



2020 Ones to Watch: Andrew Dansker, Dansker Capital Group

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Name: Andrew Dansker

Company: Dansker Capital Group

Title: President

Education: BA, University of Chicago; JD, New York University School of Law

Which project, deal, or transaction was the “game-changer” in the advancement of your career?

The first loan I ever did was for a client with a portfolio of three NNN-leased fast food restaurants in Queens. He took a chance on a young, hungry mortgage broker because he knew that I would fight for every dollar on his behalf, and I did! Finding someone who was willing to give me a shot opened the door to a career that I love and that has brought me so much to be thankful for over the past decade.

How do you contribute to your community or your profession?

I spend all day helping people get loans to grow their businesses but the most gratifying loans I am involved with are made by the Hebrew Free Loan Society where I sit on the Next Generation Board. I have the opportunity to regularly join the small business loan committee meetings where decisions are made to give low and moderate-income New Yorkers the financial help they need to start or grow their small businesses. I also give back through teaching; I just joined with Fordham Real Estate Institute as an adjunct professor and we launched a jointly sponsored quarterly webinar series.

What social media platform do you use the most professionally?

I recently started using anchor.fm which is a platform for publishing podcasts. I launched “Real Talk With Andrew Dansker,” a podcast about current events in the real estate business, as a quarantine project and it has been a tremendous accidental success.

What led you to your current profession?

I had the great privilege of working for some of the best and brightest in our industry very early on: Vicki Been at the Furman Center, Jon Mechanic at Fried Frank, and Glen Nelson at Matrix Realty Group. Somehow, though, it was a perpetual feeling of dissatisfaction that led me to try out mortgage brokerage while I planned the next steps. It was a complete accident that after several years of thinking I was in a temporary career move I realized that I might have found my calling.

What do you like most about your job?

Being a middle market mortgage broker puts me in contact with a lot of people who are first and second-generation Americans—the majority are definitely first or second-generation real estate operators. Because of that I get to see the American Dream up close on a regular basis. Most of my clients started their businesses from scratch. That proximity to success at a human scale gives me a tremendous sense of optimism for our country and brings me incredible happiness.

What can our political leaders do to increase equality in the workplace?

The most valuable professional asset that I received from my parents was a devotion to education, both academic, and ongoing in life. I think that our society owes every one of its citizens equal access to a fantastic education, regardless of who they are or where they came from. Human ingenuity is a great equalizer because ultimately those companies that allow their leaders to make decisions based on prejudice will be left in the dust by those who make decisions based on merit.

Who or what inspires you?

My great, great grandmother Sarah Mantel managed to escape from Europe in the 1930's and start her life over in America with little more than the clothes on her back. As reported to me by her daughter, my great-grandmother, she was famous for saying to those who complained, "Life's not easy. You want easy? Try peeing in the bathtub." She was 100% right.

If your life were made into a movie, what actor would you want to portray you?

I would want to be portrayed by Bruce Willis, but my wife insists that if the movie ever comes out it will be Stephen Merchant from Hello Ladies.