



Y-CPA BUZZ!



By Gordon Tom



At our networking event last November, the Y-CPA Squad featured Michelle Nouchi-Ogata of Prudential Ad-

vantage Realty and Manny August of Wells Fargo Home Mortgage. Michelle and Manny started their careers in public accounting before transitioning to the real estate industry. They presented useful information and advice to first-time home buyers, including information on the many federal and state benefit programs available. Some of you may be exploring or considering buying your first home soon and since summer is the “home buying season”, we hope you find the following recap of our November event and advice useful for Y-CPAs considering buying your first home:

Tip #1: Visit www.360financialliteracy.org/Topics/Home-Ownership

The 360 Degrees initiative was created in 2004 by the AICPA together with state CPA societies as a way to address the growing issue of financial illiteracy in the general public. It features “360 degrees” of information and advice during the various phases of your life, including home ownership. Although designed for the general public, there are a lot of

useful articles, tools and calculators on the site that will save you time and effort as you start planning to be a homeowner.



Tip #2: Get pre-qualified and understand your budget

Our average home prices here in Hawaii are among the highest in the nation, so understanding what you can reasonably afford to buy is the first step. A mortgage broker or residential loan officer at your bank or credit union can help you determine how much of a mortgage you can qualify for. As a general rule, the mortgage principal, interest, real property tax and insurance should not be more than 28 percent of your gross monthly income. However each bank or loan underwriter will have different requirements based on your credit, so make an appointment and bring a summary of your income and debts with you to the meeting.

Tip #3: Set your goals

Before you start searching through property listings, think about and

make decisions on what exactly you are looking for in a home. Do you want a house or condo? How about the location and your commute to work? Are you looking for something new or an older property that may need renovation? How many bedrooms do you need now and in the future? A realtor can help you answer these questions and explain what is available in the market. It will be easier for you and your realtor to identify potential areas and properties once you understand your goals and your budget. Keep in mind you may not be able to get everything on your wish list and be willing to work with your realtor on the properties they show you.

Tip #4: Be patient

It's easy to get frustrated during your home buying adventure, especially in the current sellers' market. Be patient and talk about your concerns and questions with your realtor, family or significant other during the process. The end result will be worth it!

Our next networking and social event is coming soon, so be sure to like us on Facebook at facebook.com/ycpa-hawaii and stay tuned for more information through the “NEW” HSCPA website launching very soon.