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Mission

We are a network of successful REALTORS® empowering women to exercise their potential as entrepreneurs and industry leaders.

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See Page 3 for list of Chapter Annual Corporate Sponsors!
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President's Message

Dear members,

Hope this issue portrays the importance of volunteering. I came across this article while searching our National web site and I thought you might enjoy reading it.

I personally believe, if you like to have a balance life. Incorporate few hours of volunteer work in your weekly or monthly schedule and you will see the endless opportunities of personal growth and friendships.

Warm regards,
Hasmik



Leading Women

Accelerate Your Career with Volunteer Leadership

By Karen M. Kroll

When you're working hard to develop your real estate career, the idea of taking on a leadership role in an industry organization might seem lofty, but totally impractical. After all, there's no time, and such roles would cut into your ability to actually be a REALTOR®. While that sounds reasonable, the exact opposite is true, according many leaders, who say that industry involvement gives you the competitive edge to build your business.



Why Leadership Benefits You

You can accelerate your career by taking on leadership positions, according to Catherine B. Whatley, CIPS, CRS, GRI, PMN, a REALTOR® and broker with Buck & Buck, Inc., in Jacksonville, FL. Whatley was also the 2003 president of the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) and has been president of her local and state chapters of the Women's Council of REALTORS® (WCR).

All have helped Whatley, a multi-million dollar producer for several decades, achieve her career goals more quickly and develop as an individual. "I think I would have become a very strong leader, capable of representing my customers and clients [anyway], but I did so more rapidly because of the experience and knowledge I gained," through my leadership positions, she said. (continue page 2)

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Monte Carlo Style Casino Night!!!

The Casino Night was well planned, high energy, glamorized, lots of laughter's and smiles. Guests were playing and dancing at the same time. D.J. Allan Cason of APC entertainment, Sponsored by Vern Buck, had all the right tunes.

The Casino Company was a great choice. Game tables sponsored by KG interior Design, Dee Sign Company, The Termite Guy, Bank of America, Colleen Kordich, Building Spec's Inc., Homestead Escrow Inc , Tiempo EscrowII, Pacific bakery, Best of the Best Productions, friendly Fred's Fotos, Travis Agle, CPA, brought hours of fun and game to the attendees.

Special Thanks to Sona Kamberg, Casino Night Chair with Tiempo Escrow II for all her months of careful and detail planning. Our extended Thanks go to Casino Night Committee members: Candy Babcock, Ellie Akhavan, Alexia Williams, Kathleen Garito, Nancy Feathers, Colleen Kordich, Sylvia Prata, Sheri Bieber, Althea Garner, Hasmik Youssefian and Daniel Nicolau.

For questions, or event participations for 2010 Casino Night e-mail **Sona kamberg** at WCRCasino09@cox.net or call her at (949) 939-2025.

Leading Women (continue... page one)

Taking on leadership roles within the real estate industry helps REALTORS® both personally and professionally. Whether they're heading up the local association's picnic committee or chairing a national task force, REALTORS® gain confidence, knowledge and contacts. Getting more involved in these organizations also can help REALTORS® better understand and even shape the direction of the real estate industry. That's been the case for Sharon Millett, CIPS, and broker/owner of CB Millett Realty in Auburn, ME. Millett was president of NAR in 1999, which coincided with an explosion in the use of technology within the industry.

The timing was fortuitous. "Because I was involved in the association, I could see what was happening around the country," she said. As a result, Millett was instrumental in helping her firm embrace, rather than fight, the use of new technology. She attributes her firm's rise to market leader to this strategy. "We could offer agents insights to new technology," she said. "This helped us move forward."

Adorna Carroll's experience was similar. Carroll, ABR, ABRM, GRI, PMN, SRES, is owner/partner of Realty3 Carroll & Agostini in Berlin, CT, as well as president of Dynamic Directions, Inc., an educational and sales training firm. She was a member of the executive committee of the Connecticut Association of REALTORS® in the mid-1990s, when discussions were underway within the industry and with regulators to change the laws to allow REALTORS® to represent buyers.

Being a member of the team working for the changes provided Carroll with insight she wouldn't have obtained otherwise. "Your involvement gives you an edge off the competition, which didn't participate in the discussion or even think about it," Carroll said. "Information is power." That translates to the bottom line, as Carroll also has been a multi-million dollar producer for nearly 20 years.



"I think I would have become a very strong leader, capable of representing my customers and clients [anyway], but I did so more rapidly because of the experience and knowledge I gained" through leadership positions. – Catherine B. Whatley

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"Your involvement gives you an edge off the competition, who didn't participate in the discussion or even think about it." – Adorna Carroll

While leadership roles can help a REALTOR® achieve his or her professional goals, anyone who volunteers with the expectation that sales contacts will start flowing in will probably be disappointed. Participating in a leadership capacity can make you more knowledgeable and confident – both qualities that can serve you well in negotiations. For example, Whatley's positions within the industry have compelled her to stay abreast of changes in tax law that impact home sales and purchases. That knowledge enables her to better serve her clients, which helps her stay ahead of competitors, she added.

That's not to say that volunteering won't lead to contacts and leads, as it often does. Pat V. Combs, ABR, CRS, GRI, PMN, a broker and REALTOR® in Grand Rapids, MI, notes that her volunteer endeavors have helped her meet REALTORS® from around the country. Once she's worked with people in a volunteer capacity, they're more comfortable sending referrals her way. Combs is the immediate past president of NAR, has held a variety of positions at the local, state and national levels and has been a multi-million dollar producer for years.

While both men and women can benefit from taking on leadership roles, some of the rewards are particularly important to women. "I think a major benefit of taking on leadership roles for women is something we dance around a bit," Combs said. That is the "self-satisfaction at being able to do a good job as a leader."

Serving in leadership roles in civic and charitable organizations outside the industry also can provide valuable experience, as well as the opportunity to contribute to the community, according to Barbara B. Lach, ABR, CRB, CRS, GRI, PMN, a REALTOR® with Coldwell Banker King Thompson in Columbus, OH.

Lach is among the top one percent of sales people within Coldwell Banker and was also the 2002 national president of WCR. In addition to the leadership posts Lach has held within NAR and WCR, she has headed committees for the Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus Symphony Orchestra and the Childhood League Center. "You can learn from each one," she said.

For starters, just the opportunity to see how other leaders handle setbacks and obstacles can be eye-opening. "You see that in leaders, they don't get hung up," on potential obstacles, Lach said. Instead, they'll find a way to get around them to achieve their goals. And, any leadership role can instill confidence. With that, you become more comfortable making decisions and giving others directions, she added.



"Because I was involved in the association, I could see what was happening around the country... [Our firm] could offer agents insights to new technology. This helped us move forward." – Sharon Millett

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Too Much Time?

One of the reasons given most often by those who decide not to seek out leadership roles is the time commitment – perceived or real – required. Some REALTORS® worry that taking on volunteer commitments, even within the industry; will cut into their ability to actually make money. That argument doesn't hold up, according to Combs. "I've found that the more you gave, the more you got back." Moreover, the industry needs people to get involved. That's the only way to ensure a voice at the table when legislation and regulations affecting REALTORS® are under discussion.

In addition, it's very easy to choose the level at which you want to commit, Carroll said. REALTORS® can work on everything from one-time events to longer-range projects. It's important to have "quality at every level," she added.

While some women may question their ability to lead, most already have been leading in some way. They may have raised a family or taken on other volunteer positions, Whatley said. However, they may not view these as leadership roles. Often, just joining an organization can be enough to change one's perception, Whatley added. That can "be the catalyst that opens up a person's ability to see her own strengths and capabilities in a new light," she said.



"I think a major benefit of taking on leadership roles for women is something we dance around a bit," That is the "self-satisfaction at being able to do a good job as a leader." – Pat V. Combs

How to Take on a Leadership Role

Once you've decided to take on a leadership role, you'll need to make your wishes known, according to Lach. "If you wait to be asked, you're probably not going anywhere," she said. Start at the local level, so you can gain experience without the pressure that accompanies national positions. "The higher you get, the more training and skills you need to set yourself apart," Whatley said.

Also, given the size of some national real estate organizations – NAR boasts 1.3 million members, and WCR has 18,000 members – it's unlikely that someone who is totally new to the organization will land in a leadership post. "You have to develop, and the local board is a wonderful way to start," Millett said.

If possible, try to participate in a committee that fits your experience and interest. "If you happen to get involved in something that doesn't quite pique your interest, you're not as involved and it won't really separate you from the others," Carroll said. "Start where your passion is and where you're more inclined to get involved mind, body and soul."

Combs, for instance, served on and chaired the Equal Opportunity Committees of the local, state and national associations in the 1970s after graduating from Grand Valley State University in Grand Rapids, MI with a degree in sociology. "This was my baby, my passion," Combs said. "It was a time in the country when block-busting was going on,

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and there were riots in cities. I felt I could make a difference.”

“If you wait to be asked, you’re probably not going anywhere.” – Barbara B. Lach



Similarly, Millett joined the Government Affairs Committee soon after getting her real estate license in 1990. This was a natural fit for her, given her work on local and state political campaigns. “Find those things you really care about,” she said. “That’s key to doing a good job and having a positive impact.”

As compelling as the benefits of leadership are, it doesn’t make sense to over-commit. It quickly becomes obvious if you are participating in industry associations to the exclusion of actually working as a REALTOR®, as you lose touch with the issues of greatest concern to REALTORS® out in the market each day.

Instead, you’re likely to become known as an “association junkie,” who just wants to travel and participate in meetings, Combs said. “It doesn’t take long before people realize that you don’t know what you’re talking about.”

Once in a position, you need to do the job to the best of your ability. However, that doesn’t mean censoring your thoughts when you disagree with others, Whatley said. Politely stating your viewpoint is necessary if an organization is going to be as effective as it can be. “To withhold input out of fear of consequences hinders ensuring the best solutions are brought forward,” she said.

In the mid-1990s, Whatley was asked to serve on NAR’s Executive Committee as WCR’s representative. Whatley was discussing WCR’s purpose and title with a recent past NAR president. He advocated changing the name to the Leadership Council of REALTORS®, reasoning that this better reflected the aim of the Council and would make both men and women more interested in the organization.

“I respectfully disagreed with him,” Whatley said. At the time, only a few women were moving into leadership roles within the industry at the state and local levels. Whatley discussed “the benefits the name gave to women who were looking to build a network of support and develop a higher degree of self-confidence as they progressed in their real estate careers.” Obviously, the name remained, and Whatley later became president of NAR.

“It takes courage to lead,” she said, “and not be in the ‘ready, aim, aim, aim’ syndrome, without ever getting confident enough to ‘fire.’”

Karen M. Kroll is a freelance writer from Chanhassen, MN.

Note: Interested in submitting an article for consideration for a future newsletter? Please e-mail Daniel.nicolau@wellsfargo.com or Hasmikwcr@cox.net

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