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THE ANNIVERSARY EDITION



Photo courtesy of Christine Ko

The Current and of Real Estate

Future Faces

Each issue, we profile up-and-coming AREAA members who are shaping the future of real estate by their amazing productivity and energy, within both the industry and their communities. BY JOHN PERETZ

CHRISTINE KO

From Entrepreneur to Real Estate Expert

AREAA member Christine Ko has always taken the road less traveled. A Bay Area native, Ms. Ko attended the University of California, San Diego and graduated with a degree in economics.

Shortly after, she began working at CB Richard Ellis, the area's top commercial real estate firm. Although she learned a lot about the real estate business, financing options, market research, and the fine art of negotiating, she found the 8-to-5 administrative inside job wasn't what was calling her.

So she took a different path, first traveling for a spell in Southeast Asia, and upon her return started a brand-new gelato company in Saratoga, California, near her roots in the Bay Area.

For three years, she built her company while learning practical lessons in marketing, management and customer service. But there was still something missing – the ability to have complete control over your schedule and to make more of a difference.

So through one of her customers, she rediscovered real estate, this time on the residential side. Within a few months of doing real estate part time, she decided to jump into it full time and sell her growing business. And she's never looked back.

After she sold her company, she worked under a top-producing broker before changing over to the Bridgepointe Group in 2011. This gave her the ability to completely re-invent herself and create her own personal brand, becoming the "go-to person" in real estate for her future clients.

But it wasn't without some self-doubt. "I had to really get it out of my mind that I was too young, I was a woman, and I was Asian," Ms. Ko candidly explains. "You have to cross over a bridge of confidence, and then everything comes into focus."

In 2011, she did a little more than 10 transactions while developing her personal brand and testing the waters.

In 2012, Ms. Ko more than quadrupled her transactions, and this year, she's on track to do even more.

She also found that the way to success actually begins with service. "You can't really chase the money," Ms. Ko explains. "That will all come. You really have to let people know that you're truly advocating for them. I always felt I was different in that I really, really cared. And I think people can sense that. Especially in the Asian American community."

True to her word, Ms. Ko devotes a lot of time to community service, both within AREAA (Ms. Ko currently serves on the Board of Directors for AREAA's Silicon Valley Chapter and is an ambassador for theEDGE) and beyond.

Ms. Ko also serves as the 2013-14 president of the Korean American Professional Society and is a member of the California Association of REALTORS®, the National Association of REALTORS®, and the Silicon Valley Association of REALTORS®.

Along with her service in the community, Christine recently received a highly prestigious award as one of *Realtor Magazine's* 30 under 30 class of 2013. This award is bestowed upon individuals who exemplify success, skills, creativity, and leadership in the real estate industry.

"You can't be afraid to do things – it's better and a lot more fun to be involved," Ms. Ko explains. "The business will come as people get to know the real you. And as you're serving the community, everybody wins. Homeownership helps to build stronger neighborhoods, and adds more than just monetary value to our local market. It creates a better home environment. And that's what we all want," Ms. Ko concludes.

At AREAA, we couldn't agree more.

ALEXANDER PHAN

From Dentistry and High Tech to Top Real Estate Producer

Mr. Phan's parents barely made it out of Vietnam at the end of the war, but little did they know the success that their children would attain in America out of their Portland-area home.

As the second youngest of six, Mr. Phan watched as his older siblings all became successful in prominent banking and medical professions. Needless to say, the expectations were high.

Right after high school, Mr. Phan enrolled at Portland State University in downtown Portland, with dentistry in mind. He even worked as a dental technician for his older brother, who is a dentist. There was only one problem – he simply didn't enjoy it. So he made the unpopular family decision to exit the world of dentistry because in his heart he knew that wasn't the right path for him.

Always a hard worker, Mr. Phan was able to buy

his first full year in 2010, Mr. Phan completed 18 transactions with Keller Williams Realty, the No. 1-selling office in central Portland.

By his second full year, Mr. Phan had 32 transactions and started to build systems that could help him sell even more.

Last year, in 2012, he sold more than 60 homes and this year is projecting to do more than 70 transactions, with the only limitation being the extreme inventory tightness of the market.

Now working as a well-oiled machine, Mr. Phan and his team partners Mr. Scott Hall, Mr. Trong Do, and Ms. Anjali Siddhu are on a roll.

As far as his secret for success is concerned, Mr. Phan is somewhat pragmatic about it. "Honestly, just showing up every day and treating it like a business is at the core. You have to make the calls,

"We're never really satisfied with our production from last month – we're always looking for ways to grow our business."

his first house when he was just 21 years old and shortly afterward got his real estate license on Valentine's Day in 2007.

After graduation, he took a job with technology giant Intel in 2008, working evening and night hours as an engineering technician. These non-traditional hours also allowed him to begin work at a small discount real estate brokerage, where he started buying and selling homes for family and friends.

But his entrance into real estate was also marked by the great real estate meltdown. Mr. Phan worked tirelessly at both jobs and was grateful for the security of income that Intel provided. But his work there, while important, was very repetitive, mind-numbing and lacked social interaction.

In 2010, after having achieved moderate success in real estate, Mr. Phan made the bold move to leave the security of Intel and enter into the wild world of real estate on a full-time basis.

follow up on what you said you would do, and be there on a consistent basis," Mr. Phan explains.

"We're never really satisfied with our production from last month – we're always looking for ways to grow our business," Mr. Phan concludes.

Mr. Phan also finds time to give back to the community and to AREAA, serving on the Portland chapter's Board of Directors.

Look for Mr. Phan and his team to be around for a long time and make a significant contribution to AREAA and the Portland area. He's just one of our many rising stars. **are**



Photo courtesy of Alexander Phan