



Maribel Koella, CCIM, SIOR, FRICS, CRE is Co-Owner, Director, and Principal Broker of NAI Koella | RMMoore, a nationally certified woman-owned, minority-owned (1st generation Mexican American) business and, also, the preeminent Commercial Real Estate firm in East Tennessee. Having logged 5 decades experience in the arena, she has acquired broad expertise across subspecialties in the field, with a primary focus on the Industrial Sector. She has advised and served on the boards of many non-profit organizations over the years, most currently having been appointed to the Metropolitan Airport Commission.

She is also noted for fostering an extensive network of connections and resources for her company, certainly locally but also nationally and beyond. For instance, among a string of firsts, she served as the first

woman chair of the NAI Global Advisory Board, a group representing more than 5,000 members worldwide. Also, among her many achievements, Maribel is also noted as exhibiting a unique capacity for solving implacable puzzles; creatively configuring pieces and assembling them into original solutions, often initially rejected by stakeholders. Her standard response: Humane tenacity; chipping away at resistance thru gentle pressure, relentlessly applied.

As for working in the Industrial sector, a specialization she doggedly pursued despite efforts on the part of established male players to dissuade her, she has commented, "I find it extremely creative to go into a dirty warehouse and come up with the best use for it," she explained. "To completely reconfigure it and help facilitate a company going into it, you have to go behind the scenes and understand how that company works." And, to effectively navigate the male-dominated world of commercial real estate in general, she describes, "I dressed in navy-blue three-piece suits and single-mindedly pursued ways to stand on the shoulders of those with greater experience," Koella recalled. "I would identify the person most proficient in the area I wanted to master. Then I would offer to do menial support tasks in exchange for the opportunity to shadow them while absorbing their knowledge." It was a tactic she applied not only in her early days in commercial real estate but also in other endeavors in her life, including becoming an airplane pilot, fly-fishing, training horses, running a fish camp in Alaska, starting a fox hunting club (they just rode horses, chasing dogs without hurting any foxes) and planting and managing her own vineyard. In fact, she cites finding a good mentor as one of the best pieces of advice she could give to the next generation of women looking to get ahead in commercial real estate or any other field.