

M E E T

anna west



me to also study Interior Design and to eventually launch a design firm. My husband is a General Contractor (West Homes), so we spent many years helping clients in California (and then Oregon) renovate their homes. In 2015, we officially moved back to Oregon to be closer to family and to raise our kids in what we felt would be a better environment for them.

Leaving Southern California meant my career was now solely focused on Interior Design. My favorite part of the renovation process has always been seeing the (often hidden) potential in a home, and then the gratification that comes when the work is done, and the vision comes to life. In addition to client renovation projects, we also did our own home remodels and a couple of “project homes”, which we loved.

But I often felt like I was missing out on one of the most important parts of the process, and that is FINDING and overseeing the sale of these homes. There’s a lot of creativity involved in searching for the right house for someone and/or helping people prepare to put their home on the market. So, I was very motivated to get my real estate license, in order to be involved in the process from beginning to end. I officially became a REALTOR® in 2018, and it’s even better than I thought it would be.

Did you have a mentor or someone that helped lead the way?

As you can imagine, being a broker at Harnish Properties has meant I have had two great Real Estate mentors along the way. Justin is so incredible at what he does and is always available to offer advice and insight, whether I’m listing a property or negotiating a sale. His mom, Kristi, was a real trailblazer in the industry. She has given me invaluable advice on balancing work and motherhood, the importance of great professional relationships, and always conducting oneself with the utmost integrity. I am grateful for what I’ve learned from each of them.

Additionally, I’ve found that I learn from every broker I interact with as I make my way in this business. I’m always watching and listening, and really value people’s vast experience. I try to emulate the people and practices that have made a positive impression on me.

What is your favorite part of being a REALTOR®?

One of my favorite things about being a REALTOR® is all the time I get to spend with my clients. I’ve been blessed to work with amazing people, and always feel like I’m gaining good friends in the process. I learn so much about how people live, what is important to them, and what “home” means to them when I am helping them sell or find their next home. It’s a different relationship than I enjoy with my Design clients, and it’s equally as awesome.

I also enjoy how collaborative this business is amongst the REALTORS®. When a house goes under contract, you are instantly thrown into a working relationship with the other agent and are working together to make the process run as smoothly and efficiently as possible for your clients. It’s fun to get to know people over the phone and email, and even more fun when you finally meet in person.

This is random, but one of my very favorite things about real estate is the fact that there’s (almost always) a beginning and an end to the process, which I find very satisfying. There’s a great sense of accomplishment when a transaction closes, and a specific date to celebrate (with champagne and gifts, of course). It’s different than Interior Design, which rarely feels completely “finished”. There’s always more art to source or accessories to style. It’s just different.

What is your biggest challenge as a REALTOR®?

Buying and selling a home is usually the biggest purchase of a person’s life, and with that comes a lot of responsibility, which I don’t take lightly. The stakes are high on these transactions. It’s always an exciting time for people, no matter the reason for their move, and each person’s way of handling it is unique. It’s something that I try to be in tune with so that I can help them manage any stress or anxiety they are feeling in the best way I know. I’d say it’s a good challenge.



rising star

HARNISH PROPERTIES

When did you start your career in real estate? /

What did you do before you became a REALTOR®?

Well, my father was a REALTOR® when I was growing up in Lake Oswego, so I used to pretend I worked with him. I would thumb through his Multiple Listings Book, highlighting addresses that sounded interesting, and then pretend to call clients and tell them about the homes. Remember those massive MLS books? Things definitely moved a lot slower then. I can’t even imagine how different that was.

My working life has been a long and winding road. After graduating from the University of Washington, I moved to Los Angeles and became an actress. Most of my success was in television commercials, and I was fortunate to shoot over 150 of them over the years. I also hosted a home makeover show on TLC, called *While You Were Out*. Being in entertainment was super fun, and a fantastic career to have in my 20’s and when my kids were young. But that creative bug and love of home design motivated

•••

What creative business practices have you implemented during the pandemic? (And do you feel you'll stick with some of them, moving forward?)

Honestly, once we got through those first few harrowing months of lockdown, things weren't THAT different, in terms of client interactions. We all wore masks and booties, kept our distance, and used a lot of hand sanitizer, but I found that people still wanted to see the homes in person. There were far fewer people at open houses and broker tours, but the showing appointments remained pretty consistent throughout the year. I appreciate how respectful the community has been to give each other space and time at showings. It feels like everyone is working together to give our clients the best (and safest) experience possible.

Are there any charities or organizations you support?

As a lover of all things "home", I am a supporter of Habitat for Humanity in Portland. I know how important it is for families, and especially kids, to have a stable home environment. So, donating time and money to that organization means a lot to me. I have volunteered in the Women Build program and witnessed firsthand how impactful simple, decent, and affordable housing can be for the homeowners and their families. They work very hard to earn the opportunity to buy a Habitat Home, and the level of appreciation they have is a reflection of that. It's a great organization that I highly recommend.



Tell us about your family. Any pets?

My husband, Joel, and I have been married for 19 years. We have two kids - our son, Owen, who is 16, and our daughter, Winslow, who is 13. I am also the youngest of eight siblings, most of whom live in the Portland area, so our extended family is very large and super fun. We have missed family gatherings so much this year and are just starting to get everybody together again.

This winter, we adopted an adorable little dog (a Bichon-Poodle mix), named Ozzy. He's been the perfect addition to the family and cracks us up daily.

What are your hobbies and interests outside of the business?

Fortunately for me, looking at houses and designing interiors are two of my favorite activities. So, while I work a lot, it could ALMOST be defined as a hobby. Those things also trickle into activities like thrift shopping for unique vintage pieces and browsing tile showrooms and furniture stores.

When I'm not working, I love spending time with my friends and family, watching my kids play sports, and taking walks in the neighborhood. When the weather is nice, we spend a ton of time on the lake paddle boarding, tubing, wake surfing, or just floating and having a glass of wine. I also love traveling, checking out new restaurants, and seeing live music. I've missed all of those things so much over the last year, and it's been nice to finally get some fun things back on the calendar!

What inspiring acts of kindness have you witnessed (or engaged in) during the pandemic that inspired you?

There have been many, and I am always inspired by the good that comes from people during a time of crisis. The doctors and nurses that worked throughout the worst of the pandemic are absolute heroes. I was in awe of them - out on the front lines, putting themselves at risk of catching the virus before we had any protections in place - I just can't even imagine how intense that was (and still is, in some places).

“AS A LOVER OF ALL THING'S "HOME", I AM A SUPPORTER OF HABITAT FOR HUMANITY IN PORTLAND.



Once the vaccine became available, I was also struck by the number of volunteers working at the Oregon Convention Center Vaccination Site, where I received my vaccine. It was so incredibly organized and well-staffed. They did an excellent job of getting thousands and thousands of people through the process very quickly, ultimately helping us lower the infection rate around the state. It couldn't have been done without the help of regular people, donating their time, and was a stellar example of a community coming together in a time of need.

Is there anything else you would like to communicate using this Portland Real Producer platform?

Just that I love this business community and am honored to be a part of it. There are so many cool, energetic people within it, and I look forward to meeting and working with as many of them as I can.



CONNECT WITH ANNA WEST

PHONE: 323-459-5907
EMAIL: anna@harnishproperties.com
WEB: harnishproperties.com
WEB: annawestinteriors.com
FACEBOOK: Anna West Interiors + Real Estate
INSTAGRAM: @annawestinteriors

