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**Shannon K.
Byrdsong**

Flying Higher

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Shannon K. Byrdsong

By combining her love of broadcasting with her clients, this former beauty queen has put to real estate success.

By Jessica Arledge



John Clanner Photography

Shannon and Byrdsong Team member Carlos Grey meets with Tanya Blanchard with Community Mortgage Services, one of her team's preferred lenders.

her desire to educate herself on the fast-track



Even with the best intentions at heart, many of us are inclined to maintain a certain degree of cynicism when evaluating our peers. If they are pretty, they can't be all that smart. If they are smart and pretty, they must be selfish. And if they are smart, pretty and caring, they must be boring! It's in our nature to look for flaws. So when you meet Shannon K. Byrdson of Metro Brokers GMAC Real Estate in Duluth, GA, you might be tempted to search for something – anything – to criticize.

Not only is this 33 year old dynamo a former beauty queen, named Miss Black University of Oklahoma in 1996, Miss Black Alaska in 1997 and a finalist in the Miss Black USA Pageant later that year, she also has a BA in Journalism and Public Relations from the University of Oklahoma. She's worked on Capitol Hill, hosted her own radio show, and has achieved extraordinary success as a real estate agent in a challenging housing market. And if that weren't enough, she also volunteers regularly with both her church, Free Chapel Worship Center, and the graduate chapter of her sorority, Zeta Phi Beta, and for causes such as Hands on Atlanta, PAWS Atlanta, Habitat for Humanity and voter registration drives. Whew!

The truth is, the more you learn about Shannon Byrdson, the harder it is to find anything negative to say. In fact, you would have to work pretty hard not to be inspired by her success!

Byrdson began her career in real estate in August of 2006, and has accomplished more in two and a half years than many achieve in a lifetime. Totalling over 3 Million in sales in her very first year, Byrdson has received the GMAC Summit Club Award and achieved Million Dollar Club status on the Northeast Atlanta Metro Association of Realtors® every year since beginning her career. According to Byrdson, the key to her success has been her strong drive, and even stronger faith.

"I feel like God's entrusted me with this platform, and when God feels like he can entrust you with a little, he'll increase your territory and give you a little more. That's why I feel like I've been able to expand my territory, not just in real estate, but spiritually as well. I've grown so much," Byrdson explains.

And that growth has not gone without recognition. In her short time as an agent, Byrdson has appeared as a guest speaker on nationally-known consumer advocate Clark Howard's WSB-TV show, has been recognized as a one of the nation's top 50 "Realtors® on the Rise" by RISMEDIA Real Estate magazine, and has hosted her own radio show, "The Real State of Real Estate with Shannon Byrdson." In fact, her business expanded so quickly that in 2008, Byrdson established her own real estate team, the Byrdson Team.

Team member Carlos Grey went through real estate school with Byrdson, and followed her career for several years



seeing these updates. It's amazing the things that they'll come out with. He's very innovative."

Levent is equally impressed with Byrdsong's business savvy. "She's one of the most organized and customer-focused real estate professionals in our organization, and maybe the best one that I've seen in my 27 years in the industry. She's highly tuned to the client's needs and goals and strives for 100 percent customer satisfaction. And she is building her business on referrals," Levent says.

Just one of the ways that Byrdsong goes the extra mile for her clients is by utilizing the latest technology available to

Beaux Pettys of Inman Park Marble and Granite shows Shannon a granite sample for one of her listings. "Beaux and his wife Claire have been great in helping our clients with their renovations," points out Shannon. "They've also sponsored my radio show and have been wonderful friends!"

before coming on board. "I had been around some other, more experienced agents, but when I saw what Shannon was doing, there was no doubt in my mind that I wanted to join her team." Grey says, "My first year of real estate, I qualified for the million dollar club. But I realized I needed to learn how to market myself, how to stand out more in the industry. That's tough to do when you're competing with tens of thousands of agents. I knew that I needed to take it to the next level and I learned how to do that from Shannon."

With a BA in Journalism and Public Relations and over 7 years of experience in high-end sales with companies like Ferguson Enterprises and Apex/Home Depot, Byrdsong was well-versed in marketing principles before entering the world of real estate. Still, she is quick to acknowledge that much of her success has been inspired by the leadership and marketing savvy of her broker and mentor, Metro Brokers president and CEO Kevin Levent.

"What I respect about Kevin is he's not afraid to spend the marketing dollars. Right now, while some people are saying cut back, he's doing billboards and ramping up marketing," Byrdsong elaborates, "Another thing I love is that he really does listen. He sends his top agents up to the mountains every year. We have a question and answer session where he asks, 'What else do you guys want? How can we make the website better?' and in three months all of a sudden you're

market her listings. Byrdsong creates a custom website for each of the homes she lists, and features her listings on over 25 websites. As an agent with Metro Brokers, all of her listings are also included in the companies monthly Super Sunday sweepstakes. Additionally, Byrdsong provides each of her clients with a CD of helpful real estate information from her radio shows and podcasts.

"Even though I'm not doing my live radio show now, I still have podcasts on my website. You can go online right now and there is "market in a minute" show on the \$8,000 tax credit. There's also a show on short sales that is very



Jacqueline Mejia of Cleaning on the Go is one of the Byrdsong Team's resources for making sure their listings are in "spic and span" condition for showing. Shannon has also presented the company's services to her clients as a closing gift. "I can always count on Jackie and her team to make sure our properties look their best!" Shannon explains.

popular.” Byrdsong relates, “The great thing about the show is that I’m able to give my sellers a CD with tips for selling in a buyers’ market, I give my buyers a CD on home buying 101. The information never expires.”

According to her clients, the wealth of information she provides goes well beyond her responsibility as an agent. Jim Haskell and his wife, Linda, enlisted Byrdsong’s services to help them relocate to metro-Atlanta from Alabama. Linda was an active agent in Birmingham at

as a team leader for her office, which is the largest of Metro Brokers’ 26 locations. Under her leadership, attendance of their office sales meetings has more than doubled. Byrdsong has also served as a member Metro Broker’s Speaker’s Bureau, where she has taught marketing seminars to agents throughout metro-Atlanta.

“When I first came into real estate I was on a budget, so I got real creative early and figured out how to effectively use my marketing knowledge to get the most return. I put

“She’s one of the most organized and customer-focused real estate professionals in our organization, and maybe the best one that I’ve seen in my 27 years in the industry.”

the time, so the Haskell’s were uniquely capable of fully appreciating just how far Byrdsong’s level of service extends beyond the norm.

“About 5 or 6 months after closing, she sent us information on homestead exemption to make sure we realized when the deadline was, what documents we needed to have, and where the office was that we needed to go to. With my wife in real estate, we know that you find a lot of people where real estate is just making a living to them, and then you find some people who see it as a service and take care of people – that’s her motivating factor – service is not a bi-product,” Haskell remarks.

Keisha Monderson was also an out-of-town buyer when she enlisted Byrdsong’s services. “If I had to rank her as an agent, I’d give her 100%. She’s a very professional person and definitely attentive to whatever your needs are. I looked at homes for 7 months,” Monderson admits. “She was very patient!”

Apparently, this dedication to her clients is paying off. While the last two years have taken a toll on many of metro Atlanta’s top agents, Byrdsong appears remarkably immune to global market conditions, and is actually looking to expand her team.

Byrdsong explains, “Right now, I have about 18 buyers. Some are already under contract, and some are going out this weekend. There’s not a lack of people in need. It’s just a matter of finding them. My business is booming so much right now, I’ve got to diversify. My goal is to have an agent in every major city in metro Atlanta.”

In fact, Byrdsong has been so successful in her approach to real estate that she now serves

together a seminar called ‘Marketing Under a Hundred Dollars per Month.’ I always had dozens of people show up for the seminar. People would say, ‘Shannon, why are you giving us all of your secrets?’ But I don’t worry about losing out from helping someone. You can only gain from that.



While Shannon’s radio show is no longer broadcast, she continues to record “podcasts” which are also posted on her website. Among the VIP guest list on her show have been Free Chapel Worship Center Pastor Jentezen Franklin, as well as well-known closing attorneys, exterminators, and inspectors.



Shannon was one of the three featured real estate agents on nationally-known consumer advocate Clark Howard's television show. Airing in 2007, the show focused on the changing economic conditions, and how it was affecting the real estate market.

Now I'm getting that turned into a Continuing Education class," Byrdsong says.

Her willingness to share is also demonstrated by her volunteering as a mentor on the national online training website, ISucceed.com, which has subscribers all over North America. "Now I'm even known in Canada," Shannon remarks.

To fill in her "free time," Byrdsong is also currently working on a book. "The classes have been so great, that I know the book would only help people even more." Byrdsong reflects, "That's long term what I see happening. I want to get the book published and then recognized on a national level, and eventually I'd like to get into some HGTV opportunities. If you're going to do it, do it big."

According to Byrdsong, her ambition is the product of her faith, and a strong Christian upbringing by a family who always believed in her.

"My Mom and Dad are who I give credit to for who I am today," Byrdsong says, "They always taught me you can do whatever you want to do if you set your mind to it. I've never known, 'You can't do that.' To try and fail is better than never to have tried."

Cynics beware! Shannon Byrdsong of Metro Brokers GMAC Real Estate will challenge your assumptions and exceed your expectations. Beauty queen, radio personality,

top performing agent, and community activist, Shannon Byrdsong may sound too good to be true, but she is the real deal. As a matter of fact, after a few hours in her presence even the biggest of cynics may find themselves revisiting dreams, and summoning the courage to recommit and reach for their goals.

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Thanks to Cherise Beasley of White Diamond Image Consulting www.wdimageconsulting.com



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