

featuredagent

magazine

Julie Hansen Orris





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California real estate professional Julie Hansen Orvis never had any doubt about what she was going to do as a career. Growing up, her mother had a successful real estate business and Julie eagerly learned the ropes by helping her with escrows. There was just one thing she wanted as a high school graduation gift — real estate school. “I graduated high school at 17, and actually had to wait until my 18th birthday to take the real estate exam,” Julie recalls. Many doubted an 18-year-old’s ability to navigate the intricacies of real estate, but that doubt only served to motivate her more. “It drove me to work harder so not only did I sell homes, I became one of the top-producing agents in the area during the first three months I was a REALTOR®.”

That single-minded determination has been a defining factor in Julie’s life from the time she was a child, and a serious car accident led to years of painful recovery. “My family was told I would die, and that if I lived I would never walk again. But I was determined to overcome adversity. I not only walked, I ran!” Such an experience would leave many people feeling fearful and tentative about venturing out in the world, but for Julie, the lingering

emotion she felt — and continues to feel — is gratitude. “I desperately wanted to live a full life, have children, be a grown-up and leave my mark on this world,” she says. “Once I was given that chance I promised I would always be grateful no matter what my circumstances. My faith was never shaken. I believe I was saved for a reason, to share my story and inspire others.”

Now approaching 30 years in real estate, Julie has worked in both residential resale and new home sales, as a solo agent and part of a team. She currently leads a team for Alain Pinel Realtors that includes her son, his girlfriend, and soon, Julie’s brother. “I love to learn and I’ve tried a lot of things and different ways of doing real estate,” she explains. “Right now, my business seems to be taking on a life of its own and is coming full circle; I’m now working with clients who are the children of the clients I worked with when I was first starting in real estate.”

Though happy to work with any client who needs her help, Julie specializes in clients looking to buy and sell luxury properties in Pleasanton and Livermore, while her son focuses more on fellow Millennial

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first-time homebuyers. “He’s really expanding our reach by getting us more involved in social media and advertising in ways that are new for me,” Julie says. “It’s all very exciting!”

With her long and positive track record, it’s not surprising that at least 70% of Julie’s business comes from repeat and referral clients. “Many clients feel like family to me by now,” she says. “I try to make the experience and every transaction very personal; It’s not just about business.” She recalls that her mom always enjoyed great referrals, and that inspires Julie to create clients for life. “Her clients loved her. She taught me that you do special things for your clients throughout the transaction, and whether a deal stays together or falls apart, you do the right thing no matter what.” As Julie works with other agents and builds her team, she also shares this advice. “I tell





new agents not to look at clients as just a number. Look at them as people and individuals and your business will come. So many agents look at clients as a commission, but that's not the way to build a long-lasting business."

Julie has worn a number of hats during her three decades in the business, and is especially proud of a time in her career that took her outside her comfort zone. "I had been doing residential resale for a long time, when I got a call from the Vice President of Pulte homes, who said he thought I'd be good at new homes sales," she recalls. "I wasn't sure that was for me, but he offered an opportunity to manage multiple home sites and other agents, and I couldn't pass it up." The move turned out to be just what Julie was

looking for. "In my first year selling new homes I did \$42-million in sales and was nominated for Salesperson of the Year from the Homebuilders Association. That was a real honor because I was able to successfully switch from resale to new home sales and it told me I had done a good job and made clients happy."

Those happy clients are what continue to drive Julie's love of being in real estate. "When I'm able to accomplish a really complicated transaction my clients are so excited and they scream and jump up and down for joy, that makes me so happy. I live for that!" she says. "I always tell my son, we are creating experiences that people will remember for the rest of their lives."

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