

In The News

Akerman's Beth Zafonte and Nailah I. Tatum Honored with 2026 Connect CRE Women in Real Estate Award

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Akerman Director of Economic Development Services [Beth Zafonte](#) and Real Estate Partner [Nailah I. Tatum](#) have been named recipients of the 2026 Connect CRE Women in Real Estate Award. The award recognizes women nationally across commercial real estate sectors and roles, from brokers and attorneys to C-suite executives, for their professional excellence and leadership.

Beth has helped real estate developers, Fortune 500 companies, institutions, and other public and private businesses across the United States identify more than \$3 billion in economic development incentives over the last 35 years. She advises on the structure, valuation, and negotiation of complex real estate projects, and her work spans real estate tax abatements, bond financings, EB-5 Immigrant Investor Program financings, tax increment financings, and other incentive and tax credit programs. Beth is also a past president of WX New York Women Executives in Real Estate and a member of the Economic Development Committee of the Real Estate Board of New York, Urban Land Institute, and CRE Finance Council. She also serves as vice president of the Akerman Foundation. She was recently named to the 2027 CREW New York Board of Directors.

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Nailah I. Tatum
Beth Zafonte

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Nailah focuses her practice on commercial real estate transactions, representing developers, landlords, tenants, lenders, investors, educational institutions, and governmental entities in connection with the acquisition, development, financing, leasing, and disposition of real estate. She also has experience with title matters and can provide title insurance and closing services for commercial transactions. A background in business informs Nailah's navigation of the complex relationship between the business and legal needs of her clients, as she assists them with due diligence investigations and advises on general contracting, compliance, and regulatory matters.

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