

featuredagent

magazine

*Sonia
Anaya*



Sonia Anaya

Between educating first-time home buyers, establishing a personal rapport with each one of her firm's clients, and supporting her community through charity and political advocacy, Chicago agent Sonia Anaya of America Real Estate Inc. puts in the work to make home dreams a reality.

An experienced businesswoman, mother, and activist, Sonia first began working in real estate in 1991 out of a desire to spend more time with her children. Within three years, her flexible job had transformed into part-ownership of the company. In 1998, Sonia founded her own group, America Real Estate Inc., which she still manages.

From the start, Sonia has had a heart for first-time home buyers. "My favorite part of being an agent is seeing the smile on the face of a first-time buyer on the day that we close," she says. Part of Sonia's interest in helping first-timers, who made up much of her business in her early years, stems from personal experience. "I came from a family that knew nothing about owning a property." To that end, Sonia wants to equip every first-time buyer for owning their first piece of real estate. "I want to help people start improving their credit, get informed, and ask the questions about what is available to them." However, Sonia is not limited to serving new buyers. "I have transitioned to both listing and buying, and a good 10% of what I do is commercial." While she focuses on the West Side, Sonia isn't limited by geography, either. "I cover all of Chicago, including the suburbs."

Sonia stands out from the Windy City's other agents thanks to years of hard work and personal dedication. "My experience, knowledge, and willingness to go the extra mile set me apart," she says. Her philosophy is rooted in a piece of wisdom found in the twelfth chapter of Luke. "I have a friend who always says, 'To whom much is given, much is required.' To me, that means a lot, because if people give you their trust, you have to give that much more back." Sonia is clear about

how that principle plays out daily. "We need to start by being very honest and very knowledgeable, and by treating people with the same respect we want to be treated with."

Not only is this way of doing business morally right, but Sonia has found that it reaps enormous benefits to her company as well. "I think people keep coming back because of the service I have given, the knowledge that I have, and the fact that I am able to find them grants." Sonia stays happily busy with the traffic she receives from her 90% referral rate. "If you get someone a nice grant, they go and tell their neighbors and friends."

While her focus has always been on helping people through real estate, Sonia has also become involved at the local, state, and national levels as well. In 2010, she served as the political coordinator for Congressional Representative Luis Gutiérrez before joining the National Association of Hispanic Real Estate Professionals (NAHREP).

That involvement has led to numerous accolades, including the 2016 Illinois REALTOR® Political Involvement Award and the 2018 Brian A. Bernardoni Political Advocacy Award from the Chicago Association of REALTORS®. "To me, these awards were huge because I never thought I was a political person, so receiving them was unexpected, but I'm very proud of them." Sonia has also given back to her community through fiesta night fundraisers for grammar schools, school sponsorships, and even plans to incorporate her love for running by completing the Chicago Marathon for charity.

Sonia is modest about her 15-agent firm. "My business is a small, boutique real estate company." Thanks to the size of her business, Sonia has the privilege of interviewing every client personally prior to the loan application process. "My team then helps them improve their credit, shows them how to save money, and otherwise educates them." This model of personalized

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service works so smoothly that Sonia doesn't even maintain a website. “I've never had a website and I've never needed one. My 'website' is the personal service that I give my clients.”

While Sonia has dedicated years to providing top-notch assistance to her clients, she is also looking forward to building up her other legacy: her family. Sonia has an amazingly supportive husband and four children. Two of Sonia's children are following in her footsteps — her daughter is a real estate agent in San

Diego, and her son is a soon-to-be Dominican University graduate working in real estate administration on Chicago's North Side.

Though retirement has crossed her mind, Sonia still wants to stay involved in her company, especially where face-to-face interviews with clients are concerned. “I will probably retire but still do the referrals to the agents,” she says. Thanks to her children, even if Sonia does retire, her legacy of respect, education, and activism will live on.

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