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Led by co-founders Raffaellina Merlino and Becky Rynkiewicz, **Artemis Real Estate Group at Keller Williams Main Line** takes a novel approach to helping clients buy and sell in an ever-changing market.

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# The Art of Artemis

BY LEIGH STUART | PHOTOS BY NINA LEA PHOTOGRAPHY

RAFFAELLINA MERLINO AND BECKY RYNKIEWICZ, THE CO-FOUNDERS AND REALTORS OF **ARTEMIS REAL ESTATE GROUP AT KELLER WILLIAMS MAIN LINE**, TAKE A NOVEL APPROACH TO HELPING CLIENTS BUY AND SELL IN AN EVER-CHANGING MARKET.

**I**n June 2020, when Realtors Raffaellina Merlino and Becky Rynkiewicz co-founded Artemis Real Estate Group at Keller Williams Main Line, they founded their enterprise on the cornerstones of dedication, teamwork, and creativity. Success came quickly to these entrepreneurial-minded women, and they continue to thrive during one of the most tumultuous times in recent history by offering clients the best service possible.

“Demand has gone through the roof in the suburbs over the last few years,” Merlino shares. “For a while, homes were getting up to 10 offers—now, it’s more like four or five. A lot of people are dealing with burnout, so it’s up to us to get creative, finding the right lender or title or insurance partner, and doing things other Realtors won’t do.”

When prime properties attract lukewarm interest, Merlino says a little outside-the-box thinking can “get inventory moving.” A June event in Philadelphia, hosted by Artemis, is a prime example.

“To get some foot traffic through properties, we’re hosting a mega open house at a new luxury five-unit build-out,” Rynkiewicz says. “We’re featuring artists from Mural Arts Philadelphia, and there will be live paintings, catering and bartending, and a live band, and it’s all open to the public. Plus, we’re raising funds for the Mural Arts organization.”

The event exemplifies Artemis’s mission; Merlino and Rynkiewicz not only want to help

**“The beauty of our team and this company is that we are not only able to shine in our best light, but we’ve hired agents and administrators and staff that love what they do just as much as we do, so everyone can work to their highest and best use.”**



Raffaellina Merlino



Becky Rynkiewicz

buyers and sellers realize their dreams, but also have a “contribution-driven mindset,” meaning they strive to be good stewards of the communities they serve. The organization’s leaders constantly look for opportunities to give back, supporting organizations devoted to animal rescue, children’s health, and the empowerment of female entrepreneurs such as themselves.

“We’re a women-led business,” Merlino says. “We’re mothers and feel a woman can contribute financially to a home as well as support a family.”

“A lot of people talk about what we’re doing, but we’re really living it,” Rynkiewicz adds. “I came from very humble beginnings, living paycheck to paycheck, and I knew from a young age I didn’t want to live like that. I wanted to be a homeowner and bought my first house at 24.

“Going through the process, I was never taught that you don’t need a perfect credit score or 20 percent down to buy a home,” she continues. “I had to teach myself, and I realized that if I can do it, anyone can. I want to show others it is possible to be a homeowner and it’s our mission at Artemis to solve clients’ problems. In the U.S., anything’s possible.”

This philosophy has likely contributed to Artemis’s meteoric rise over the past two years. Merlino and Rynkiewicz have expanded their team to include seven professionals who have expertise in everything from administration to marketing to sales. Merlino credits much of their success with

the ability to manage priorities.

“This business takes precedence, but in conjunction, I have to take care of my health and family,” she says. “I run multiple businesses, including a real estate withholding company, so I’ve become a master of delegation. Surrounding yourself with the right people is key.”

Rynkiewicz agrees. Before founding the firm, when both she and Merlino were working as solo agents, it wasn’t always possible to offer as high a level of service as they could with their forces combined.

“The beauty of our team and this company is that we are not only able to shine in our best light, but we’ve hired agents and administrators and staff that love what they do just as much as we do, so everyone can work to their highest and best use,” she says. “It is incredible when you see how much more powerful collaborative effort can be, much more than you can ever be in your own solitary business.”

These luxury Realtors offer services to buyers and sellers interested in homes in Philadelphia and its surrounding suburbs—Bucks, Delaware, and Montgomery counties and beyond, including South Jersey and down the Shore. Rynkiewicz, a Doylestown native, focuses largely on suburban properties, while Merlino specializes in city spaces.

“I think the reason we have been able to scale to this level this quickly is because we did the hard work a lot of real estate entrepreneurs aren’t willing to do,” Rynkiewicz says. “A lot of agents just want

to focus on sales and commission. We knew we had to build a strong foundation, so when we first decided to partner together, we knew first and foremost we needed to invest a lot of money to hire a salaried employee and create a website, an operations manual, a company creed, a mission statement, and five- and 10-year business plans.”

“When we started out, we were really looking to educate and support each other and our growing team,” Merlino adds. “In order to have a team that’s productive, first and foremost, you have to set that culture. We’d share resources, even give leads away. It’s very important to build that trust for someone to successfully serve alongside you.”

Their decision appears to have been the right one. Today, Artemis Real Estate Group is a flourishing enterprise that empowers buyers and sellers, as well as members of its own team, to succeed while maintaining its focus on building communities and strengthening families. ■

**➔ Artemis Real Estate Group at Keller Williams Main Line**  
6 Coulter Ave. 2nd Floor  
Ardmore, PA 19003  
(267) 279-9755  
[liveloveartemis.com](http://liveloveartemis.com)

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