

New Orleans City BUSINESS

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Nicole Webre Nass

Webre Consulting president and lead government relations consultant; Livewell Properties founder and CEO

2016
Women
of the
Year



As legislative director for New Orleans City Councilwoman Kristin Gisleson Palmer, Nicole Webre Nass often helped constituents work through legal, permitting and zoning issues.

"Everyone kept commenting, 'I would hire somebody who does what you are doing,'" she said. "And I thought, 'Why am I working for city government, when I could be in the private sector doing the same thing?'"

So in 2013, she cashed out her city retirement account and started a consulting firm. Within a few days she had four clients, she said.

Webre Consulting helps people navigate City Hall and specializes in government and community relations, regulatory compliance, land use planning, zoning, real estate development, permitting and economic incentives.

"I feel like I'm having an impact on the local economy by helping people start their businesses," she said. "Otherwise, maybe they would have come across too many road blocks and decided not to do the venture."

She is putting that same skill set to work at Bakery Village. While she has done smaller projects such as condo conversions and subdividing and reselling lots, this is her first large real estate development for her own company, Livewell Properties. She's basically re-planning an entire block in the Irish Channel Historic District, tearing down an old bakery

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warehouse and returning the area to its former status as a residential neighborhood.

"I've done large-scale projects for clients, and while I was at City Hall," she said. "It's totally different when it's your money."

Getting into real estate development was the easy part, she said. The hard part is putting in the time, effort and money to make sure the project succeeds.

But she hopes the development business will one day provide for her retirement and give her something to leave for her children.

"I want to leave a legacy," she said.

— David Jacob