

women in real estate '05



A FORMALLY TRAINED OPERA SINGER, SHE PERFORMED FOR REBNY IN MEMORY OF THOSE LOST IN 9/11

A rare jewel in the commercial real estate industry: Michelle Marie Zere of Zere Real Estate Services

LONG ISLAND, NY Michelle Marie Zere, vice president of business development for Zere Real Estate Services Inc., a full service commercial real estate firm celebrating their 25th business anniversary.

Michelle's mother, Marie Zere is the founder and president of Zere Real Estate, the first women owned commercial real estate in the state. These footsteps are a tall order to fill if you are the daughter of a trail blazer in the commercial real estate industry. To walk in Marie's shoes Michelle explains it's as if growing up on Donald Trump's Apprentice program every day, all the time my entire childhood.

She started as the listings girl at age eleven in her mother's first office in Great Neck, Nassau County. The office was opened on a boardroom dare, Marie rolled the dice and started to take away substantial business from competitors with her Japanese and Technology based customer base. Her trademark was her hats and leaving long stem red roses. Not soon after Marie ventured to eastern Long Island and predicted the biggest growth in Suffolk County along the Veterans Hwy./MacArthur Airport Business Corridor and the Brookhaven Yaphank Industrial Park.

In business people often talked about mentors, her mother Marie Zere has been the driving force of her strength and abilities. Marie is a great negotiator. Her energy level is amazing and she has a very charismatic personality. They have traveled the world together and Michelle says that whenever Marie walks into a room people tend to gravitate towards her presence regardless of whether they even speak the same language. Her smile and approachable graceful beauty all get compounded by her kindness.

Michelle decided to get a diversified background before coming back to real estate. After a twelve-year absence she made the decision to return home to the family business after the September 11, 2001 World Trade Center attack. She was out of the country at the time singing for a wedding at the Cathedral of Paris. She is a formally trained opera singer (specializing in French, Russian and Italian). In 2001 she performed for the Real Estate Board of New York for a crowd of over 3,000 in memoriam of those lost in 9/11. In 2004 she was invited to Monte Carlo to perform for Prince Albert of Monaco.

Her associates that worked closely with her had these comments to share.

"Michelle is a dynamic, creative woman who puts her all into everything she does, and the results prove

it. Her spirit lifts the workplace, while her professionalism demands the best from those around her. She's a real joy to work with, both because she's devoted to her work but also to really enjoying life itself. We traveled to Cannes, France for the International MIPIM retail conference where she negotiated and socialized with many of the top developers in the global arena. She understands the real estate world from every angle," said Peter Slatin, Forbes Magazine, *The Slatin Report*.

"I worked with Michelle for many years in New York City, what a great lady she is. She loves New York and breathes excitement into everything she touches. Together we launched a commercial real estate magazine called *Grid* that was



Michelle Marie Zere

tional arena is impressive and truly mark her as a "one of a kind!"

Michelle resides in Smithtown. She is a member of the Commer-

out of the Soviet Union before Glasnost and the Berlin Wall fell by writing public officials pleading her case and not taking "no" for an answer. The Associated Press Wire picked up the story along with CNN News worldwide.

After California she got lured back to New York to run political campaigns on Long Island with the promise of a lucrative job position. She masterminded a campaign race to beat a local incumbent with pancake breakfasts for seniors and singing God Bless America. Her candidate won. She was then offered a secretarial position. She told the politician to politely take a walk and went directly into her family's real estate business. The first year she closed over twenty-four deals and completed a 10,000 s/f office

Post were we worked together for over four years. As a salesperson myself, I can tell you her va-va voom, go get'em attitude is the best bar none. Always energized and positive, she not only gets the job done, but also makes it look easy and fun at the same time. Success in sales is not effortless, but when you enjoy your profession it shows. Its easy for Michelle to be the best sales woman I have ever met. When you have years of experience and knowledge of the real estate market the job gets done with grace and ease," said Monica German - Prestia, *Bloomberg News*.

The magazine transition was a natural chain of events after the intense deadlines of the newspaper industry. *Real Estate Forum/Real Estate New York* would be her new venues. "She has an extraordinary talent for new business development. We worked together on *Real Estate Forum* and *Real Estate New York* magazines where she used her inside contacts in real estate to grow the business tremendously. Having real estate in her blood and publishing experience under her belt, her positive and energetic drive only made the formula a successful equation for business growth. Years later we joined forces again at Cahner's Publishing with *Grid* magazine where we traveled, networked extensively at industry conferences and private receptions for the biggest real estate decision makers in the nation," said Susan Kane, *Select Leaders.com*.

Since coming on board with Zere Real Estate Services Michelle has closed many top bracket transactions with national firms, sale/leasebacks, 1031 tax free exchanges, sales/leasing of office, medical, industrial, retail sites, east end land for luxury residential, wineries, marinas in The Hamptons, both on the North and South Forks of Long Island.

She enjoys working with her mother, Marie Zere, brothers, both Michael and David Zere and a talented commercial real estate sales team. The office looks like a corporate headquarters but, the atmosphere in the office at times is as if you are at their family dining room table on a Sunday afternoon for a traditional Sicilian dinner. The ambience is warm, friendly with great conversation and you can always have a good laugh and get something delicious to eat or drink in the cucina.

Zere Real Estate Services likes to customize their deals and make all of their clients feel special, trust in their expertise and ultimately guide them to the best financial outcome.



Shown (from left) are: Michelle Marie Zere and Marie Zere attending the Real Estate Board of New York's

unlike any publication that had previously served the real estate market. With her dynamic abilities and energy this publication won six publishing awards within two years and grew internationally to great reviews. Michelle is one of life's winners, and a true friend. A rare jewel in this cut-throat world," said Lord Phillip Wren, publisher, *Executive Decision Magazine*.

Terry Townsend, former publisher of the *Long Island Business News* said, "I have known Michelle for over twenty years, I have watched her mature into a no nonsense business executive nurtured from an early age in one of Long Islands most successful commercial family owned real estate firms, Zere Real Estate Services. Experienced in virtually every phase of real estate, her background includes high-level positions with prestigious real estate publications, her customer clientele in the interna-

cial Industrial Broker Society (CIBS), the New York State Commercial Realtors Association, Femme Chef D'Enterprises Mondiales (FCEM) where she just returned from South America, Buenos Aires, Argentina. Last May she attended the North African Trade Conference in Fez, Morocco. This November she leaves for Asia, Tokyo, Japan, Bangkok, Thailand and in Spring 2006 Seoul, Korea.

She is a graduate of the University of California, UCSB where she spearheaded the George Bush Senior campaign for a campus of 50,000 plus students. Became friendly with a little known radio talk show host by the name of Sean Hannity (WABC Talk Radio Host/Hannity & Combs Fox Network) and he asked her to be his first live radio show. He took out an ad in the *Santa Barbara Newspress*, "Meet a real live Soviet."

Michelle got her first husband

deal with Metropolitan Life insurance for a ten year lease term. She received an award in Suffolk County for "Outstanding Young Careerist" for bringing companies to Long Island.

Trying to carve her own niche she left real estate to run the Long Island Builders Institute's membership, PAC funds in Albany and NAHB in Washington, D.C. She developed a visually attractive interesting fun newsletter that caught the eyes of all the big NYC newspapers.

After several offers she thought there would be the most opportunity with the *New York Post*, where she was greeted with the baptism of fire in the publishing industry as the Real Estate Advertising Manager. She closed over two hundred and eight real estate sections for Rupert Murdoch's *Newscorp*.

"I had the pleasure of getting to know Michelle at the *New York*