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SHAHEEN RUTH, MARTIN & FONVILLE
REAL ESTATE

Q & A

What initially drew you to real estate?

I was drawn to real estate from an early age through family. My father is a retired developer who spent most of his career building neighborhoods throughout Richmond's suburbs. I can vividly remember getting up on Saturdays as a kid and riding around with my dad, checking on projects and walking through homes under construction. I was always welcome at his office and would occasionally attend meetings and networking events with him as I grew up. Looking back, I believe those experiences really helped connect me with the industry. Now here I am getting ready to kick off my 20th year in the business and real estate is still just as exciting for me today as it was in the beginning.

Why is relationship building so key to your success?

Relationships are without question the most important aspect in creating a successful and lasting real estate career. There is a great saying – "people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." This is so true, especially in residential real estate. Clients must have confidence that when they need me, I will be there, and in many cases, will have already anticipated their need. After years in business, I have the good fortune of working almost entirely with repeat and referral customers. That trust from new referrals only comes after delivering consistently year in and year out for my past clients. Many of my clients have become friends and their continued support is the driving force of my business.

How do you give back to the community?

I began supporting FeedMore around 2005. Shortly thereafter, the Meals on Wheels organization asked me to volunteer as a fill-in driver, delivering meals to the homebound. Little did I know that would be the start of me delivering meals every month for the past 15 years. There are so many worthy charitable organizations out there, but FeedMore has always held a special place for me. I think it is because nourishment, like shelter, is such a basic human need. Helping to solve the most root issues first always made most sense to me when deciding how to allocate resources. Meals on Wheels and FeedMore do important work and I look forward to continuing my support of fighting hunger for years to come.