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Women in Business Q&A: Michele Marano, Real Estate for the Energy Professional, Champions Real Estate Group

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Michele Marano provides real estate services for energy professionals to guide clients moving to and from Houston and the surrounding energy corridor locations. Michele Marano's 15 years of experience in energy commodity markets enhances her ability to guide clients through the complexities of buying and selling their homes in the Houston market. Not only does Michele Marano completely understand and speak the real estate market, but she is also versed with both the national economy and the mortgage industry and can discuss energy-related matters with clients.

The premise of Michele Marano's business is about giving back. The service Michele Marano provides to clients is an in-depth understanding of not only residential real estate, but deal-making, negotiations, market value, risk assessment, and market trend understanding. The Texas Real Estate Commission provides a license to practice real estate, but an individual's experience in business is what sets one agent apart from the rest.

Michele Marano's credibility is proven by her intentions as she places great importance on offering her clients a value they will not find anywhere else. Demonstrating integrity and trustworthiness instantly with her clients, who she shares a common background and business language with, provides a good sense of comfort from the start. Michele Marano puts her clients first in every situation. With passion in real estate and enthusiasm to help others, Michele Marano dedicates her expertise to each client.

How has your life experience made you the leader you are today?

I hold vivid memories of my childhood, my parents and the conversations we shared. My dad's involvement in commodities and The New York Mercantile Exchange played an integral part of my fascination with markets. As a child, I dreamed of working on Wall St. and my parents encouraged me that anything was possible. With their trusted support, I followed my dreams. I believe that with each challenge comes a lesson and in sharing our experiences with others we are able to learn and grow from them.

I grew up in a home along the countryside, surrounded by hundreds of acres owned by my family. It was the beauty of nature that inspired me in ways that would carry throughout my life, not knowing that one day my life would evolve around real estate.

Through these experiences I've learned to lead with determination, perseverance and mindfulness of staying true to oneself. The beauties of natural elements of the earth move me and help keep life in perspective.

How has your previous employment experience aided your tenure at Real Estate for the Energy Professional?

In a field dominated and defined by men, I was the one they came to. My first job was on The New York Mercantile Exchange, 4 World Trade Center, New York, NY. Not only did my career as an energy commodity broker influence and shape the woman I've become but it also gave me insights into a world that few men or women have ever known.

I worked in one of the most highly competitive and fast paced market environments. It is because of my ability to overcome and adapt to the obstacles that were laid before me that I am inspired to share my experiences. It was also in this role that I realized how much my career gave meaning to and impacted every other aspect of my life, ultimately leading me to start my own company, Michele Marano - Real Estate for the Energy Professional.

What have the highlights and challenges been during your tenure at Real Estate for the Energy Professional?

The challenges have been reinventing my brand and myself. My focus for the last several years has been creating the first Real Estate Service for Energy Professionals. The highlights have been giving back to an industry in an unexpected way. I never thought I would be offering a service that I desperately needed at different points in my career. And being in Houston, of all cities, just seems like it was meant to be. My career did a full circle and it feels right.

What advice can you offer to women who want a career in real estate?

Real Estate is about working on your own. I would recommend anyone who wants a career in real estate to establish a fundamental understanding of business and setting expectations by working in another industry first. There's a better chance of success when you bring business knowledge and skills from other work experiences. When you work in a structured environment, like a corporation, there are expectations and schedules set for you. This helps you build a strong work ethic as well as accountability that anyone requires to be successful working on their own.

What is the most important lesson you've learned in your career to date?

Do what is right. My career has been shaped by a lot of factors but morals have remained constant. If it doesn't feel right, it probably isn't. I always trust my instincts.

How do you maintain a work/life balance?

It's something I struggle with to this day. I am all about work and I have to force myself to take breaks. When I am close to nature I find myself the most relaxed. I take breaks occasionally and when I do, it's about finding stillness, quiet and being inspired by the beauty of the ocean.

What do you think is the biggest issue for women in the workplace?

Working hard to be an equivalent.

How has mentorship made a difference in your professional and personal life?

Striving for success in a male dominated industry has shaped me into the woman that I am today. Although I stand firm to my beliefs and values to this day, my view of success has changed upon age and through experiences. Through mentorship I have learned to guide others through sharing experiences, maintaining integrity and inspiring others to accomplish goals.

Which other female leaders do you admire and why?

I admire women who've achieved a level of success, made it personal and share it. Oprah's OWN Network is very personal and I enjoy her way of sharing it. Through the OWN Network Oprah shares her personal relationships and discussions with her audience enabling them to learn together with her from the experiences and wisdom of those she brings on the show. I also admire the women on Shark Tank, Barbara Corcoran and Lori Greiner. Sharing their success goes far beyond participation in the show. Through desire and initiation they mentor entrepreneurs and build inventions into lucrative businesses. Taking risks and making personal investments demonstrates leadership and I admire them for that.

What do you want Real Estate for the Energy Professional to accomplish in the next year?

My business resembles a kaleidoscope, watching each crystal fall into place while constantly changing. What's most important in my business in the years to come is to continue growing a prominent service in real estate for the energy sector. Sharing my experience with individuals and being a role in their real estate choices is how I am able to give back to energy professionals moving from all over the world to the Energy Capital, Houston, Texas.