

featured agent

magazine



*Kirste
Gaudet*

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From multimillion dollar retail sales to bookkeeping, Kirste Gaudet of @Properties cut her teeth in multiple businesses before becoming a thriving Chicago real estate agent. With an eye for visual arts, an education in interior design, and experience in sales and entrepreneurship, Kirste possesses an impressive set of abilities that enables her to serve her clients with skill and distinction.

Having attended the prestigious K-12 Cranbrook Schools in Michigan, designed by world-renowned architect Eliel Saarinen, Kirste was interested in visual design and architecture from an early age. “Basically, I lived in a museum,” she says. “I became a very visual person and really appreciated all the amazing art and architectural detail that I was immersed in every day.”

Kirste went on to study interior design at The University of Wisconsin-Madison before becoming an account executive for Oscar de la Renta and Yves Saint Laurent. “I went to all 17 Marshall Fields, brought in their product, and

designed special holiday events,” she explains. “I really developed a strong sales background during that time.”

After marrying and having three children, Kirste left her successful career but kept her skills sharp by helping her husband run their co-owned improvisational comedy theater, ComedySportz. Kirste handled the accounting and employee insurance needs for the venture. Finally, when her children reached high school, Kirste embarked on a new career in real estate.

Although she became a licensed agent in 2009, when the market was at a low, Kirste considered it a blessing to enter the industry at that time. “I knew that if I learned the business correctly right from the start, and if I could make it in that year, I would be successful.” Kirste certainly stood out from her peers in a very difficult time. “I had one sale for \$3 million, and I was only one of 70 people who had a sale that year out of the 250 people in our office.”





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Crediting her success to her work ethic and commitment, Kirste says, “In 2009, you had to be a go-getter, and you had to be ready for anything. You had to be in it 100%.” She also points to her previous work experience, including her early interest in visual design, for giving her a leg up. An eye for aesthetics is a key part of serving the luxury residential market that is Kirste’s speciality. “All of the pieces aligned together for real estate, including my visual background, my interior design background, and my sales background.”

Now an experienced agent focusing on the North Side, Kirste primarily represents luxury and co-op clients from the North Center, Gold Coast, Lincoln Park, and Lake View neighborhoods, though she has done work in Edgebrook, Portage Park, and the South Side. She also has specialized

knowledge regarding home sales for divorces. “They’re difficult to navigate, especially if you have two people who are really struggling with one another.” Kirste understands that not just anyone can handle the rigors of this type of home sale. “It’s a different process,” she says. “It’s tough, but you have to be equal to both sides.”

In a competitive market, Kirste appreciates the advantage of being a sole proprietor. “There isn’t anything wrong with having a team, but a lot of people don’t want to have the revolving door of different people coming through their home.” Because the buck stops with her, Kirste’s clients can trust her for marketing, briefings, showings, and negotiations. “I think people really like to know who they’re working with so they can have solidity throughout the whole process.”



One way that Kirste relates to her clients is through her appreciation for the appearance of their homes, an enjoyment that is informed by her visual design interests. “I love seeing everyone’s home. It doesn’t matter if it’s a tiny apartment or a \$5 million home,” she says. “I never get tired of it.”

Though she thoroughly enjoys admiring the home aesthetics, Kirste’s favorite part of real estate is forming relationships. “I’m very easygoing,” she says. “I just love the process of meeting clients and learning who they are, what makes them tick, and finding the perfect home or property for them.” These connections have contributed to her estimated 95% referral rate. “My clients are part of my life after the sale. They know that I’m a good and honest person, and they like to refer people that they know are going to do a good job.”

Kirste loves leveraging her success for others, including through mentoring and the Impact Grants Chicago program. “Women come together to provide grants to the

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South Side and Chicago communities in need,” she explains. The program donors devote their time to learning the needs of individual communities and businesses in order to determine who is most in need of the charitable grant. Kirste is also joining the board of Jump Start, and has previously raised money for the Trinity High School for Girls.

Personable to the end, Kirste has a vision to lead clients into the best possible situation. “I am absolutely passionate about home ownership and the financial security it provides someone at the end of the day.”

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