

# li top commercial newsmakers

## Michele Francis



**Michele Francis**  
President and CEO  
Safe Harbor Capital Group

**1) Please discuss your charitable/organizational involvements.**

Safe Harbor participates in many volunteer organizations. Most recently I helped raise donations for the Gift of Life Gala, a fund raiser hosted by the Gift of Life Program of Rotary International District 7260, which helps mend hearts. Safe Harbor has pledged to help save a child's life. In connection with event, I donated not only \$4,000 to a child in need of open heart surgery, but I also opened up my home to a needy child and his family, while he waited to have open heart surgery.

**2) What is the most notable transaction or project in which you have been recently involved?**

Two notable projects that Safe Harbor is involved in is a development by Benjamin-Beechwood called Arverne-by-the-Sea, a 100-acre oceanfront community in the Rockaways, and a modern high-rise condominium developed by the Wood Partners located in West Palm, Fla.

**3) Please discuss your professional background.**

Five years ago, I joined Safe Harbor (formerly Beechwood Capital Co.) as director of sales and mortgage operations, and was charged with developing and implementing a business plan for this start-up mortgage brokerage firm. I then became president of Safe Harbor. There began to be a need to have an identity as a standalone company, and Beechwood Capital transitioned into Safe Harbor and extended its reach beyond Long Island, Hudson Valley, and New York throughout the east coast including Florida, setting a course to provide mortgage banking services.

**4) What is one criterion that sets your company/firm apart from your competitors?**

Service, service, service. I think that when you start out in any career, you have to find yourself a niche. At Safe Harbor I apply this philosophy, directing the company to find its niche and delivering great service.

**5) Do you see your industry in a more or less favorable position six months from now?**

Over the next six months we should be relatively flat with the advent of rising interest rates.

## Kevin Welsh



**Kevin Welsh**  
New York state licensed real estate sales person  
Zere Real Estate Services, Inc.

**1) Please discuss your charitable/organizational involvements.**

I am a member of the New York State Commercial Association of Realtors (NYSCAR) and the Commercial Industrial Brokers Society (CIBS).

**2) What is the most notable transaction or project in which you have been recently involved?**

JW Creations, Plainview; Extreme Promotions, Mineola; Window Network, New Hyde Park; Rohrbaugh, Deer Park; AID Woodworking, Bohemia; Sound Move Studios, Bohemia; and Fleetwash, Ronkonkoma.

**3) Please discuss your professional background.**

I have been associated with Zere Real Estate Services for four years. I am an active participant and advisor to the ongoing growth of the company in Internet real estate sales and leasing. I am a graduate of St. Johns University, with a bachelor of science in Communications with a minor in Business. At St. John's I interned with corporate divisions of NBC Television and WABC Eyewitness News.

**4) What is one criterion that sets your company/firm apart from your competitors?**

Intensive knowledge and research of local business markets in both Nassau & Suffolk Counties. Many Long Islanders trust and confide in our firm to handle their properties. We have the flexibility and freedom to approach a deal creatively, by using contacts and relationships cultivated in twenty-six years in business.

**5) Do you see your industry in a more or less favorable position six months from now?**

Maybe more so than ever, creative thinking and a strong understanding of the economy is a must in this business. The ability to "think out of the box" to suit a customer's needs while cutting expenses will be the key ingredient for successful real estate transactions.

## Nicolas Muro



**Nicolas Muro**  
President  
Muro Title Agency, Inc.

**1) Please discuss your charitable/organizational involvements.**

I volunteer with the Long Island Council for Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (LICADD). We are a resource center for families affected by this disease.

**2) What is the most notable transaction or project in which you have been recently involved?**

I am a founding member of the Long Island Real Estate Group (LIREG). We have raised funds for Hospice, Ronald McDonald House and other charities.

**3) Please discuss your professional background.**

My career began as a vice president of sales/title closer. While in this position, I learned all aspects of the industry from application through post closing.

**4) What is one criterion that sets your company/firm apart from your competitors?**

Muro Title Agency, Inc. is a family business. My wife, Regina, is not only my life partner but my business partner as well. Service, service, service and a great web site at [www.murotitle.com](http://www.murotitle.com).

**5) Do you see your industry in a more or less favorable position six months from now?**

There are many changes taking place in our industry. Time will tell as whether it is a positive or negative. However, I believe that we are heading in the right direction.

## Steven Saraniero



**Steven Saraniero**  
Partner  
William F. Collins AIA Architects

**1) Please discuss your charitable/organizational involvements.**

I donate time and architectural expertise to a number of community projects. These include the design of a Nassau County children's park and design and planning for several Long Island churches and church property renovations.

**2) What is the most notable transaction or project in which you have been recently involved?**

The 9-11 terrorist attacks nearly devastated NYC's Landmark Verizon building near the World Trade Center. WFC was charged with overseeing the restoration of the Art Deco skyscraper. The project earned seven major awards for WFC.

**3) Please discuss your professional background.**

I joined WFC in 1988, made partner in 2002 and currently manage firm operations. I'm point person for Verizon and work with banking clients, among others. I am also a former board member NY State AIA, Buffalo chapter AIA.

**4) What is one criterion that sets your company/firm apart from your competitors?**

A culture built on the development of long-standing client relationships, maintaining total commitment and dedication to our clients. Driven by client expectations and specific needs, our success comes from providing unmatched personalized service and expertise.

**5) Do you see your industry in a more or less favorable position six months from now?**

I see a favorable outlook if the economy continues to strengthen and fuel prices stabilize. Capital spending associated with technological improvements appears to be increasing, which relates to additional work for architectural firms like WFC.

Do you know a colleague who should be considered for a future edition of Long Island Commercial Newsmakers? If so please contact Kristine Wolf, Long Island Real Estate Journal publisher at (800) 654-4993 x245 or email [kwolf@rejournal.com](mailto:kwolf@rejournal.com).