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Driven to Serve

Guided by a desire to help others, **Realtor Tammy Harrison** provides the kind of from-the-heart service that wins prestigious awards and turns buyers and sellers into clients for life.

BY **MATT COSENTINO** | PHOTO BY **JEFF ANDERSON**

Many Realtors tout their credentials by pointing to their sales numbers from the prior year or their rankings in the region and state. Tammy Harrison could certainly use those metrics to impress, too. In her mind, though, the most rewarding aspect of the job will always be customer satisfaction—and few can rival her in that category.

Her devotion to helping others runs deep. Years ago, one particular client came up with a name for the lasting relationships she has built over the course of more than two decades in the industry: Tammy's Tribe.

"It's really like a family," says Harrison, a Realtor at COMPASS RE who focuses her business on the Main Line and surrounding areas. "I don't know how else to describe it."

Once someone becomes part of that family, they basically become a member for life. Not only will past clients come back to Harrison when they are in the market again, but they will often turn to her for recommendations on which professionals

to use for certain services and even seek her advice on key decisions, such as whether to sell a home or rent it out when moving to another one.

"If you want someone who will always have your back, that's me," Harrison says. "When clients have a problem with their real estate or they want to know what they can do to increase the value of their home, I'm still here and still serving them."

That level of commitment has garnered Harrison the prestigious honor of Five Star Professional Legend for the second year in a row. Five Star is a national company that recognizes the best of the best in a number of professions, using objective research methodology tailored specifically to each one. For real estate, the process relies heavily on customer surveys, and Harrison's clients are more than willing to share feedback about their positive experiences with her.

The status of Five Star Legend is reserved for those who have earned the Five Star Professional distinction at least 10 consecutive years, and Harrison has received the honor 12 straight times—every year since it has been offered in the Philadelphia market.

"That's the award that means the most to me," she says, "because it's not based on how much money I've made or how much business I've done; it's all about client satisfaction."

Harrison applies the same level of service to each client, no matter who they are and where they are on their real estate journey. For example, she recently represented a couple in their 50s who were looking to buy a home for the first time. Bad advice from an online lender was going to cost them an extra \$4,400 at the closing table, but Harrison intervened. She set her clients up with an experienced mortgage professional with whom she had a long history, thereby fixing the mistake and reducing their out-of-pocket expenses dramatically.

At the other end of the spectrum, Harrison often oversees multimillion-dollar deals. She has even worked with local celebrities, such as Jason Kelce of the Philadelphia Eagles and Paul Reed of the Philadelphia 76ers.

"Working with both of them was great," she says. "In Paul's case, his mother was very involved, and I got to know her well. As for Jason, he's been very, very kind about signing jerseys for charities that I'm involved in. They're lovely people, and normal people, which is interesting considering how famous they are."

Apart from her work, Harrison supports charitable causes that are near and dear to her heart. One of them is called Mission Kids, a child advocacy center for children suffering from abuse. Mission Kids provides a number of valuable services, including using specially trained professionals to conduct forensic interviews of abused children to limit the risk of those children reliving their trauma.

"They also do training for schools, for hospitals, and for all different types of organizations across the country on how to spot and find kids who are being abused," Harrison says. "They do work in so many important areas, and I just love being a part of that group."

Harrison is also looking to partner with a local charity to combat another issue that she believes she can help with: homelessness.

"Around where I live in Norristown, there's a huge homeless population," she says. "The town used to have the only homeless shelter in Montgomery County, but they have since closed it. At



The members of "Tammy's Tribe," named for the group of clients Harrison has helped over the years, includes local celebrities such as Jason Kelce of the Philadelphia Eagles.

some point we have to do something about this. How long can you continue to have a population that doesn't have anywhere to live? The investors of the world are building apartments as fast as they can, but for the people who can't afford those apartments, where do they live? That's another thing that has caught my attention, and I wanted to get involved."

As for her storied career, Harrison has no intention of slowing down anytime soon. While many agents come and go because of the up-and-down nature of the business, she understands that there will be wildly successful years and others that are affected by down markets. Either way, she's just going to keep serving her clients the best way that she can.

"I started my professional career as a headhunter when I was 25," she says. "I've done management, I've done sales, and I've been a solutions manager for Xerox. Frankly, I wasn't really content with what I was doing until I started selling real estate. It's all about the people, but it's also a love for what I'm doing. Every time I do a deal, I learn something from it. That keeps the job fresh, and I just love it." ■

COMPASS RE

Tammy Harrison

COMPASS RE

(610) 822-3356 | (610) 520-2500, call or text

tammy.harrison@compass.com