

# Stacking Up

Nevada eclipses national average for REALTOR® designations earned; findings show many specialize in distressed sales

By NVAR Staff

There is growing sentiment that becoming a REALTOR® should require tougher standards, specifically more robust training and education. Given that groundswell from inside and outside the REALTOR® community, continuing education classes and earned designations will be seen more as necessities than luxuries.

NAR's state education directors released a breakdown, listing the number of designations earned by REALTORS® in every state. Nevada's 15,300 REALTORS® have earned 4,509 designations, just less than one designation for every three REALTORS®, but well above the 1-in-4 national average. Designations come in all shapes and sizes, distinguishing REALTORS® for everything from expertise in social media and emerging technology (e-PRO) to a heightened proficiency in handling transactions for military personnel (MRP).

"If I claim to be an expert on something, I need to have that knowledge," said Reno REALTOR® William Process, who currently serves as President for the Reno-Sparks Association of REALTORS®. "I like working with vets and green energy. I figured those designations would help me.

"I believe designations are beneficial. With the green designation, I learned about everything from solar panels to efficient home audits. I even did an efficient home audit on my house. Now I can help my clients because of my understanding and knowledge. The MRP coursework helped me with veterans as clients and I'm a vet so that's something that's close



The icons above represent some of the more than 25 designations that REALTORS® nationwide can earn to highlight their continuing education in real estate. Below, Nicolle Gust prepares for a recent Open House. The Reno-Sparks area REALTOR® has earned the Seller Representative Specialist (SRS) designation.

to my heart. The designations can help you learn an awful lot, which makes you better for your clients, the buyers and sellers."

The most popular designation among Nevada REALTORS® is by far SFR (Short Sale and Foreclosure Resource). Nearly nine percent of all REALTORS® in the Silver State have earned the designation, far from a surprise given Nevada's explosion of distressed properties over the past decade. At one point in 2011, more than 70 percent of all residential sales in Clark County alone were distressed.

Only eight other states had more SFR-certified REALTORS® than Nevada, a bit disproportionate given Nevada sits 23rd among all states in the number of licensed REALTORS®. The nine percent figure was second only to Arizona among the six states that make up the Rocky Mountain Region XI.

Other popular designations among Nevada REALTORS® are: GRI (Graduate Realtor Institute)



883, CRS (Certified Residential Specialist) 450 and ABR (Accredited Buyers Representative) 304.

Fred McElroy is the Nevada state president for CRS designees.

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Almost three percent of Nevada REALTORS® hold the designation. McElroy raved about the education and benefits of earning the designation.

"CRS is the best designation you can get and the most powerful," he said. "It's tough to get. Typically, you have to travel to attain it, so it takes a committed individual to earn it ... When someone is referring to another agent, often in another community, designations are the first thing a person is looking for. Secondly, they want to find people who are involved, like those in leadership locally, the movers and shakers. Often times these are CRS designees, first-class individuals who are committed to getting things done."

Like McElroy, Azim Jessa is deeply invested in his passion, global business. The Las Vegas REALTOR® is one of a select number of Nevada REALTORS® to earn the CIPS (Certified International

Property Specialist) designation.

"Originally being from Canada, and with parents who have a background from east Africa, I thought it would be interesting to learn how other cultures do business," said Jessa, one of NVAR's leading sources on global business. "It's beneficial as a REALTOR®, especially in a multi-cultural city like Las Vegas, to understand you can make communication easier ... There are benefits to living in a resort town and knowing how to promote it. A key benefit of earning your CIPS and other designations is that they promote networking and help you get connected to the right people."

Among Nevada REALTORS®, some of the more rare designations revolve around commercial real estate. For instance, just 114 Nevada REALTORS® hold the CCIM (Certified Commercial Investment Member) while only 31 are SIOR (Society of Industrial and Office REALTORS®) accredited. Both figures account for less than one percent of

all Nevada REALTORS®.

"My CCIM designation was well earned, but the depth of the education and knowledge learned has proven invaluable," said Kevin Sigstad, a Reno REALTOR® and NVAR's Immediate Past President. "The courses ensured you understood the commercial concepts so you could put them to good use in practice. The knowledge you gain allows you to offer more and better service to your clients. I whole-heartedly believe the CCIM designation, and many other designations for that matter, help REALTORS® differentiate themselves. You gain expertise and ultimately earn more business."

In southern Nevada, click [here](#) to learn more about continuing education and earning REALTOR® designations. Reno-Sparks area REALTORS® can learn about continuing education coursework by clicking [here](#). REALTORS® can also explore online designation offerings through NAR. Just click [here](#).