



### **Winning in Life and Real Estate**

Every day on his way home from work, Joseph Ianiro, an agent with Real Living Gateway REALTORS® in Hasbrouck Heights, NJ, stopped at the same local candy store to buy a lottery ticket. He always played the same numbers—his birthday and his partner’s birthday—and for years, he had no luck ... at least as far as the lottery was concerned.

He was lucky in business, enjoying a 32-year career with AT&T Communications then switching gears to real estate as a sales associate with Gateway REALTORS®, “a company that’s like my family,” he said. And, he was also lucky in love, celebrating more than 30 years together with his partner, John. But if luck was a big jackpot win, Joseph had none of it.

Then one evening in November, while watching a news story about large Q3 Twitter losses, Joseph recognized the winning digits that scrolled across his television screen with life-altering detail.

“Oh my gosh!” he screamed.

“What?” John, who had been busy preparing dinner, asked Joseph. “Were you planning to buy stock in Twitter?”

“The lottery numbers came out!” Joseph replied.

“How many did we get? Three?”

“We got all six.”

What followed next involved a late-night, two-hour drive to the New Jersey Lottery headquarters in Trenton, the winning lottery ticket—worth \$7 million dollars—stowed away in the trunk of Joseph’s car. “I wasn’t about to mail the ticket,” he explained. “As we drove to Trenton, I was panicking on the highway that the ticket would somehow escape!”

Several hours of verification, one oversized check and photo-op later, Joseph Ianiro was officially the winner of the New Jersey Lottery’s Cash4Life giveaway.

So, cut to Joseph and his partner buying a small island in the Caribbean and never working another day in their lives, right? Wrong. “I’m absolutely going to stay at Gateway REALTORS®,” Joseph said. “The real riches in life have nothing to do with money.”

When asked why he'll continue his career in real estate, Joseph points to memorable experiences with clients he simply couldn't let down. For example, at the same time he won the lottery, he was also helping buyers with a special-needs son look for a moderately priced house. "We looked at dozens of properties," he said. "While I was showing them houses, their son was fascinated with his iPhone, watching a video of a little hamster spin around a wheel."

When the family finally found their perfect dream house—a 3-bedroom home in Hasbrouck Heights complete with a large playroom—Joseph handed the buyers' their keys and gave their son a real, live hamster. "I asked him what he was going to name it," Joseph explained. "He said without hesitation, 'Joe.'"

It's the memorable experiences like this one that helped Joseph realize how impactful his job could be and added to his steadfast desire to remain a Real Living agent. "From the beginning, it was always the warmth that drew me to Real Living," he said. "I tell my clients this: Any real estate agent can open doors and show you houses but at Real Living, we're here to help you through the entire experience."

This philosophy is why Joseph won't be leaving his job anytime soon, lottery winnings or not. "My story might be all about money on the surface," he explained. "But really, it isn't about money at all."

