

THE EVOLUTION OF anita kestel OF MY TRANSACTION CO.

▶▶ partner spotlight Written by Molly Lauryssens
Photos by Maryland Photography Inc

Anita Kestel is a caring entrepreneur. The owner of My TransACTION Co. enjoys contract law and is a systems-oriented person who is also an animal lover, a vegetarian, and environmentalist. Armed with a strength and resiliency gained through hardship, she was determined from a young age to make her own way.

Fiercely independent – that’s how Anita would sum up her youth. Growing up in a large, tight-knit family as the eldest sibling of four brothers in a small town in Cecil County, she was looking to expand her horizons. Her parents had divorced a few years earlier. So when she was 13 years old with a whopping \$4 in her pocket, she and a friend decided to run away to the mountains of West Virginia. Suffice it to say, they didn’t make it very far. She took off to New York City and then Virginia over the next couple of years, moved to Florida and back home, and then decided she had more to accomplish in life, and set out to put it in motion.

She noted, “That was always about me wanting my freedom and independence more than it was ever about my family.” These days, Anita’s mom is in her 80s, and the two are very close. Often when they reminisce about those younger days and “how wild our family really was.” She says they are grateful because they all came out happy, well-adjusted, and loving one another.

Finding Her Energy

About 20 years ago, Anita answered an ad in the local newspaper to become a receptionist for RE/MAX. While she started part-time and did that for about a year, she then worked as an unlicensed assistant. Four years later, she decided to get her license and worked as a buyer’s agent for a large team. Eventually, she went out on her own.

A few years later, she decided to go back to school and finish her business degree, which included contract law and marketing studies. “I’ve always been creative, business-minded and certainly an entrepreneur.” At that point she decided she no longer wanted to work as an agent, so she figured out her niche and started the company. That was 11 years ago. With hard work and good mentors, she and the business are still going strong!

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Anita and daughter, Aryn (also a team member) at Masonville Cove Environmental Center

Anita's unique perspective is a competitive advantage. She is always coming from the agent's point of view and has designed her systems off that knowledge and experience. Her specialty is contract work, scheduling, and compliance, and her focus is helping agents get from contract to closing. She and her team work remotely and cross-brokerage. Anita loves working with her clients and notes that generally, agents who do any volume with no help have "something falling through the cracks." As a systems lover, she also helps her agents get organized. In addition, she writes offers for her clients and does compliance reviews for small brokers.

Anita is married to Tim, and they have two grown kids: a son, Dylan, living in New Jersey, and a daughter, Aryn, who lives in Savannah, Georgia. Aryn has been full-time with My TransACTION Co. since May 2021. She is taking the real estate pre-licensing course and comes to Maryland on a regular basis to work side by side with her mom. While primarily remote, this mother/daughter tandem is loving that they get more time together! They and their compliance specialist, Suz, make up the My TransACTION Co. team.

Finding What Matters

Volunteerism has been a significant driver for Anita, and she's worked on several causes like Habitat for Humanity and Red Cross. Currently, she sits on numerous committees and the board of directors for the Howard County Association of Realtors, but her personal passions center around protecting the environment and animals. One of her most significant endeavors is with Masonville Cove Environmental Center (www.masonvillecove.org), where she is the chair of the Citizens Advisory Committee Board.

This hidden gem, where she had her photo-shoot, is located in South Baltimore in Curtis Bay and seems to get better and better as it grows. It has become the nation's first urban wildlife refuge program, hosting a green environmental center, along with hiking trails, a fishing pier, kayak launch, and a dredge containment site for the Maryland Port Administration. This award-winning collaboration teamed up with other nonprofits like Living Classrooms and The National Aquarium and partner with the Port of Baltimore and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. It is home to a pair of nesting eagles who have hatched their eaglets several times over. Eventually, it will become the southern point of the Gwynn Falls trail system. This has become a destination for school kids, kayakers, birdwatchers, and hikers alike. It is something that Anita is quite proud to be involved with.

Anita is all about positivity and purposefulness. She says she believes everything is about energy and truly has a heart for caring. She can't stress enough, "I really do care, and there has to be action in order to be impactful, and there has to be effective communication along the way."

She proves that time and again through her selfless and tireless actions, and we'll admit that maybe being as independent and driven as she was as a kid has helped propel her to where she is now.

