

TOP AGENT

MAGAZINE

A portrait of Valerie Fitzgerald, a woman with long, wavy blonde hair and blue eyes. She is wearing a white, ruffled blouse with a large floral pattern. She is standing in a doorway, with a dark wooden frame on the left and a white wall on the right. The lighting is soft, highlighting her features and the texture of her blouse.

VALERIE FITZGERALD

THE BILLION DOLLAR WOMAN | VALERIE FITZGERALD

Business mogul, mom and mentor, a veritable force of energy, performance and passion—Valerie Fitzgerald has left her imprint on the hearts and lives of those who have come to know her. Since first acquiring her license in 1988, Valerie has risen to the highest echelon of agents, serving the highest echelon of clientele and building a billion dollar real estate empire. Her journey to the pinnacle of her profession is awe inspiring and is a testament to the strength of the human spirit.

As one of the foremost experts in the greater Los Angeles real estate market, Valerie's reputation precedes her. She consistently ranks among Coldwell Banker's Top 10 agents nationwide and has earned countless sales and marketing awards. The Wall Street Journal also named Valerie among the Top 200 real estate agents nationwide.

On a local level, her performance has earned the attention of the Los Angeles Business Journal for the highest sales volume in L.A. County for residential real estate and was also recently nominated for the publication's 13th annual "Women Making a Difference." In 2008, Valerie was awarded the publication's Excellence in Marketing award.

With appearances on shows such as "Entertainment Tonight" and MTV's "Cribs," she has also become more than a local expert, she has become a celebrity. Her celebrity also comes from giving generously of her time to charitable pursuits. She and daughter Vanessa co-founded "Children Uniting Nations," a mentoring program for foster care children. Over the past several years since its founding, the organization has drawn several celebrities such as Jane Seymour and Pierce Brosnan and the annual Academy Awards Dinner Celebration has garnered over \$400K in support of the charity.

In spite of her superstar status, Valerie remains surprisingly approachable and warm. Many who come in contact with her find that the woman behind the legendary name is more than the sum of her stellar achievements, she is also an inspiration. Her desire to motivate others and share of herself has prompted her to pen her first book to be published by Simon and Schuster entitled *Heart & Sold: How to Build a Recession Proof Business*. Valerie has embarked on her next great adventure: the road to being a best selling author, a journey that has taken upwards of three years to complete.



"My goal with the book is to share my personal stories with others, specifically other women. I want to empower them to strive for the life they want," shares Valerie. "Women want to learn how to pull together a multitasking life, how to have a family and be a career woman at the same time. Regardless of personal circumstances, it is possible to succeed."

On a more personal level, the book also serves as her memoir, a chronicle of her personal achievements in the face of adversity. She still recalls those days vividly. As a single mother with no income and very little savings, she had hit a

personal low in her life. Real estate was her hope for a better life for herself and her daughter. It was her dedication that helped her focus and pull herself up from the depths of the dark points in her life to the heights of personal and professional success.

She recounts the story of one of her first home showings, one of the many heart warming anecdotes in *Heart & Sold*. “I showed up in my beat up VW bug. I was climbing up the stairs to meet the client carrying my briefcase, a diaper bag and my wonderful baby girl. I had broken one of my heels and I made it the rest of the way up the stairs barefoot,” she says with a good natured chuckle. “The client looked at me and said, ‘I guess you got the job!’”

In her local office, Valerie exemplifies what it means to be a dedicated agent. Betty Graham, President and CEO of Coldwell Banker, has had the privilege of seeing Valerie’s performance first hand. “Valerie’s focus is intense, she is an original thinker, and she has a fervent work ethic. She perpetually looks for ways to serve consumers in the way they want to be served. Her online presence is highly designed to attract and retain strong client relationships. Valerie’s communication skills guarantee repeat business. She introduces her team to her clients with absolute clarity as to the function each will provide in a transaction; hence, the client’s expectations are always met. Lastly, when Valerie is their representative, her clients know they will be told the truth. She is a powerful force in our business, with a huge heart filled with tender passion for her daughter’s well-being.”

Recently, her talent for fostering open channels of communication prompted Coldwell Banker to invite her to speak in front of a packed room at their International Business Conference about “Communicating in Today’s Market.”

Part of Valerie’s expertise is her unrivaled knowledge of the market. She takes the time to continuously hone her craft by meeting with Masterminds Groups across the country to stay abreast of the latest trends. She also meets with a personal business coach. She says, “Buyers look for value and lifestyle and I have an advantage because I have spent my career constantly



learning and studying the market. I understand all markets in the greater L.A. area. Once, I sold a home for a buyer because he was impressed that I could tell him all the other sales that occurred in the area and I knew all the latest numbers off the top of my head.”

She is also a marketing genius who spends on average upwards of \$450K in marketing homes each year. A big believer in high tech marketing, much of her marketing budget is spent cultivating her already massive internet presence. Each month, the Valerie Fitzgerald Group’s website receives 30,000–40,000 verifiable hits. The Group also markets on several international websites and nearly one hundred business and social networking sites. To round out her portfolio, Valerie advertises in the L.A. Times and publishes newsletters that her clients receive. All results from marketing are traceable and made available to each client.



together including ski trips in Aspen and excursions to Europe. Entertaining clients and friends in their Brentwood home is also one of their favorite activities.

The future for the Valerie Fitzgerald Group holds many new and exciting developments including expansion in the condo development and marketing areas of real estate. Currently the group exclusively markets several condo projects in the greater Los Angeles area and continues to add new projects. "I have never been afraid to try something new," says Valerie. "I am always re-inventing myself, changing and growing and it is part of what I love about what I do."

Despite Valerie's reputation as a luxury home specialist, she is quick to point out that she is in the business of buying and selling homes. "I choose not to niche in a particular price point or area, I run a business and my clients come from all walks of life and I provide the same high quality service to all clients."

As a top agent, inevitably, Valerie is often asked for "the top three things to do to be successful." She comments on her philosophy, "There is no exact formula for success and it doesn't come overnight. I have spent five years just trying to get the right rhythm in my team! So many people are in a hurry to be successful and you cannot rush success. I prefer to let things happen organically and naturally. It is all in your perspective, never start out negative."

Part of Valerie's staying power in the industry has also been as a result of maintaining balance in her life. She takes care of herself and takes the time to enjoy her success. As a result of employing the latest technology, she is able to conduct business from anywhere in the world. "I went on a vacation to Cabo with some friends, and through my BlackBerry I was able to lie on the beach and still conduct business." Valerie's personal inspiration has always been her daughter, Vanessa—now in her twenties. Vanessa's mother still remembers with much fondness carrying her daughter around to showings and carrying her baby bottles in her pocket. They often take trips



If anything can be learned from Valerie, it is the value of determination. She has been quoted with these simple words of wisdom, "If you shoot for the moon and miss, you're still among the stars." This stellar agent's place will always be amongst the brightest in her profession.

VALERIE FITZGERALD

THE VALERIE FITZGERALD GROUP

310-285-7515

info@valeriefitzgerald.com

www.TheValerieFitzgeraldGroup.com