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Urban Land Institute to hold conference on "Opportunities in an Uncertain Market"

Event to highlight opportunities in today's marketplace and career-development advice

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NEW BRUNSWICK — The Northern New Jersey District Council of the Urban Land Institute (ULI-NNJ) in cooperation with their Young Leaders Group (YLG) will convene the "best and the brightest" of the real estate community to address the issues shaping the markets in which we live and work, entitled "Opportunities in an Uncertain Market."

The event will be held on March 4, 2009, at 2:30 p.m. at The Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers University in New Brunswick.

The half-day event, consisting mainly of two panel discussions, will highlight distressed opportunities in today's marketplace and career development advice while also addressing the issues that will help those in the real estate industry understand the trends affecting the year ahead.

Urban Land Institute is a worldwide organization that provides leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities by bringing together leaders to exchange best practices. The institute is comprised of developers, builders, property owners, investors, architects, public officials, planners, real estate brokers, appraisers, attorneys, engineers, financiers, academics, students and librarians.

The Urban Land Institute-Young Leaders Group was started several years ago in Houston and has grown by leaps and bounds throughout the United States. Today, 38 district councils sponsor Young Leaders Groups, with membership for those under 35 now totaling more than 8,000. The Urban Land Institute, Northern New Jersey Young Leaders Group started in 2004 with 58 members and has since grown to 114 members.

The first panel, "Distressed Opportunities," will be moderated by William G. Lashbrook III, senior vice president of real-estate finance for PNC Bank, a highly diversified and growing financial-services organization spanning the retail, business and corporate markets. The panel will address how people may benefit from market dislocation. Lashbrook has been involved in the banking industry for more than 35 years.

The panelists will consist of:

* Richard D. Jones, partner, Dechert LLP. Dechert is internationally recognized for their transactional litigation and assets-management practice. Jones, a member of the executive committee of Dechert's Finance and Real Estate group, focuses his practice on mortgage finance and capital markets.

* Mark Bhasin, senior director of originations, Palisades Financial LLC. Palisades Financial specializes in commercial real estate and secured corporate lending and has successfully completed more than \$2 billion in transactions. Bhasin has more than 10 years of experience as a commercial real-estate professional in structured-finance and lending arenas.

* Alan Leavitt, founder and chief investment officer, Lane Capital Partners LLC. Lane Capital is a \$500 million opportunity fund focusing on the acquisition of sub- and non-performing commercial mortgages. Prior to forming Lane Capital, Leavitt was a member of Rossrock LLC, which he co-founded in 1992.

The second panel, "Down Cycle 101," will be moderated by Richard F.X. Johnson, senior vice president at Matrix Development Group, one of the Northeast's most respected real-estate investment-development firms. The panel will cover how to survive and thrive in your first real estate down cycle. Johnson is currently the partner-in-charge of all office and mixed-use projects within the Matrix portfolio, with a particular focus on urban development and redevelopment opportunities in New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

James W. Hughes, Ph.D., dean of the Bloustein School, will give a historical overview. Hughes has been a member of the Rutgers faculty since 1971 and was appointed dean of the Bloustein School in 1995. He is a nationally recognized academic expert on demographics, housing and regional economics.

The panelists will consist of:

* Robert P. Antonicello, executive director, Jersey City Redevelopment Agency . The agency's responsibilities include project facilitation, site assemblage and clearance, environmental remediation and developer selection within redevelopment areas. Prior to joining the agency as executive director, Antonicello owned and operated his own commercial-real-estate company for more than 20 years. His knowledge of real-estate development and adaptive use and re-use projects assists him in his day-to-day function as executive director.

* Dennis W. Russo, partner; Herrick, Feinstein LLP. Herrick, Feinstein is one of the nation's most prominent mid-sized law firms, providing a full range of legal services to businesses and individuals around the world. Russo represents some of the nation's premiere real-estate development-and-acquisition companies, as well as real-estate- investment trusts (REITs) and hotel companies, in connection with the acquisition, development and disposition of commercial projects, debt and related joint ventures.

* Jonathan B. Schultz, co-founder and managing principal, Onyx Equities LLC. Onyx is a private real-estate-investment and property-management firm that co-invests with various institutional and high-net-worth joint venture partners in commercial properties. Schultz is also the co-founder, president and CEO of The Schultz Organization LLC, founded in 1990. The Schultz Organization provides real estate advisory services to institutions and private owners and tenants.

For more information regarding the event, visit the Web site at www.nnj.uli.org.