

MANN REPORT

RESIDENTIAL

| CONTINUING EDUCATION |



Leading The Charge In the World Of Continuing Education

Esther Muller “The Academy endeavors to create a skills-building program that empowers our students and helps them to take their careers to the next level.” **The Real Estate Academy**

“This is the best of the continuing education courses...”

For Esther Muller, The Real Estate Academy’s co-founder and master teacher, this praise from past students is priceless. It is a vindication that her mission of the past 12 years has been achieved, because before The Real Estate Academy was founded, mandatory continuing education was considered by most brokers as something akin to going to the dentist – to be avoided at all costs until absolutely necessary. “You didn’t want to do it, but if you wanted to continue working in real estate, you had to,” Muller remembers.

That feeling of foreboding vanished when Muller and Benjamin Wieder founded The Real Estate Academy in 1995, with the support of Lewis Rudin. Muller has made a rote process interesting, engaging, and – dare it be said – fun.

How did this happen? Working within the strict mandates of the Department of State – Division of Licensing Services, Muller, a former teacher, developed a curriculum that is very much up-to-the-minute. “The Academy endeavors to create a skills-building program that empowers our students and helps them to take their careers to the next level,” she says.

The Academy’s hallmark is the caliber of its guest lecturers. Muller understands that learning from one’s peers is an incisive lesson in itself. Already well-known in the trade as a power broker, she has the reputation and

the name recognition that attract industry megastars. They include, among many, Howard Lorber and Dottie Herman, Prudential Douglas Elliman’s chairman and president/ chief executive officer, respectively; Pamela Liebman, The Corcoran Group’s president and CEO; Diane Ramirez, Halstead Property’s president; David Michonski, chairman/CEO of Coldwell Banker Hunt Kennedy; Michael Shvo, founder of the SHVO Group; John Fotiadis, associate partner at Costas Kondylis & Partners, LLP; Elizabeth Stribling, president of Stribling & Associates; Dolly Lenz, vice chairman at Prudential Douglas Elliman; and Jonathan Miller, president/CEO of Miller Samuel. “For these individuals to take time out of their insanely busy schedules to lecture, gratis, at the Academy is an honor and a tribute to the institution,” says Muller. “We are the only continuing education program where agents can learn from this professional level and immediately benefit from this sharing of knowledge.”

“It’s always a pleasure to present at the Academy,” says Pamela Liebman, president/ CEO, The Corcoran Group. “The students are enthusiastic and attentive. Esther always creates the most interesting sessions.”

For Muller, education and real estate are more than a means to an end: they are her twin passions. Muller and her family immigrated to the United States from Israel in the 1950’s with \$500 in cash, knowing very little English. Her real estate career enabled her to go from a fifth-floor walkup on Utica Avenue in Brooklyn to

a luxury apartment overlooking Manhattan’s Central Park.

“The profession has been very good to me,” says Muller. “Through the Real Estate Academy, I feel that I am giving back and helping others as much as I possibly can. I take great personal pride in that.”

“I’ve known Esther for years, and her dedication to the real estate industry has remained steadfast,” says Dorothy Somekh, senior vice president at Halstead Property. “I’ve taught at the Academy and have taken classes as a student. I’ve enjoyed both experiences.”

Muller always looks for ways to improve upon the Academy. She has permanently moved the program’s seminars into The New York Athletic Club and launched an advertising and marketing campaign, aided by a newly hired creative director. She redesigned the Academy’s website, updating its look and providing one-click access to multiple information pages.

The future looks bright for Muller. “I am looking forward to the next 12 years, growing the Academy and continuing to lead the education community in a thoughtful, stimulating manner.” ■

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