

EXECUTIVE AGENT

MAGAZINE™



**RUSS
MONTOYA
REALTOR**

Executive Agent of the Month

MAIN STREET
REALTORS®

RUSS MONTOYA

When Integrity, Experience and Compassion Matter

Written by Haley Freeman - Ian Wiant Photographer

Russ Montoya recalls his childhood in the small town of Grants, New Mexico as an idyllic one. His mom and dad, Arlene and J.D., were honest, hard-working people who set a fine example for their six sons as loving parents and good citizens. “My dad worked for a uranium company, and my mom was a waitress,” he remembers. “They both worked hard, and what they did for our family was incredible. I loved my childhood, out playing with family and neighbor kids. We’d be gone all day riding bikes, playing ball and catching lizards, and when we got thirsty, we’d stop in a neighbor’s yard and get a drink from their water hose.”

As Russ was entering high school, J.D.’s employment took the family to Trona, California, near Death Valley. There, they continued to live a small-town life. But like

many young people, Russ was eager to get out and start his life in a bigger, more exciting place. He relocated to Fontana, began college, and was eventually hired at Home Depot. What began as just a job turned into a 10-year career. Russ grew with the company during its heyday and rose to management under the tutelage of his manager, Cameron Mickey and the company’s founder, Bernie Marcus.

“I’ve never forgotten the lessons I learned there about customer service. Once a month, Home Depot had ‘Breakfast with Bernie.’ At 6:00 a.m. on a Sunday, we would bring all the employees in for a meeting, and Bernie would talk about his philosophy of taking care of the customer. If you were wearing an orange apron, you had one mission: make the customer happy.”





Russ leveraged his success at Home Depot by investing in real estate. It wasn't long before he had accumulated a portfolio of single family and multi-unit buildings. Then, he was offered an opportunity to join Downey Savings and Loan (later U.S. Bank) as a branch manager. Three years

later, he was running one of the top performing in-store branches in the region and was promoted to vice president regional manager. He continued to refine his knowledge of general finance and mortgage lending, while adding to his real estate holdings.

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Along the way, he obtained his real estate license as an instrument to facilitate his own investment transactions. Then a major life event caused him to reevaluate his professional path: he became a single father to a young daughter. “First and foremost, I wanted to be a parent, and I decided I was working too many hours. When I first got my real estate license, I never planned to be a practicing Realtor®. It just made sense for buying and selling my own properties. But I saw the joy that comes from this profession, and it was the perfect opportunity for me to structure my schedule so I could raise my daughter and spend more time with her.”

For the past five years, Russ has dedicated his professional talents exclusively to real estate. His clients benefit greatly from his passion for homes and his more than 20 years of real-world experience buying, selling, financing and managing property. “I am 100 percent committed to serving clients, and I just love it. I still own and operate my real estate investment company more like a hobby which allows me to follow my passion of being a true and sincere Realtor®. It turns out that throughout my career, I’ve been acquiring the skills to make me the Realtor® I would hire.”

Russ has also given back to the profession and the community by serving first as a board member and then as board chairman for Neighborhood Housing Services for the Inland Empire (NHSIE) from 2009 through 2013. This nonprofit agency is dedicated to making the dream of home ownership available to underserved populations, a commitment Russ shares.

After so many years in the corporate business environment, Russ had a keen desire to work with an entity other than a traditional, big-box real estate company. He envisioned a high-service boutique, where he could give clients the personal attention they deserve, without sacrificing the amenities offered by larger brands. He found that winning combination at Mainstreet Realtors® in Rancho Cucamonga. “We are cutting edge in technology, and we have a photographer, videographer, marketer and social media manager on staff. I love being able to spend more time with my clients and not having to worry about these things getting done. I don’t have the corporate obligations, either. The broker and I have the same philosophy about customer service.”





Russ's customer-focused approach to real estate begins with making every client feel like his only client. He is never rushed or high-pressure. Instead, he takes the time to understand exactly what characteristics comprise a family's perfect home, and then he goes to work finding it. "I'm a one-deal-at-a-time guy. My goal isn't to be the top agent -- it's to genuinely help the person or family that is right in front of me. I'm not chasing my own goal. I'm here to accomplish their goal and do what's best for them. This is a huge piece of someone's life. It might just be another Tuesday to me, but I know it's not like that for them. I take pride in being there for someone and making sure they get the best service and the best deal possible."

Russ delivers on that promise, and the proof is in the heartfelt appreciation expressed by his clients. They say Russ is "thorough," "went beyond the call of duty," "extremely responsive," and "on top of every detail."

Clients who hired Russ to sell their home and then help

them buy another, said: "From the beginning until we closed both escrows, nothing but the best service! From selling our house to helping us buy the house of our dreams, Russ helped us with everything you can think of: paperwork, negotiations and going above and beyond. I truly recommend Russ. His work ethics are amazing and he was always able to help us with any questions we had. Thanks Russ, for all your help. You have not only gained a customer for life, but a friend that we now consider family."

In his personal life, nothing is more important to Russ than his family. He strives to set the same example to others that his parents provided for him and his brothers. In all aspects of his life and work, he demonstrates that integrity, experience and compassion matter. "I guess I'm kind of old-fashioned. I just want to be the best person I can be, while doing my part for society and for the people who trust me to help them buy or sell a home. I don't need a contract to tell me what to do or what's right."



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