
CRAIN'S CLEVELAND BUSINESS

FORTY UNDER 40

Michael Cantor

Chief Operating Officer and General Counsel, Allegro Realty Advisors Ltd.

By **STAN BULLARD**

Michael Cantor recently told colleagues at Allegro Realty Advisors that he planned to write an article about sale-leaseback transactions for the Cleveland Bar Association's monthly journal.

"Boom, it was done," recalled partner Russell Lamb of the article in the November issue. "We asked, "When did you do that?" The guy can multitask like no one I've ever seen."

However, that is not the consummate tale of Mr. Cantor's juggling skills.

While working full-time as a real estate consultant, Mr. Cantor earned a law degree from Cleveland-Marshall College of Law in 2000. Moreover, in that same period he and his wife, Amy, had two of their three daughters and built a home in Solon.

However, Mr. Cantor acknowledged limits. In that period, he shed serving on a citizens committee in Solon that was finding new uses for the old Solon City Hall because of time constraints.

As one of Allegro's principals, Mr. Cantor spends half his time working with corporate clients on real estate consulting issues and the rest on managing staff, handling public relations and overseeing risk management for the firm. He also supervises its performance review practices and professional development programs for new hires.

Mr. Cantor sharpened his style for penning articles at Miami University by obtaining both a Bachelor of Arts in English and a Bachelor of Science degree in business.

"I got to meet bright students in the arts and business," Mr. Cantor said of his double major.

While attending college, the disdain that Cincinnati-area residents voice for Cleveland surprised Mr. Cantor, who grew up in University Heights, Orange and Pepper Pike, and made him a stronger advocate for his hometown. At the same time, he enjoyed watching the skyscraper and suburban office boom that transformed Northeast Ohio in the late-1980s. Those factors led him to pursue a career in real estate in his hometown.

When he graduated in 1991, he hit the job market during a recession and real estate credit crunch. He found work at the Victor S. Voinovich Co. brokerage and thrived on its tenant-representation philosophy because he liked working with the underdog. He later worked with Cleveland Real Estate Partners and joined Deloitte LLP when it bought the firm in 1999.

George Hutchinson, Allegro's CEO, has worked with Mr. Cantor since 1991 and described his friend as driven but possessing "a lot of common sense." Mr. Cantor showed that as he explained why he earned a law degree: "I



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wanted to make sure the lawyers were not killing my deals for no good reason.”



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