

# THE NAHREP 10

The Hispanic Wealth Project®

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A businesswoman with incredible foresight and care, Liza Mendez learned the important lesson of living within your means early in life. She grew up with the comforts of a well-off family, never lacking or in need. After transitioning from a life of privilege to being on her own at a young age, Liza realized there was no safety net besides planning and prudence in the real world. Struggling to make ends meet, she moved back home newly single with her young daughter.

Liza went to work in the family real estate business where she took every course and training she could. With much planning and exercising financial responsibility, she was able to save enough money to purchase her own home in 1996. “It was still tough,” Mendez recalls. “When the market started booming, many people were taking money out on their homes, buying cars, taking great trips, and leveraging themselves to buy other homes. Did I think about taking money out and getting into the game? Of course. But I remembered the words my family always said: *con tu casa no se juega*. You don’t play with your house.”

Fortunate to have equity, Liza sold her home in 2009, paid off her debts, and put away a significant amount in savings. Moving back home once again, she kept an eye out for the right real estate opportunity. She finally purchased a short sale property in 2012, calling it one of her proudest achievements.

When the housing market crashed, Liza’s family did not feel the effect as deeply as other businesses in the industry thanks to their diverse network. However, as a member of the real estate team, Liza did feel the changing market. “I remember being told by my dad ‘just focus on keeping the doors open,’ as a way to channel the anxiety I felt,” said Mendez. “I put my blinders up and focused on my business and didn’t allow myself to be distracted by the other parts of the industry.” With that advice, she tapped into booming REO market in no time. Seeing another change in 2012, they shifted their operations once again to be able to thrive in the ever-changing market.

Knowing and anticipating the ups and downs of the real estate industry has been instrumental to Liza’s financial success. The values of living debt-free, modestly, and spending within your means were instilled in her by her family at a young age. “Always look ahead as to what is coming,” she stresses. “Don’t live in fear, but be prepared for the dips. When the dip happens and you are prepared, you can take advantage of opportunities that present themselves as well.”

Today, Liza lives in Southwest Broward County, Florida, and is the President and Principle Broker of Pedro Realty International. Thanks to the lessons she’s learned throughout her life, she is prepared for all the changes that might come her way.

