

FRUSTRATION SPURS ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Knowing there had to be a better way inspired Jessica Morel to launch her own real estate business.

BY KATHLEEN GANSTER



Jessica Morel was

lucky to be able to buy a house when she was only 22 by using her VA home loan, but admittedly, she knew nothing about real estate.

“I didn’t really even know what a real estate agent was until I bought my first home,” she said.

Having a career in real estate, let alone owning a real estate company, wasn’t even in her mind. It wasn’t until a frustrating experience with a real estate agent that Morel started thinking about a career change.

After serving in the Army Reserve for eight years, including deployments to Bosnia, Korea and Iraq, Morel finished her college degree.

“I fulfilled my lifelong passion of becoming an elementary school teacher and started a family with my husband, Benny, whom I met in Iraq,” she said. But after only one year of teaching, Morel and her husband decided she would become a stay-at-home mom with her two young daughters, Marisela and Sofia.

PAINFUL PROCESS

It was when they decided to buy a larger home for their growing family that Morel had the unfortunate experience.

“Without really understanding how the real estate market worked, we called the agent

who was listed on the sign in front of the house that we liked. That agent ended up representing the seller first, and barely represented us,” she said.

The Morels sold their house, but were left feeling frustrated and upset. Then Benny suggested that Morel go to real estate school. But even then, it was for the knowledge, not necessarily a new career.

“We wanted to be better educated the next time we were ready to make a real estate transaction,” Morel said.

After completing her real estate license in 2006, Morel went back to teaching and soon found she was helping her fellow teachers look for houses.

“Eventually, I was spending more time in real estate than teaching and once again a decision had to be made - I decided ▶



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THE PERSON

JESSICA MOREL

MILITARY SERVICE: U.S. ARMY RESERVE, 1997-2004, SERGEANT (E-5)

THE COMPANY

TRI FREEDOM REAL ESTATE PARTNERS®

YEAR FOUNDED: 2012

HEADQUARTERS: TEMPE, ARIZONA

WEBSITE: WWW.TRIFREEDOM.COM

▶ to leave teaching for one year to try out real estate,” she said.

A NEW CAREER

As long as she could match her teaching salary of \$30,000 that first year, Morel was going to make the jump.

“In my first year, I not only met that goal, but tripled my teaching salary,” she said.

As the Morel family grew to include Olivia and Rio, Morel worked in real estate part-time. In 2010, she joined a large real estate company with a very high producing team, a team that served as mentors to her. But it still wasn’t enough.

“My heart was really tugging me to do something bigger and more meaningful in the world and I just wasn’t sure if real estate was the place for me anymore,” she said. Her family was also struggling financially and they found

themselves only days away from foreclosure on their own home. Leaving real estate wasn’t an option for Morel.

But it was also a turning point. After a long year of self-reflection and working with a personal coach, Steph Martini, Morel decided instead of just “doing” real estate, she would change her attitude and style of business.

“I realized that I was actually in an incredible position to change people’s lives and do something much greater than myself. I developed a plan where I could impact the world one family and one home at a time,” she said.

TAKING THE LEAP

In 2012, Morel, then 37, started her own team. She enlisted her two sisters, Angel, still active in the Army and having just returned from deployment in Iraq, and Liz, a Marine and also an Iraq veteran. The three created Tri Freedom Real Estate®.

“The name Tri representing three sisters and Freedom representing our commitment to our country was created by Angel. Our logo has three red stars that symbolize our belief of God, Family and Business,” she said.

According to Morel, Tri Freedom Real Estate strives to be the real estate team of

choice throughout the United States while creating a peace of mind transaction for their “Star Clients.”

“We are committed to being a part of something greater than self,” she said.

In the early days of her company, Morel would put her four children – all under the age of 8 – to bed then research online information on how to file the paperwork and other business particulars. During the research she discovered Veteran Women Igniting the Spirit of Entrepreneurship (V-WISE). She immediately signed up for their next conference.

“They offered all the tools I needed to continue creating my company. The support they offered was so incredible and this past year, I attended the first Annual Alumni Conference,” Morel said.

GIVING BACK

Morel also serves her fellow veterans by serving as the Arizona state director and a national board member for the non-profit Veterans Association of Real Estate Professionals (VAREP), a national organization that focuses on education and advocacy for the military and veteran community regarding housing and financial literacy. She launched the Phoenix and Tucson chapter and is currently working on launching a Yuma chapter.

“Being part of VAREP has been an incredible experience and I love being a part of something that is helping so many people around the country,” she said. 🌟