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After earning her place as a world-class athlete, **Sarah West** uses the same tenacity and commitment to build a thriving real estate business in her hometown.

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Driven to Succeed

After earning her place as a world-class athlete, **Sarah West** uses the same tenacity and commitment to build a thriving real estate business in her hometown.

by **MATT COSENTINO**

photography by **NINA LEA PHOTOGRAPHY**



For those who do not know Sarah West well, it is tempting to peruse her long list of accomplishments and peg her as the ultra-competitive type. A three-time college All American, who also competed after college at a professional level, West has since used the same drive to establish herself as one of the most respected real estate agents in Pennsylvania.

West does love to win, but she believes winning is a byproduct of committing to the craft. Whether pertaining to athletics or real estate, she finds great satisfaction in working hard behind the scenes to get better every day.

“There’s a humility to athletics, and you have to love the process,” says West.

At age 12, she was told by experts at Hospital of Pennsylvania, Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, and Johns Hopkins Hospital that her athletic career was over. She went on to achieve an accomplished athletic career by persevering through complex injuries that were misdiagnosed or unsolved for most of her career.

“You really have to let go of the titles, the wins, and those big goals,” she says. “You show up every day and give it your best, no matter the circumstances. That’s really the only way to find your highest potential. To be really present with what that one day calls for, give it everything you have, and build on that.”

She takes the same approach in real estate: focusing on each client, each house, and each offer.

A Realtor since 2016, West announced herself as a major player in the industry right out of the gate. She was recognized as a “Rising Star” from 2017 to 2019—a rare distinction bestowed upon fewer than 60 of the 22,000 licensed agents in the Philadelphia area. A distinction she first received after only eight months in the industry.

West joined COMPASS Main Line soon after the organization moved to the area, recognizing its innovative approach to the industry. The very next year she ranked 20th on the *Wall Street Journal*’s list of top-100-selling agents in the state. This placed her in the top 1 percent of the 1.5 million agents across the country. Last year she was COMPASS’s No. 1 individual agent in all of Pennsylvania.

What makes all of those achievements even more impressive is that real estate was never part of West’s plan. After eight years of working for CEOs of venture-backed

technology companies and simultaneously competing on the Women’s Pro Doubles Circuit for squash, West decided to shift gears and pursue her dream of becoming a doctor. She was in the final semester of her two-year, pre-med post-baccalaureate program at Mills College, with a summer interning with the Fetal Surgery department at CHOP in between—and thriving, just as she had at Episcopal Academy and Dartmouth College—when her life took an unexpected turn.

A childhood spine injury led to serious, delayed health complications, and West was forced to move back home to Pennsylvania to undergo an arduous recovery. It was during this time that she turned to real estate, following in the footsteps of her beloved parents.

“I had dreamed of being a doctor since I was a kid,” she recalls. “At that juncture, I had put in a tremendous amount of work and investment to go, and I was finding a lot of success on that path—I was right there. It was devastating when that whole thing got thrown off track, but it was a blessing in disguise. It was a lesson: Sometimes your worst nightmare ends up being the best thing that happens to you. I am so grateful that it worked out this way.”

Much like every other endeavor she has pursued, West immersed herself in real estate and achieved predictably stellar results in unprecedentedly quick fashion. She specializes in the luxury market on the Main Line, boasting distinguished clients such as professional athletes and high-level executives. At the same time, she also loves the reward of working with first-time homebuyers, those downsizing to a smaller residence, or those moving after a life event. She sees it as an honor to be trusted with this process by anyone.

To her, she loves the challenge and thrill of each transaction and the dreams she can help make happen. She gets energized each time she finds the perfect home for a buyer or secures top dollar for a seller. She was not sure she would experience such fulfillment after forgoing the opportunity to attend medical school.

"I couldn't say more about how significant I think this job is and how important it is to work with an excellent agent," she says. "In the past two years, the difference between

working with one of the best agents versus someone who is 'just a friend' is the difference between winning and losing a bidding war, securing your dream home or not. As a seller, in some cases, it can mean a substantial difference on your sale price."

West, a native of North Haverford, has an intimate understanding of the area and enjoys sharing her knowledge of streets and neighborhoods with her clients. This is particularly helpful when she is working with clients new to the area. On a personal note, being back home has allowed her to be closer to family and gave her the chance to spend time with her father before his recent

passing. For those reasons and more, she is grateful for where her journey led her, no matter how circuitous the route.

"I was living in California, going 100 miles an hour, got shot out of the sky, and had to come back to my hometown," she says. "It felt like the greatest of defeats, and it turned out to be one of the best blessings. I came back here at such a humbling time, but it's become something I am so grateful for.

"This is something I pour my heart into," she continues. "The fact that it was built in ways on my father's legacy makes it that much more meaningful." ■

**This is
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heart into."**

—SARAH WEST



THREE OF
SARAH WEST'S
RECENT
LISTINGS



➔ **COMPASS RE**

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Home photographs courtesy of Sarah West