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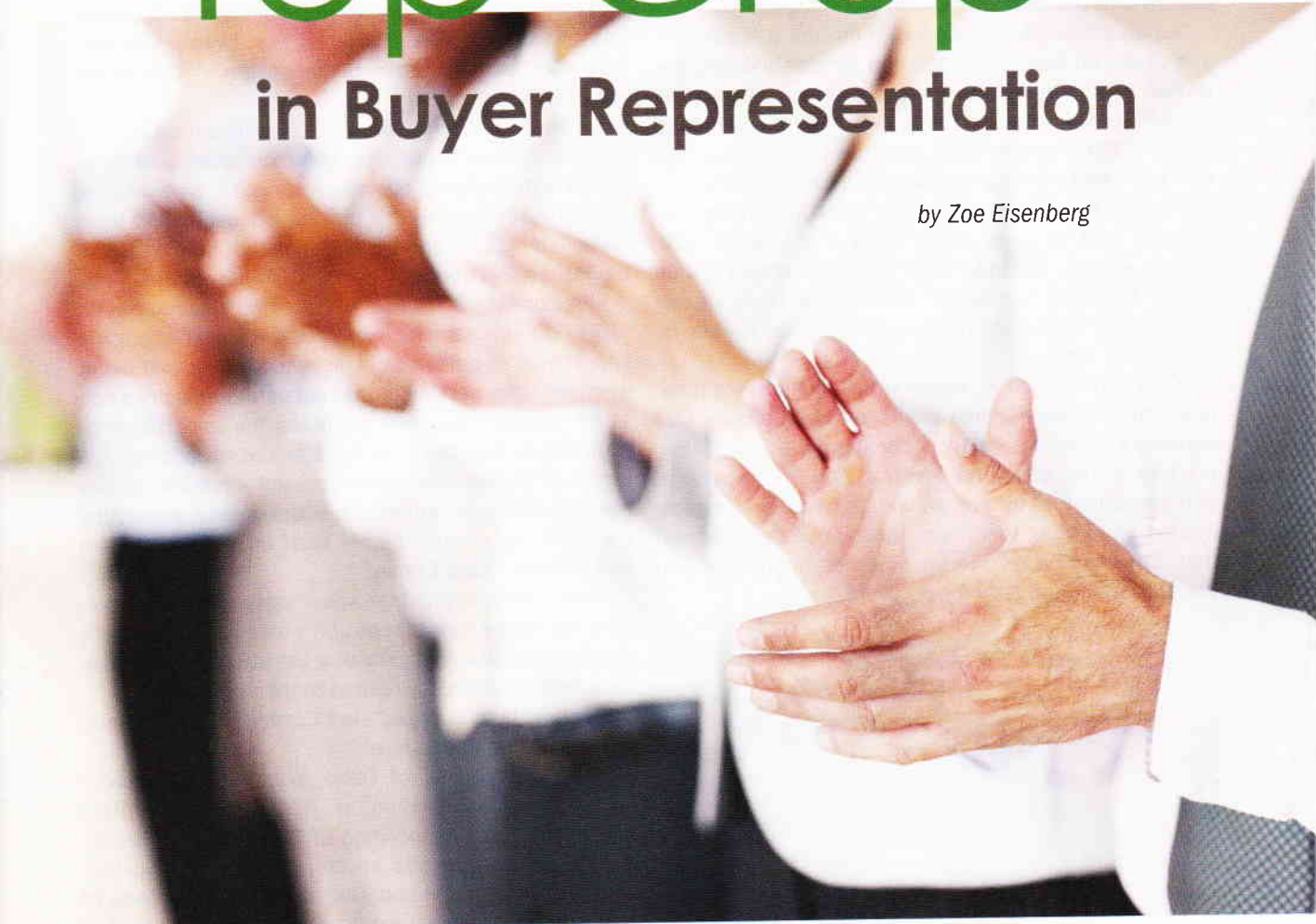
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REBAC Hall of Fame Highlights the

Top Crop

in Buyer Representation

by Zoe Eisenberg



Each November, as agents are in full-swing for the fall buying and selling season, the Real Estate Buyer's Agent Council (REBAC) acknowledges the achievements of its most accomplished members by inducting them into the REBAC Hall of Fame. Initially nominated by their peers and then selected by a panel of industry leaders, REBAC Hall of Famers demonstrate outstanding work ethic, a commitment to their buyers and the proven ability to not only survive, but flourish, in the ever-changing real estate industry.

This month, REBAC welcomes its latest top crop of Accredited Buyer's Representatives (ABR®) to the REBAC Hall of Fame. These real estate professionals are utilizing their ABR® designation to grow their business, set themselves apart from the competition, educate themselves and their clients, and represent buyers with passion, innovation and integrity.

"As an exclusive buyer agent, I am not a 'salesperson'; I am an expert that offers a service-oriented approach representing the buyer's interest," says real estate broker/owner, exclusive buyer agent and recent 2014 REBAC Hall of Fame inductee Lora Cusumano, who has been working in real estate for 11 years.

"I go out of my way to gather as much information as I can to help my buyer client make an educated decision on whether or not to buy a particular property, and devise the best negotiating strategy for them," says Cusumano, whose favorite way to help her clients is to educate them.

2014 REBAC Hall of Fame inductee and long-time real estate veteran Eloise Eriksson Martin shares Cusumano's belief in making education a priority: "Every year, I start off with a personal note to my sphere and past clients providing an update of the real estate market and letting them know how much I appreciate their business," says Martin, who has been active in the real estate industry for 30 years.



However, clients aren't the only important component of the education equation. "I am always educating myself through continuing education, designations and through experiences," says Cusumano, who notes that one of her preferred methods of staying up-to-date revolves around her ABR® designation.

"I love the *Today's Buyer's Rep* publication. It always has awesome tips and articles that I have successfully used in helping my business grow," Cusumano comments.

"I believe in the importance of continual education, in-depth market knowledge, communication and delivery of extraordinary customer service," says Martin, who stresses that ABR®'s ongoing education and information, programs and updates help her stay on top of the issues and trends to successfully serve her buyers.

Rick Conley, a 2014 REBAC Hall of Fame inductee and ABR® course instructor, can speak volumes about the importance of education. A licensed broker and agent who has been working in the real estate industry since 1988, Conley frequently promotes the importance of NAR/REBAC courses to brokers and associations.

"I love the value of buyer representation and convey the benefits to my attendees in the course, promoting the ABR® as a much higher level of professionalism and service," says Conley.

When Conley is on stage speaking to agents and brokers, he makes sure that all of his classroom topics are practical and valuable, providing the attendee with take-away materials directly related to their practice.

"My goal is to engage," says Conley. "I conduct seminars on a one-to-one level."

2014 REBAC Hall of Fame inductee, the Greater Metropolitan Association of REALTORS® (GMAR)—the largest local Association of REALTORS® in Southeast Michigan—houses several continuing education courses, designation courses, and REALTOR® Code of Ethics training for real estate professionals looking to improve their services.

"Since the program's inception in 2010, we've had just under 3,000 REALTORS® complete a REBAC course with us in southeast Michigan," says Wickey Livernois, the association's education director. REBAC inducted GMAR into its 2014 Hall of Fame for its widespread promotion of the ABR® course and buyer representation awareness among its more than 6,000 real estate members.

"GMAR agent training focuses on this elevated service level and designs offerings that prepare today's real estate professional for the emerging buyer client," says Duane March, GMAR's CEO.

"I want to be an invaluable resource to my clients

“An average of 80% of mobile and tablet users are using their devices for local searches.”

-comScore, 2014

and sphere and be a person they can always depend on,” says Martin, who stresses that her ABR® designation helps present her as dependable and knowledgeable. Martin uses the marketing materials provided by ABR® to educate and inform her buyers through their entire real estate transaction.

It's these added touches that really differentiate ABR® designated REALTORS® from their competition.

“Today's consumers are smarter than ever because of the Internet,” explains Cusumano. “Buyers are now researching real estate firms and designations and interviewing agents before hiring the ‘right’ buyer agent,” she continues. “Also, listing agents in my local boards that don't like to work out of their area love to refer buyer clients to me because they know what my designation represents.”

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2014 REBAC Hall of Fame Inductee

The difference between ABR® designated professionals and other agents is something that Conley stresses during his educational seminars; “I strive to help agents understand that if they can educate their buyers of the value of an ABR® designated agent, and the difference from an ordinary representative, they will be rewarded with a lifetime of referral and repeat business.”

From growing their businesses to providing opportunities for continued education, these inductees are proof that having your ABR® designation automatically gives you, the real estate professional, a foothold above the competition. **RE**

The Real Estate Buyer's Agent Council (REBAC) has over 30,000 members, including 25,000 ABR® (Accredited Buyer's Representative) designees. Any REBAC member holding either the Accredited Buyer's Representative (ABR®) or the Accredited Buyer's Representative Managers (ABRMSM) designation is eligible for the REBAC Hall of Fame.

For more information about the REBAC Hall of Fame, please visit www.REBAC.net/HOF.

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