

Sarah Zahn
WLI Prologis Scholarship Report
October 26, 2018

I was very honored to be selected as a recipient of the WLI Prologis scholarship to the Fall 2018 ULI Conference. The scholarship provided much more than financial benefit; it provided crucial access to other high level professional women as well as to national product council work that would not otherwise have been available to me. As the co-chair of a new local WLI chapter in Portland, OR, the ability to hear what other WLI groups are doing across the country was invaluable, and the ability to network with and learn from these women was exceptional. I came away with many new ideas and a strong new national network of female professional contacts. Participation in the Women's Leadership Initiative steering committee meeting enabled me to forge a stronger understanding of national priorities for WLI in the next several years as well as to hear firsthand some of the successes and challenges in WLI chapters across the country. I came away with a strong sense of direction for our Portland chapter and I look forward to working with my local team to develop innovative programming that is relevant to women working in our community and to becoming a model for other WLI chapters across the country.

I participated in all of the WLI-related events including the awards breakfast, the steering committee, the happy hour and the speakeasy event. Personally the most valuable element of the WLI scholarship program was the ability to participate as a guest in a product council meeting. I was invited to join the Urban Development/Mixed Use Council (Bronze). We spent a productive and interesting day hearing from local market experts and developers working in the Boston market. Touring Kendall Square and getting insight into the incredible changes in that market in the past decade was fascinating. Meeting with the developers of a large project in Seaport had direct relevance to the work I am doing back in Portland. Most of all, I enjoyed meeting and networking with the other product council members from all disciplines and from across the country.

As a follow-up to my participation in the fall meeting, I am looking forward to pursuing membership on a national WLI committee and I also intend to look into joining a product council and becoming a full member of ULI. The ability to come together several times a year with other professional real estate practitioners – and in particular, women practitioners– is highly valuable to me and I am so pleased that this scholarship provided this unique opportunity to me.