



Vince Malta

By Mandy Ellis

VINCE MALTA BROUGHT with him over 40 years' experience when he took the reins as 2020 President of the National Association of REALTORS®. A third-generation California REALTOR®, Malta is not only an award-winning broker who has spent decades volunteering for state, local and national organizations, he's also a leading baseball bat authenticator.

BIO: Vince Malta is a REALTOR® and the Vice President of Malta & Co., Inc. in San Francisco. He is the 2020 President of the National Association of REALTORS® and a Director for Life of the CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®.

We spoke with Malta about NAR's new Fair Housing Action Plan, the impacts of COVID-19 on REALTORS® moving forward, and how growing up in a REALTOR® family influenced his career.

What are your top priorities as NAR president for 2020?

Combating the legacy of racism in housing and working towards housing equality and affordability is one of the central strategic priorities of my presidency. The NAR Leadership Team passed a Fair Housing Action Plan earlier this year, called ACT for short — that stands for Accountability, Culture Change and Training. Among other proactive and collaborative steps, this plan calls on

us to create minimum, core fair housing training requirements for all states, and to develop a model state licensing law, to make sure real estate agents who violate fair housing laws are held accountable.

We at NAR share the hurt, frustration and outrage felt by millions of Americans at the death of George Floyd. His shocking, senseless death is tragic. Our deepest sympathies are with the Floyd family and many other families across our country who understand and feel this pain and grief. We believe that as leaders in our communities, America's 1.4 million REALTORS® are active participants in promoting equality, inclusion and acceptance. We appreciate all that our

VITALS

BROKERAGE: Malta & Co., Inc.
BROKERAGE FOUNDED: 1969
OFFICE LOCATION: San Francisco
NUMBER OF OFFICES: 1
NUMBER OF AGENTS: 4
YEARS IN THE BUSINESS: 43
SPECIALTY: Residential and Commercial
TO SUCCEED, REALTORS® NEED TO: Invest in yourself, invest in knowledge; those are the most important.

members do to listen, learn and work with others to be a part of the solution in the fight against discrimination and injustice. And we fight for policies that address racial injustice and build safe, inclusive spaces for all — particularly African Americans, who have faced centuries of institutionalized racism and discrimination in housing as well as nearly every other aspect of life.

What would you say to California REALTORS® who are worried that the lingering effects of the coronavirus pandemic will massively disrupt their businesses?
 As devastating as the COVID-19 pandemic has been for all of us, I am

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THE LEAD

cautiously optimistic that our economy will soon rebound — and that REALTORS® will lead the way for recovery. NAR recently partnered with the research firm Engagious on a series of surveys to explore how homebuyers and sellers want to safely handle home sale transactions during and after the pandemic. We found that for prospective buyers, the desire to own a home remains strong, and the guidance, expertise and professionalism REALTORS® provide is more important now than ever.

The news in the California market is also optimistic. C.A.R. has found there are continued signs of buyer demand coming back. Fewer buyers and sellers are getting cold feet, and mortgage interest rates are at an all-time low. And NAR's chief economist, Lawrence Yun, has said sales are expected to rise as the lockdown is lifted, and the recovery

could be very strong. With mid- and low-price properties in high demand, it's a strategic time for sellers to list, and historically low interest rates will continue to attract buyers.

Of course, we know these are only the first steps on what may be a long journey to recovery. And as long as there are REALTORS® who need help, NAR will work relentlessly to provide our members with the tools and resources they need to grow their businesses. But these are all reasons to be hopeful that better times are around the corner.

Who or what has helped you adjust to your role as president?

Our industry is going through a time where we can't have one-year wonders taking us one direction, then someone else taking us in another the following year — we need to work strategically. When Elizabeth Mendenhall was president, she, John Smaby and I looked at things not in one-year segments, but in terms of what are we going to be doing over these next

several years? We worked in unison.

I'm similarly incredibly blessed to now work with a collaborative leadership team that shares the same values of putting members first and collaborating with other organizations to get things done. We also have an incredible CEO in Bob Goldberg; his experience with associations has been very helpful.

You're a third-generation REALTOR®. What did you learn from your family that most impacted your career?

The most important advice I received was to concentrate on the relationship, not on the deal. Because when you've been in real estate as long as I have, I'm now selling to third-generation clients, and that's because I wasn't focusing on just making that deal. I nurtured that relationship. That lesson has helped me the most — while others are prospecting for clients, I'm finding that my best source of clients is the ones I already have.

When you're not handling presidential duties and running a real estate company, what do you do to enjoy some time off? Time with family is the thing I appreciate most. I've got three sons and I enjoy seeing what they're doing in their world; I'm very proud of what they're accomplishing.

My business partner and I are also the leading baseball bat authenticators in the country. About 18 years ago, someone brought in a Babe Ruth bat to a baseball store. The shopkeeper offered him \$25,000, and he took it. We took a look at the bat and were able to discover something special about it.

The very first game ever played in Yankee Stadium, Babe Ruth hit the first home run in that stadium with that bat. With our letter of authentication, the bat sold in auction for \$1.3 million. We concentrated on the ethical obligation we had when we knew there was something special there. I always tell agents, because of this, people recognized the fact that we were honest and ethical. I tell real estate agents that ethics will always win the day.

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