

## **YPN Advance Conference, Chicago, August 2023**

As one of the least tenured agents at this conference, I fully expected to be in over my head to a degree and to potentially get lost in the shuffle that so often takes place during these bustling, high energy two-day conferences. By the time you get comfortable, it seems as though they are steering you right back out the door, and you feel as though the overload of information will take months to sort out and seep in. I knew that I would be meeting agents from all over the country, and that many of them would have a lot of experience and knowledge for me to take advantage of, if I played my cards right.

In the week leading up to the conference, I was nervous about being in a room like this and feeling out of place. I am not often the first to speak up in a crowded place, and I didn't know if I would have much insight to offer. Day 1 of the conference, in one of the initial breakout sessions of the day, we were asked what our respective YPN groups did in regard to events, how our turnout was, what kind of association support we had, and what improvements could be made or what setbacks had taken place. I found myself feeling mighty proud of our committee and association based on our numbers for these events, our dedication to planning and pulling off such events, our willingness and ability to support our community, and our commitment to playing as a team and doing our part as best we can. From what I heard at our table, day after day and session after session (talking to Realtors and staff from associations of all sizes), it felt as though our committee not only does a great job on our own with the resources and connections at our disposal, but we receive a considerable amount of support from our staff and board, allowing us to form professional and personal relationships with our team on every level.

One of the biggest takeaways for me was the stress of the importance of the YPN brand and its influence on future generations who will be making their marks on the business world in the coming years. While it is important, of course, to cultivate your own business and to work on bettering yourself, holding the door open behind you cannot be minimized. Part of the vision of NAR for YPN, brought to our attention by our 2023 NAR president-elect, Tracy Kasper, is that of providing financial literacy and homeownership visibility - as well as potential future career opportunities in real estate - to students at public high schools who would not otherwise have access to such information and knowledge. A Realtor in every high school in America by 2024 is their ultimate goal, and they asked us to help them carry the torch back to our associations as we made our way back home. This is something that I would be interested in pursuing with the right support in the future, and I wanted to provide a first look into that for our association, giving us as a community the opportunity to thrive in this project. Building effective leaders for our future, and providing education for those who need it, will help preserve our industry and continue to keep it strong. We are not strangers to enemies of our industry and if generations of ignorance could turn into future generations of knowledge, we will continue to build value for our clients and for our community.

In one of our breakout sessions, we talked about the structure and planning opportunities that we all face within our organizations. During this session, we found ourselves

again in good company at CCAR and NTYPN, as we have successfully handled the numbers of our committee members, the turnout of our organized functions, and all the other fires in between. Kyle and I offered our insight into this and compared our experience at home with the experiences of those around us. One of our great strengths is in maintaining an amazing culture within the committee, while balancing personal, business, and the committee work itself during our meetings and in our outside discussions as a group. Most of the suggestions brought to this subject by the leadership and advisory board are things that we as a committee already do with ease. Many other committee leaders and staff liaisons were thrilled at what WE had to say about our association and committee, which filled me with pride at our work and the work of our supporters.

A favorite quote of mine from one of the speakers was: "Make sure you do these 3 things every day - 1. Do something hard that makes your life uncomfortable - only doing easy things will make your life hard. 2. Do something fun that brings joy to your life. You will burn out without it. 3. Do something for someone else. You will find inner peace." There's a lot that goes on in our personal and professional lives that gets in the way of our joy, of positive thinking, and of peace – but this was a refreshing take for me that really made me think about these things with new perspective, and hopefully strive to do this whenever possible.

As we closed out the long days and took advantage of the networking opportunities and entertainment that the beautiful city offered us, I was overwhelmed with gratitude at my place in the this circle - I didn't want to be anywhere else, and was honored to be a part of something that is certainly bigger than myself, but that is also bigger than real estate. Where I thought I may find myself floundering, I actually felt totally at ease - it helped to have Kyle, the Mary to my Little Lamb, along for the ride, both as a YPN veteran and a Chicago savant, so that I got to take advantage of all the wonderful food and sights the city offered while getting to be practically carted around the city. I am so looking forward to my next steps in leadership within the committee and association, and am humbly grateful, again, for the trust and confidence in me that is continually shown.

- Jordan