

Empowering the next generation of commercial real estate leaders

# The REET Institute's innovative approach to training high school students

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In an ever-evolving real estate industry, the need for diverse, skilled, and innovative leaders is more pressing than ever. The Real Estate, Education, Thought Leadership (REET) Institute is at the forefront of addressing this need by offering a unique program designed to train, develop, and mentor high school students to become the next generation of investors, owners, and leaders in the commercial real estate industry.

The REET Institute's program is not your typical classroom experience. Instead, it offers an immersive, hybrid eight-week experience that includes learning from and networking with industry professionals. Each cohort has a target size of 20-25 scholars, ensuring a personalized and impactful learning environment. Through hands-on learning opportunities, students gain valuable insights into the commercial real estate industry, develop critical skills, and build a network of mentors and peers that will support them on their journey to success.

One of the driving forces behind the REET Institute is Andre Wisdom, REET Institute Founder and Senior Valuations Manager, Real Estate at Alberta Investment Management Company. His influence and leadership have been pivotal in shaping the vision of the REET Institute, steering the organization toward a commitment to empowering the next generation in real estate.

Whereas many real estate professionals attest to the experience of simply 'falling into' the industry, the REET Institute's eight-week program is designed to intentionally open doors for young people to explore the real estate sector and find their place within it. To achieve this, youth are introduced to new career avenues and learning opportunities, covering essential topics including:

- The Six Steps of the Acquisition Process
- Searching for Opportunities
- Determining the Value of Real Estate
- Finding the Capital to Pay for a Property
- Adding Value to Your Investment
- Real Estate Presentation Strategies
- Closing the Deal

Through this comprehensive approach, the REET Institute empowers the next generation to navigate and thrive in the real estate industry.

One of the key features of the REET Institute's program is a Dragon's Den-style pitch competition, where students showcase their knowledge, skills, and creativity. This competition not only provides students with real-world experience pitching their ideas to industry professionals, but it also gives them the chance to compete for a \$10,000 scholarship to further their education and career goals.

In 2024, the REET Institute offered its program in Edmonton and Calgary, with the Appraisal Institute of Canada (AIC) serving as the Exposure Session sponsor. This Exposure Session presented scholars with an invaluable opportunity to explore stunning properties in both cities; in Edmonton, they visited Rogers Place, Edmonton Tower, and Sky Residences, while in Calgary, they explored The Ampersand. Through these experiences, the scholars engaged in insightful and meaningful dialogue with property owners and managers, gaining a deeper understanding of building management, property history, and unique property characteristics.

Other supporting program partners include the Alberta Real Estate Foundation, Altus Group, Ryan, BOMA, NAIOP, CREW, ONE Properties, Oxford Group, and Candarel. These partnerships demonstrate the industry-wide support for the REET Institute's mission to empower the next generation of commercial real estate leaders.

The REET Institute offers various ways to get involved, including sponsorship, volunteering, internships, and job opportunities. Additionally, the REET Institute extends its commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in the real estate industry by offering free online training to industry partners.



By engaging with the REET Institute in these capacities, individuals and organizations can contribute to the development of future leaders in the industry and make a positive impact on the real estate community.

To date, the REET Institute has seen 50 students successfully complete the program. These students have benefited from an immersive learning experience that prepares them for careers in the commercial real estate industry.

Since its inception, the REET Institute has also provided more than \$40,000 in scholarships and prizes to scholars, offering financial support and encouragement for their academic and career pursuits. Five of our scholars have gone on to participate in internship opportunities, gaining valuable real-world experience and industry connections. Each year, alumni return to support the next cohort as guest speakers, co-facilitators, and judges at the pitch competition, creating a cycle of mentorship and support that strengthens the program's impact and fosters a sense of community and continuity among participants.



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These outcomes showcase the tangible and lasting effects of the organization's innovative approach to training high school students and empowering them to succeed in the commercial real estate industry.

Looking to the future, the REET Institute has its eye on expansion. Youth living in rural and remote communities face unique

challenges, including limited access to educational resources, mentorship, and networking opportunities. This lack of exposure to the commercial real estate industry hinders their ability to pursue careers in this field. Through partnerships and the launch of a mobile app in the fall, the REET Institute will aim to reach rural and remote communities, ensuring that all students have access to the knowledge, skills, and mentorship needed to succeed in the commercial real estate industry.

To learn more about the REET Institute and how you can support our mission, visit: <https://reetinstitute.learnworlds.com>. 