

# BOMA/Chicago Foundation

## Full Designation Scholarship Recipient Testimonials

[Learn More About the Scholarship Here](#)



**Teresa Amaro, RPA**, was the recipient of the Full Designation Scholarship in 2013. She joined CBRE in September 1997 as an Administrative Assistant and quickly found her passion was in the commercial real estate industry. As a Real Estate Manager, from 1998 through 2011, Teresa was responsible for a mix of office and industrial real estate totaling approximately 750,000 square feet. In 2011, Teresa became the Real Estate Manager for 250 S. Wacker, an 18-story office building located in downtown Chicago, totaling 244,961 square feet. In 2020, she was promoted to Senior Real Estate Manager.

Teresa earned her RPA designation two years after receiving the scholarship. Although she was already a seasoned manager, there was much more to learn as is always the case in property management. The knowledge she gained about environmental issues, mechanical equipment, real estate finance and risk management has given her more confidence, insight and perspective in her job. She has become a better manager for her clients and tenants.

“Earning my RPA was an enriching experience and I feel more confident in my role as a property manager. There is so much value in learning with your peers about the many facets of property management. I especially appreciated that the classes were taught by experienced real estate professionals who work in the industry and know the real challenges we face in managing buildings. The knowledge I gained and the relationships that were developed are invaluable. I am so grateful to BOMA/Chicago because I would not have been able to accomplish this without their generous scholarship.”



**Joe Sherman, RPA/FMA**, was awarded the 2014 Full Designation Scholarship. Joe began his career in Facility Management in October 2002 while working as the Director of Operations for Botanicals, Inc., an upscale event design firm located in a 30,000 square foot design studio on the border of Bucktown and Lincoln Park. He was hired by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra as Operations Coordinator in August 2007. Working under Director of Facilities, John Maas (RPA/FMA), Joe learned every aspect of managing Symphony Center, the 294,211 square foot performance home of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. In 2015, Joe took on the role of Production Manager. Orchestra Hall is a National Landmark concert hall, built in 1904, making Joe’s facility management experience very unique, almost niche-like.

In regards to the instructors, Joe states, “When one is taking 10 classes, back-to-back, it would be a reasonable expectation to have some weak links in the bunch – not so with the BOMA/Chicago education & professional development program. Every instructor I had was very well-suited to the material & tremendously committed to sharing the wisdom of their experience in CRE and facility management. This standard of excellence extends itself across all facets of the incredible educational programming that BOMA/Chicago offers to their members, such as the Brown Bag Seminars.”

“Being awarded the Full Designation afforded me the luxury of taking every class that was available. Consequently, I was able to earn the RPA/FMA in less than two years – it was like a graduate program in commercial real estate and facility management.”





**Zaena Rihani, CMCP**, was the recipient of the Full Designation Scholarship in 2018. In December 2016, Zaena joined CBRE as part of the of the Property Management team which coordinated the opening of the 150 North Riverside Plaza, a 1.2 million square foot class A office building. She began her career in commercial real estate as a Real Estate Services Administrator and advanced to becoming the Assistant Real Estate Manager in February of 2019.

Zaena states, "I am immensely grateful to BOMA/Chicago and the scholarship committee for awarding me the Full Designation Scholarship. The RPA provides a strong educational foundation which is valuable for a successful career, especially when one is new to the industry. Receiving this scholarship not only assisted me in achieving my real estate license and CMCP certification, but also increased my confidence in making decisions as a CRE professional. I was also able to gain insights from experienced professionals and expand my professional network. Through the scholarship, I was paired with a seasoned mentor and received one-on-one career guidance. The scholarship is a great opportunity and I encourage all professionals to pursue their RPA!"

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**Allie Borrego, RPA, CMCP**, was the recipient of the Full Designation Scholarship in 2019. In July 2014, Allie began her Property Management career by joining JLL as a Tenant Services Representative at 300 South Riverside Plaza, a 1.1 million square foot commercial office building located in the West Loop. Allie quickly advanced in the ranks becoming a Property Administrator at 540 West Madison in 2016 and returning to 300 South Riverside in 2018 as the Assistant General Manager.

Upon receipt of the scholarship in 2019, Allie completed all RPA courses within a year and received her Real Property Administrator designation in 2020. During that time, she also received her Real Estate License, became a Certified Manager of Commercial Properties (CMCP) and a first-time mom!

"Being the recipient of the Full Designation Scholarship not only expanded my knowledge of the industry, but also expanded my network tremendously! The educators in the program are all seasoned, well-regarded professionals. Not only was I able to "learn from the best", but I also made connections with people who have greatly aided my career. BOMA/Chicago has helped me grow in more ways than I could ever imagine and I am beyond grateful for the resource they continue to be."

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**Caroline Foulk, RPA**, was the recipient of the Full Designation Scholarship in 2020. In June 2017, Caroline began her Property Management career with JLL as the Tenant Service Coordinator at 180 North LaSalle. Caroline was quickly promoted to Property Associate at the same location and has since relocated twice, filling open positions with JLL at 550 West Washington/363 West Erie and now at 333 South Wabash, the iconic 1.2 million square foot "Big Red."

After receiving the scholarship in January 2020, Caroline began her Real Property Administrator courses in-person but transitioned to mostly remote learning for the remainder of the curriculum due to the COVID-19 pandemic. During the two-year

period of the curriculum, Caroline also received her Real Estate License and became a BOMA Chicago Diversity Ambassador.

“As a recipient of the Full Designation Scholarship, I was allowed to pursue my Real Property Administrator designation at an accelerated rate, without the setback of financing the classes alone. This happened during a crucial time of development in my career, giving me the educational foundation necessary to become the confident real estate professional I am today. The opportunity to enroll in the full year of courses allowed me to develop strong relationships with the other students who were also pursuing the designation. I am immensely grateful for the instructors who make the time to pass on their experiential knowledge and to the Educational Board who afforded me this opportunity. There will always be value in learning things the hard way, but BOMA Chicago and the network of leaders who oversee the RPA program here make learning all you need to know so easy!! I highly recommend the program, especially to those newer to the industry.”