Northwestern | Kellogg

Alumni Spotlight

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What is your key strategy/focus in today's market?

Obra Capital is an asset management firm with a specialized approach to alternative investing and approximately $5.8 billion in capital under management as of May 31, 2025. The role of my team at Obra Real Estate ("ORE"), a subsidiary of Obra Capital, is to source and manage first lien commercial real estate loans that are placed directly on Obra Capital's insurance balance sheets and other Obra managed vehicles when investment mandates are believed to align with lending opportunities. Unlike many large institutional lenders, we have a particular focus on the lower middle market ($5-50MM) and because we are a balance sheet lender, we can offer customized loans solutions that can adapt with investors business plans.

Commercial real estate is at an inflection point. As the market transitions from historically low rates to a higher-rate environment, uncertainty has increased, creating a pause for many investors. This dislocation presents opportunities for disciplined lenders like us to partner with quality sponsors. In times of uncertainty sponsors and assets can be overlooked as lenders look to rebalance their investment portfolios.

Opportunity can come in various flavors. Whether it's an acquisition, recapitalization of an existing project or ground-up development, we believe our capital can help investors be successful in their projects.

What are your thoughts on interest rates in 2025? How will this impact your strategy this year?

I think most of us agree that rates needed to be raised to stymie inflation. That said, I don't envy the position the Federal Reserve Bank is in today. Cutting rates too soon could bring back inflation and cutting too late could send us quickly into a recession.

While we have views on macro trends, our strategy doesn't rely on predicting interest rates. Instead, we remain focused on assets that serve fundamental, long-term demand—particularly in habitational real estate, which has accounted for nearly 60% of our lending activity. Whether it's multi-family, mixed use, for sale condo's or build to rent communities it's not secret that our country is severely lacking in housing. We believe that continuing to support projects in the habitational space can provide some reprieve of interest rate pressures.

What opportunities are you seeing in the real estate market given current economic conditions?

What I love about our market positioning is that we are able to see a broad array of market opportunities and meet with many talented investors across the lower middle market. We are seeing more creativity on deal structure than I can recall in the commercial real estate space. Sponsors are unlocking value through creative structuring. Whether it's repositioning distressed multifamily into for-sale condos or acquiring underutilized office assets from banks, I believe these transactions require conviction, experience, and thoughtful capital. That's where we look to add value. Our creative structuring, in-house servicing and in-house asset management teams allow us to structure each loan to meet the unique needs of our borrowers.

What do you believe is the biggest misconception about commercial real estate?

While commercial buildings may look similar on the surface, each one has a story. What makes this business so compelling is the uniqueness of every deal. At ORE, we reject one-size-fits-all solutions and tailor our lending to each sponsor's specific needs. We review approximately 300+ transactions a month, each requiring thoughtful and thorough structuring. If you are an investor in commercial real estate or plan to be, I believe it is best to partner with lenders that don't use a cookie-cutter model to solve your challenges.

What is one piece of advice you would give to someone entering the workforce today?

Listen.

If I have any regrets in my career, it's that I've worked with so many talented people and I wish I could have listened more, absorbed more, learned more. I try now to start every business conversation with a question of the other person. Asking a question helps frame the conversation, understand the person better and potentially learn something you never expected to.

In the words of Judge Judy, God gave you two ears and one mouth for a reason! Ask more questions. Listen deeply. The best leaders are curious and humble enough to learn from everyone around them—especially early in their careers.

How has your experience at Kellogg impacted/helped/affected your career? Favorite class/memory?

I chose Kellogg for my MBA because I wanted to attend a school that was renowned for areas that I was the weakest. I came out of college as a finance major and investment banker. I still love finance and it's my career, but I thought that marketing was so interesting and wanted to be challenged outside my current skillset. I look back now and I couldn't be happier with my choice. Kellogg challenged me to grow beyond finance and explore areas like marketing and people leadership—skills that now inform how I build and manage teams.

My favorite memory? Traveling with the Kellogg rugby team, where friendships and bruises were equally shared.

What has been your greatest achievement?

My passion in business has evolved over the course of my career. Early on, I was purely transaction-driven — focused on closing the biggest loans and making the biggest "splash." But with experience, I've come to find real fulfillment in identifying market opportunities, building businesses from the ground up, and surrounding myself with exceptional people who share the same vision.

About a year ago, our entire team made the transition from our predecessor firm to Obra Capital, where we launched Obra Real Estate. Our mission was ambitious: to build the premier private capital provider to the lower middle market. We knew that to deliver on that promise, we needed a national reach combined with the speed and the flexibility of a nimble platform.

In just 45 days, we built out our origination platform, asset management protocols, and a fully functional servicing division. That level of integration in such a short time gave us the confidence — and the infrastructure — to immediately begin investing.

While I'm proud of what we've accomplished, the credit is shared. I'm fortunate to work alongside incredibly talented and driven teammates who don't need to be micromanaged. Thanks to their efforts, we're now targeting to originate over $500 million in loans annually, with the goal of delivering best-in-class service to our borrowers and partners.

What's your favorite thing to do outside of Real Estate?

With three young sons—"The Wolfpack"—my weekends are more playgrounds than parties. That said, I'm a lifelong Detroit Lions fan and recently discovered a love for paddle (platform tennis). Here's hoping this is the year we end the Super Bowl drought.