollars. Maric noted that when she was first hired at UConn as vice president for research in 2017, the school’s research budget was \$267.6 million. By 2022, it was \$367.6 million.

This year, the school’s research budget is now about \$380 million. That’s a 42% increase in eight years.

Still, there’s room for growth.

To support the effort to join the AAU, Maric told the trustees that UConn needs to increase its total annual R&D expenditures to \$500 million by 2030, and raise its endowment market value from \$577 million to \$1 billion by 2032.

The funding increases she seeks come amid the school’s recent financial struggles. Maric has previously said the university and UConn Health system face a combined \$134 million budget deficit over the next two years due in part to state budget cuts.

In addition, the need to increase fundraising for revenue sharing with student athletes, and cuts in grants by the federal government further place a strain on the university’s finances.

Despite those issues, Maric believes the goals are achievable.

She noted UConn is competing for federal and state funding for two different major research projects. The school is a finalist in a U.S. Department of Commerce competition for smart manufacturing utilizing artificial intelligence, which could provide a piece of up to \$400 million in research funding.

UConn is also working with Yale University to develop an innovation ecosystem in Connecticut focused on quantum technologies. The initiative is among 29 nationwide chosen as a finalist for up to \$160 million in National Science Foundation funding.

Both projects also are eligible for millions of dollars in state matching funds, Maric said.

As for fundraising, Maric said the university is currently in the midst of its largest campaign ever, called “Because of UConn.” The multiyear campaign started in 2020, and through the end of July has raised \$757 million.

“So, if you look where we are, I think we are in the right direction,” Maric said. “We have to have a laser focus. We have to have more donors, we have to engage more alumni. We have to engage more of the industry. It is a stretch goal, but I would not call that an imaginary goal. I will call it an aspiring goal. And this is where we want to be.”

Article from: Hartford Business Journal | **Article by:** [David Krechevsky](#) | **Article Date:** August 11, 2025

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Student Placement 2024-25

Has your firm recently hired a UConn Real Estate Intern or graduating Senior? We want to know about it!

Don't forget - the Center continues to offer Resume Books of students looking for internships and fulltime placement in the real estate industry.

To share your recent hire or for more information and to receive a copy of our student resume book, please send an email to: kathryn.oleary@uconn.edu or call 860-486-3227.



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