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If you are interested in contributing or nominating Realtors for certain stories, please email us at jason.acres@RealProducersMag.com

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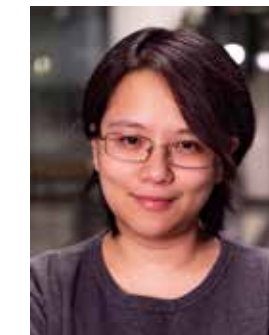
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WELCOME to NORTH SHORE REAL PRODUCERS!

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► publisher's note

"We're moving!"

All too often I remember hearing those words growing up. Depending on one's circumstances, those can be difficult words to hear. Let's face it, transitions are hard! I have many friends who are in the military and for them, it's a very common occurrence to relocate every few years. I can't imagine it's not difficult for them to move so often. My heart truly goes out to them. To say that I too understand transition is an understatement. I had the unfortunate experience of moving fifteen times in the first eighteen years of my life. Okay, it wasn't all bad! I met new people everywhere I went. I experienced new sports teams that I participated on and, of course, I made new friends in our neighborhoods.

Sadly, moving away from comforts, or regular routine and stability, can have its challenges. Recently, my family transitioned from one location to another. It's definitely something we'd rather not experience again anytime in the near future. Our transition meant new jobs, new friends, new employment expectations, a new church, and a new home. That's a lot of "new." In all of the thinking, planning and deciding, there was one thing that made our changes a bit easier to handle. That one thing was really a person -- our local real estate agent.

During our recent transition, our agent and friend, Shannon Johnson, from Berkshire Hathaway Realty, was there **for us** and **with us** every step of the way. I can't tell you how many homes she showed us or how many phone calls she made. Shannon served us and did her best to help our transition go smoothly. We were so grateful for her expertise, patience, care and listening skills. Our move wouldn't have been nearly as successful if not for our REALTOR'S® partnership.

It brings me such joy to be working with so many of the finest, top-producing real estate agents on the North Shore like you. You are an incredible resource, bringing great comfort to many, and are a trusted partner. I want to encourage you today that you do make a difference in the lives of those around you. My hope is that you continue to be passionate about your role as a reputable REAL-

TOR®. Who knows? Perhaps there's a young boy out there like me, so many years ago, who will be moving soon with his family, and is unsettled about a new home and new school. You have the power to influence his family and his well-being, by playing a significant role in his transition. Thank you for all you do!



Jason Acres

Owner/Publisher

North Shore Real Producers

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top producer

Article written by **Nora Wall**
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THOMAS
DOWNING

@PROPERTIES

...

THE THREE KEYS TO BECOMING SUCCESSFUL: TRUST, KNOWLEDGE, & LIKABILITY



For North Shore real estate agent Thomas Downing, the numbers speak for themselves. Since beginning his real estate career in 2014, he has closed a total sales volume of over \$50,000,000, and \$20,000,000 of those sales were in 2018. Thomas Downing is one of the fast-rising talents amongst the North Shore's real estate scene.

A Chicago area native, Thomas grew up in Glenview, Illinois. After college, Thomas started a career in marketing and lived in New York, San Francisco, and Houston. It was an exciting and fulfilling ride, but after a while, he got an itch to try something new. After years of working in marketing and holding senior roles advising Fortune 400 companies, Thomas decided to change careers. He says, "While my career was gratifying, after decades of traveling for work, I felt the need to be in one place." It was time for him to grow firm roots and real estate caught his attention. He continues, "I have always loved real estate - from the searching, buying and selling to the design, remodeling and decorating. It was an easy, natural fit." In 2014, he moved back to the Midwest and started a career in real estate.

Thomas received his real estate license in 2014 and began working as an agent for Edina Realty, a Minnesota based real estate firm. In 2015, he moved back home to the Chicago area and joined @Properties.

As a new agent, Thomas did not have a vast network starting in the business. His strategy to develop new business became marketing and open

houses. Thomas explains, "60 percent of potential buyers walk into an open house without an agent. Why would anyone pass up this opportunity to introduce your services to people looking?" Open Houses quickly became his primary lead generation tool. Today, he advises his team to do the same. Thomas continues, "I honestly believe that anyone with a passion for this industry can make it work."

Voted "Rookie of the Year" by Chicago Agent Magazine in 2016 and the recipient of multiple other awards, the transition into real estate has gone remarkably well for Thomas. He says, "It was an easy, natural fit to utilize both the business and personal elements of my life in this new career.



...



I have never looked back.” While challenging, Thomas finds real estate to be a personally gratifying career. Thomas continues, “Without exception, the two most rewarding parts of my business are helping our clients realize their home buying or selling goals, and helping my team members be the best they can be in this challenging business.”

When Thomas is not selling real estate, he’s busy training for and competing in marathons and triathlons. He has participated in over a dozen races, including the Ironman Triathlon in 2012 and the Chicago Triathlon in 2019.

His participation in competitive sports reminds Thomas of the im-

portance of consistency and hard work in achieving goals. Achieving goals requires daily practice, persistence, and commitment to growth. With triathlons, Thomas sees that by pushing his edge, over time, he can accomplish pretty much any goal he sets for himself. The results are tangible.

According to Thomas, the three defining traits essential to success are trust, knowledge, and likability. First, your clients must trust you and believe in your capacity to do your job well. Second, you must be knowledgeable and confident about your business and the services you provide. This confidence creates the capacity to achieve more. The third essential trait is likability. The ability to play well and get along with many different personality types is critical. Likability is directly tied to emotional intelligence too. People with keen emotional intelligence connect with people effectively and develop long-term relationships.

Thomas’s advice to up and coming top producers: “While this industry is not complicated, it isn’t easy. I promise that anyone who keeps at it, is consistent and open to learning, can make this work. Surround yourself with people who prop you up and are successful.” Thomas says, “At heart, we are not salespeople, we are in a service industry.”

As Maya Angelou observed, “Success is liking yourself, liking what you do, and liking how you do it.” Thomas is proof of this astute remark.

Thomas’s top tips: “Keep at it, be consistent, improve and celebrate.”

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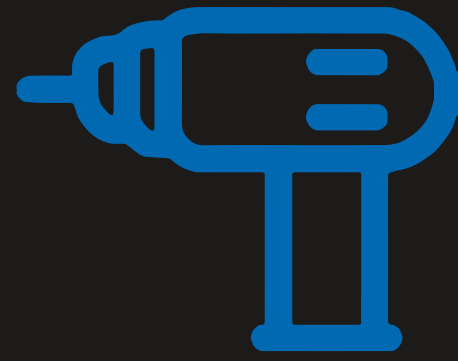
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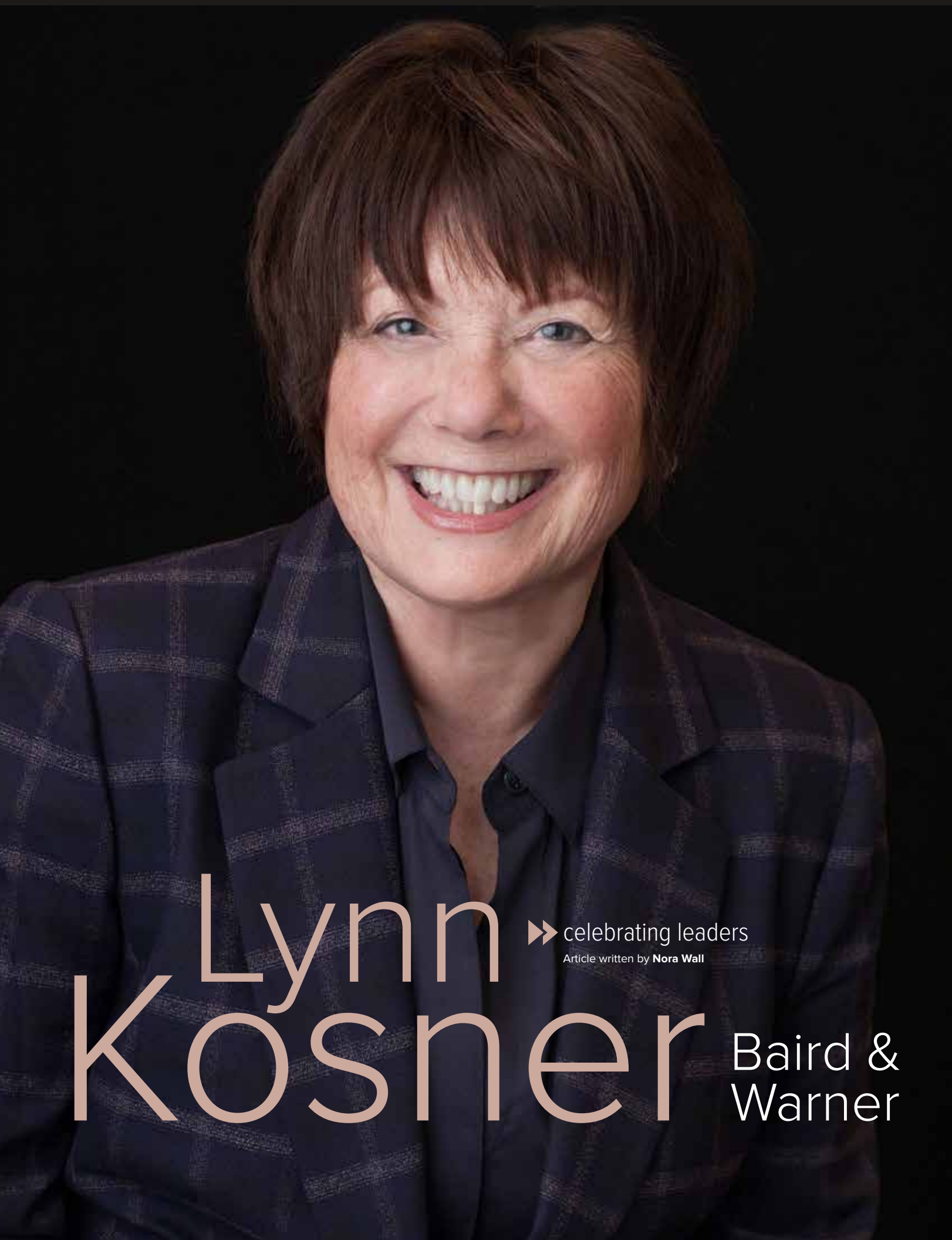
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Lynn Kosner

▶ celebrating leaders
Article written by **Nora Wall**

Baird & Warner



Effective Leaders Inspire Everyone to Achieve More

Lynn Kosner's rise to the top stems from her dedication, hard work, optimism and passion for real estate. Lynn achieved her goals by taking the steady path of careful planning, goal setting, and consistent effort to improve her performance. As Managing Broker of one of the more successful Baird & Warner real estate offices in Chicagoland, Lynn believes she is only as successful as her team.

When Lynn's sons were in second and fourth grade, she decided to shift gears and return to work full-time as a real estate agent. For 15 years, she worked first for Kahn Realty, and then Coldwell Banker. In 2005, Lynn was recruited by Baird Warner as the Managing Broker of the Highland Park office.

A team player, Lynn considers her top achievement to be the success of the agents she manages. She says, "The agents in the Baird Warner Highland Park office are the most productive agents within the company since I have been here at Baird & Warner. I am very proud of that accomplishment as it not only speaks to how hard they work, but also what a positive influence we are on each other." She works hard to foster a collaborative work environment and enjoys nurturing the growth and success of the agents.

Lynn credits her high level of achievement to three factors. First, she's blessed with a healthy support system of family, friends and colleagues. Second, ...



she focuses on what matters to achieve a successful outcome and does not let herself get bogged down in the details that won't impact the end result. Third, she also believes the market plays a significant role in real estate transactions, and the ability to adapt and remain flexible in any market is critical to succeeding in real estate.

Lynn approaches her work with a realistic attitude and focuses on the big picture. She says, "Of course, I have goals and do my best to achieve them, but again, although the execution of the plan is essential, the vision I maintain of the target allows me to be more creative, open, and often less rigid. Real estate is a people-oriented job. My goals are for my agents to succeed and offer them the guidance and counsel along with training they need to be top producers."

A breast cancer survivor, Lynn believes her solid support system of family and friends were vital to her full recovery and ability to get through a tough time in her life. During this challenging time, she also came to a deeper understanding of her core inner strengths, her optimism and exuberant energy. Whatever the obstacle is that comes into her life, Lynn puts a smile on her face and finds a way to overcome it. Lynn doesn't give up.

As an optimist with high energy levels, Lynn believes, "Laughter is the best medicine. I try to see the best of what is in front of me." It's her positive can-do attitude that drives her forward to set bigger goals, and successfully lead a team of agents. Lynn considers herself one of the luckiest people in the world; a great company to work with that she believes in, a wonderful, healthy growing family, great relationships personally and professionally and a successful, happy team as a result of her hard work. What else can you ask for?



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loanDepot is a residential mortgage lender that matches buyers and homeowners with the most up to date products available in home financing. By developing internal technologies, the company is on the cutting edge. John focuses on optimizing the customer experience while embracing automation.

Raised in Colorado and heavily influenced by his father who was a drummer, John grew up with a drum set in his basement. He started playing in a band in high school and never looked

back. He moved to Chicago right after graduating from the University of North Carolina School of Arts with a degree in Theatre to pursue music and acting. While he loves the arts, music, and acting are not professions that pay particularly well. As the need to make more money became a prominent issue in his life,

he decided to return to school for his MBA at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

After graduating from business school in 2002, he was searching for what to do with his newly minted degree. He struck up a

conversation with the mortgage broker who helped John and his wife, Becca, buy their first home. The job seemed to match his personality. John says, "The creative atmosphere and entrepreneurial spirit with a focus on financial knowledge was right up my alley." In 2002, he leaped into the industry just as rates start-



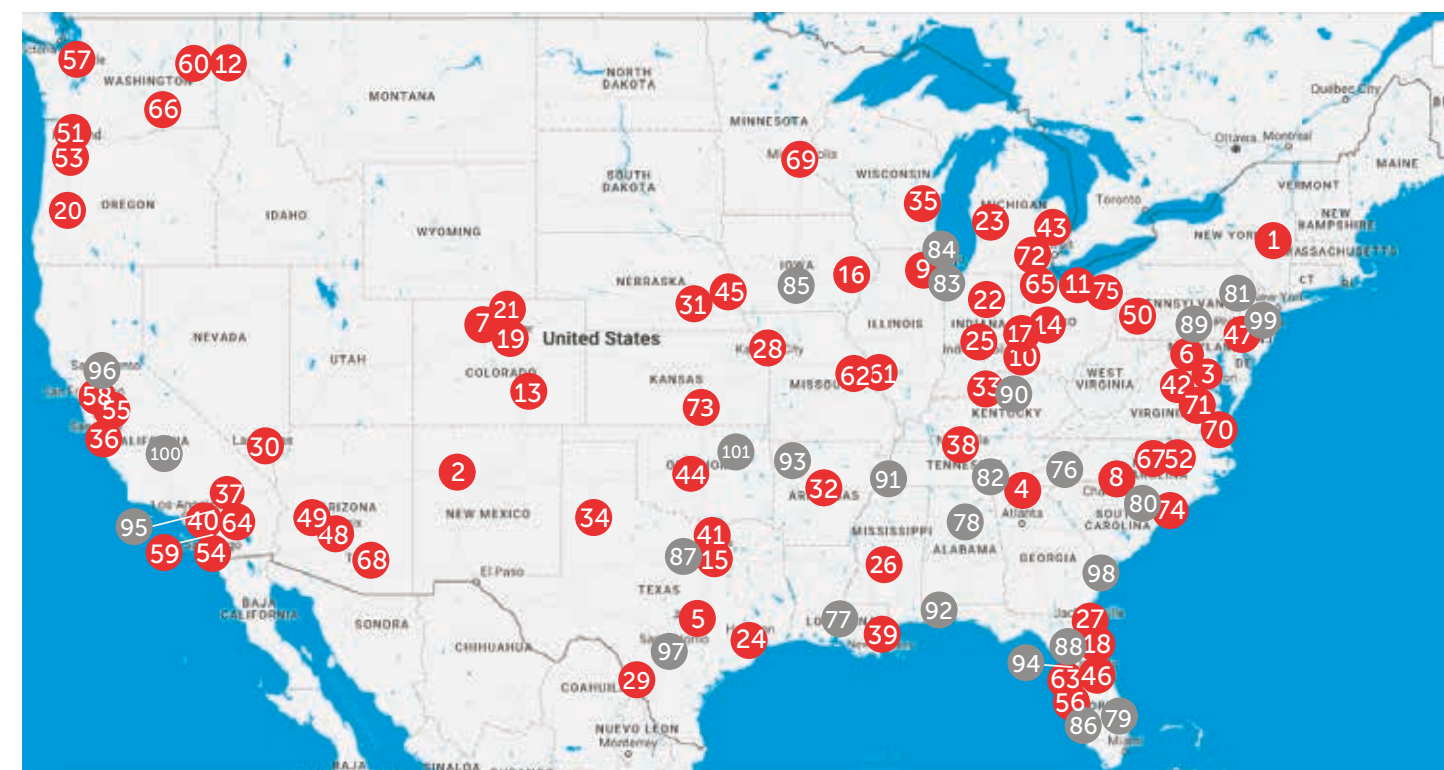


ed to drop down from its high of eight percent. It was an exciting time, and John was off and running in a new career.

John's business is 100 percent referral based. He says, "I know what a leap of faith it is to refer out to your clients. You've worked hard to build a relationship with them, and you want to make sure that they're treated well and fairly." He works hard to earn and maintain the trust of his clients. He says, "We get paid well, and we owe it to our clients to be available to them, and not shirk the responsibility of making sure our mutual clients are getting the attention they deserve." He says, "I take what I do

extremely seriously. There are very few things more important to people than buying a home." John wants his clients to become his friends, and he works hard to earn their trust.

John says, "As a drummer, you're the one that sits in the back out of the spotlight, and you're responsible for keeping everyone on track. That's similar to my role in the home buying process. There are so many pieces flying around when you're doing a loan, and I'm the one that is there to keep it all together." John works hard to keep a steady beat for his clients and ensure a smooth transaction each and every time.



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Erica Conaty Goldman

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Article written by **Nora Wall**

Former Television Marketing Executive Finds Her Passion in Real Estate

A former Marketing Executive at NBC, Erica Conaty Goldman pursued real estate as a second career once her children were in school full-time. With a high achiever's track record, Erica knew that succeeding in real estate would demand a lot of time and focus. She was up for the challenge. Erica dove in, and under the mentorship of Managing Broker Chris Stephens at Jameson Sotheby's International Realty in Winnetka, Illinois, she quickly found her stride. She is a fast-rising star in the North Shore real estate scene.

Erica's husband, Jon Goldman, who is a Vice President with the mortgage lender Guaranteed Rate Affinity, encouraged her to jump into real estate. With a husband as well as friends who were already heavily involved in real estate, combined with her marketing background, it was the perfect match for Erica to create a new avenue for herself. It worked out well. Just four years into the industry, she has already closed over \$20 million in total career volume sales.

The biggest challenge for Erica was being a rookie and winning the trust of new clients without an established track record. She says, "It's never easy to be the 'new girl' when you're over 40-years-old, especially in an industry hyper-focused on equating years spent in the industry with success." Erica has managed to overcome this perception and advance professionally. She is now forming a team - Premier Lifestyle Partners. She believes her resilience, determination and business acumen are the characteristics that have enabled her to succeed in the industry.

She married her husband, Jon Goldman, in 2005, and they have three children: Piper (13), Quinn (10), and Shea (8). She says, "How my children perceive me as a role model is what matters most to me. The biggest hurdle to that has been that it's extremely challenging to achieve work/life balance in an industry that's notoriously unforgiving with its unpredictable scheduling demands." She jokes, "If I can continue to receive loving birthday cards from my children each year, I think I must be doing okay."

Erica is not one to shy away from a challenge, and her fast success in a hyper-competitive industry demonstrates both her tenacity and grit. Moving full steam ahead, Erica has found her passion in a second career and is enjoying every minute of it.



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