

# Apartment List

## Spark - Day 1, Innovative Tech

### Introduction, John Kobs

**Speaker:** John Kobs, CEO of Apartment List

#### Notes/Takeaways

- *“2021 will be a year of mobility, fun and flexibility”*
- Panel discussions and speakers will be a reflection of the exciting year ahead of us in the world of renting.

### What does it mean to be customer-obsessed?

**Speaker:** Bob Holobinko, Rebel Gail Communications

**Session Description:** Do you want to know how to become customer-obsessed? By creating habits. Customers are the most vital piece in any business. But, despite all the tools we have today to form emotion-rich experiences, many marketers still struggle to understand their customers and what they really want. This just doesn't cut it anymore, especially when consumers actively seek out connections with the brands they buy from rather than one-off shopping experiences. In this session, you will hear from Bob, the Chief Brand Creative Strategist at Rebel Gail Communications and former VP of Marketing for Gap and American Eagle, as he explores his customer-first approach.

#### Notes/Takeaways

- What does it mean to be customer obsessed?
  - Customer-centric, (also known client centric) is a business strategy that's based on putting your customer at the core of your business in order to provide a positive experience and build long term relationships.
  - Customer-centric strategy relies on customer focused leadership, committed front line workers, and seamless communication through the company.
  - Customer surveys, one-on-one conversations, and customer reviews can be used to better understand your customers and their experience.
- A modern, customer-oriented organization puts the customer at the top of the company's focus.
  - Begin with consumer insights, research, and trends
  - Insights percolate throughout the company and inform decision making at every level of the organization

- Customer demands are constantly changing, how can we as leaders keep up with these changes?
  - Continual, daily listening is needed in order to keep up with the changing consumer
  - Be proactive, not reactive to industry shifters
    - Consumer trends are changing daily and brands need to move at pace or ahead of consumers.
    - Innovate before innovation needs to happen
- Personalization is becoming a key component in driving purchasing decisions.
  - Personalization is giving the consumer content they resonate with and want to engage with.
  - “Personalization can transcend multiple mediums”
    - Focus on balance between valuable content & design and over-personalizing in a way that diminishes the brand’s influence.
- The pandemic has accelerated the digital landscape, and this acceleration has affected customers purchasing decisions and day-to-day experiences.
  - Convenience and safety provide value to customers like never before
- Customer obsession is evolving as we return to some degree of normal
  - People are craving connectivity, so companies need to enhance the customer experience in the physical sense.
- How to make a substantial impact and become customer-centric
  - Commit broadly at scale - everyone must go head first towards becoming customer-obsessed.
  - Inject customer centricity into your daily routine - make it a habit!
  - Spend five minutes a day reviewing customer feedback and try to understand what they are feeling.
  - Reward employees who practice customer centricism.

## Transformational Pivots

**Speakers:** Lacey Hoff, Tom Chomak, and Christopher Bobel

**Session Description:** If 2020 has taught us anything, it’s that crisis has the potential to create opportunities to unleash necessary change. Transformational pivots, the reassessment and subsequent re-launch in a new direction, can unlock the power of innovation and creativity. We’re excited to talk about personal and professional pivots that have helped people and brands win, and share ways that you can position yourself for future growth and success.

### Notes/Takeaways

- **Lacey Hoff** - Owner and Creative Director, Crush Studios

- Prior to Covid, Lacey had a 10-person team juggling 10 given projects at a time, all involving custom brand experiences (booths, sets, and events).
- Crush Studios' Operations were completely disrupted by the pandemic
- Transforming the businesses did not happen overnight - Crush Studios took a pause, experimented with new ideas, and came to innovative solutions.
- Began creating “experiences in a box” - packages that were sent to virtual event attendees.
- Experienced massive career shifts and this helped prepare her for the changes COVID brought on.
  - Importance of problem solving
  - Playing around and experimenting with creative solutions
- Planning to expand on Studio shoots and set designs
- **Christopher Bobel** - Customer Experience, Slack
  - Prior to COVID, in-person interaction was very crucial for Christopher to understand his customers and evaluate their needs.
  - Slack did not experience operational shifts due to COVID. Christopher, however, had to adjust how he approached customers and their needs.
  - Slack customers needed one fabric to connect all groups within an organization.
  - In a time of transformation, it is important to “take a step back, listen, and seek to understand before we’re sought to be understood.”
  - Strives to create products that bring human elements to the virtual world
- **Tom Chomiak** - CTO, LCP360 & Co-Founder, Panoskin
  - Panoskin was able to respond quickly to the changes that COVID brought forth
  - Biggest change was adjusting to increasing demand for virtual tours, and responding to surges in existing virtual tours.
  - Needed to capture all types of model units, not just amenities as virtual tours became needed.
  - Being part of a tech start-up, one needs to be agile
    - Reimagining how product can be made better
    - There was a need to enhance the overall experience as clients began relying on virtual tools
  - Going forward Tom plans to better understand the needs of his partners and build out a road map to meet those needs.

## The Future of Social Media

**Speakers:** Brigette Muller, India Morgan Little, Julia West

**Session Description:** As a result of the pandemic, people are seeking more meaningful interactions virtually. Online platforms like Facebook and Instagram have been some of the only community outlets available to us. And while social media has always been key

for connecting people, it's evolving - as a new and direct e-commerce platform, and a voice for social and political reform. Listen into our conversation, where key industry leaders will discuss their predictions on how social media will continue to progress in the future.

### Notes/Takeaways

- **Brigette Muller** - Content creator, strategist, consultant
  - People are consuming more content than ever before, and now that TikTok has emerged, social media is becoming more of an un-cut, relatable, and entertaining space where like-minded people can connect with one another.
  - Social media has become a community space,
    - The comment section offers a place for people to engage in conversation with like-minded people
  - Brigette has grown on TikTok and realized the importance of being relatable - if you ask questions to your followers, people want to engage with you and be heard.
  - On social media, any moment can matter. Creators want to know how to tell a story, whether it's big or small.
    - Sometimes, the small moments make for the best performing content
  - Brigette highlights the importance of making viewers feel that they are a part of something - by giving them an interactive experience or treating them like a friend.
  - By asking your followers/customers a question, you are not only engaging with them, but you are also getting valuable information from them.
  - Branded content performs the best when it doesn't seem branded - keep it as authentic and casual as possible
  
- **India Morgan Little** - Senior Director of Social Media, MTV
  - You have to listen to your audience
  - Platform managers become the nucleus for the platform, they listen each day to followers and gather insights from SM trends/comments/conversations.
    - Tune into what the audience is talking about
    - Amplify content to the audience based on their interests/wants/needs
  - Social media content has differentiated itself from traditional marketing content
    - Social content is specific to each individual platform
    - Instagram, among other platforms, is constantly changing as additional features are added (Stories, IGTV, Reels).
      - Must listen to the platform *and* the audience to understand what type of content is working and what is not
  - Social media is a “young person’s game” and it requires a lot of time to get used to the platform - it takes screen time and engagement.

- Must be personally excited and passionate about the platform in order to stay relevant as a brand
    - In order to stay on pace with the trends, social media marketers must move quickly and make decisions that “feel speedy”
  - Build a really diverse team and listen to them. Your team should reflect your audience.
- **Julia West** - Social Lead, Pinterest
  - Use social media to bring awareness and make your brand a part of a conversation.
  - Know who your audience is and where they are spending their time.
    - Journalists and business professionals may be spending time on Twitter.
    - End consumers are spending time on Instagram, TikTok, Facebook (Inspiration, ideas, positivity) - they want to see what creators are posting
    - Content Creators don't want to see creators, they want to understand how they can be a better creator.
  - TikTok/Instagram content that's short, unfiltered, and resonates with people is not going anywhere.
    - Provide content that has a distinct purpose or an aha moment
  - For social media marketing to really work, you have to listen to your audience.
    - “Capitalize on what people are feeling”
    - “Know what they want to see, and give them what they want to see.”
  - Before posting, “Put yourself in your audience' shoes- would you like it, comment on it, or share it yourself?”

# Creating Culture in a Virtual Environment

**Speaker:** Natasha Gaffoglio, Communications & Engagement, Taco Bell

**Session Description:** Never before have we been so connected to each other around the world through one shared experience, a global pandemic. Culture, leadership, teams, and the way companies operate have been put to the test as a result of the pandemic. Remote culture is core to many successful organizations today - from creating unconditional connections to co-workers to operating apartment tours virtually. Join our discussion and hear from renowned leaders on creating/nurturing a virtual culture that keeps employees connected - and even become a virtual work culture guru yourself!

## Notes/Takeaways

- Natasha Gaffoglio leads the global communications team at Taco Bell and is constantly finding ways to break through the noise and stay relevant.
- Culture at Taco Bell pre-pandemic:
  - 500-700 people in office on a given day
  - So much energy, conversations, and buzz going through the office.
  - Very “In-person” culture
- Taco Bell had a quick transition to a virtual work environment
  - Entertainment is a big part of company culture, so Taco Bell needed to find a way to translate that to a virtual environment
  - Incorporated virtual hangouts, gym classes, etc.
- Taco Bell saw the need to drive new thinking and innovation within the company
  - Launched the “internal incubator” - “good ideas come from everywhere, from any part of the organization.”
    - All Taco Bell employees had the opportunity to contribute creative, innovative solutions to enhance the virtual experience.
    - Came up with 70 ideas from across the company
    - Harnessed employee creativity and drove innovation
- Taco Bells initiatives to make employees feel heard, valued, and appreciated
  - Launched internal program called “Seasoned for Growth” pre-pandemic
    - Goal: To give employees opportunities for personal enrichment and career development.
    - Courses were offered to employees (Meditation, negotiating skills, etc.)
  - Keep virtual meetings/hangouts fun and entertaining (1 hour max)
    - Don’t want to take away from employee’s time and energy
    - Tap into employees' creativity!
- How Taco Bell keeps employees emotionally invested into company success:
  - Need to strike the right balance between updating employees on company news/health and listening to employees to make sure their voices are heard.
  - Everybody needs to be empathetic of one another!

# Spark Day 2 - All Things A-List

## Fireside Chat with John Kobbs and Andre Iguodala

Andre Iguodala is a 15-year veteran of the NBA, a three-time NBA Champion, an NBA finals MVP, a two time gold medalist, a best selling author, and an investor at Apartment List

### Conversation Highlights

#### John Kobs - How do you measure success?

Andre:

- Feeling of being in it, giving it my all, and being alongside my teammates
- Getting better every day

#### John Kobs - How do stay motivated and upbeat through turmoil?

Andre:

- Push myself and those around me to do better
- Don't let noise be a distraction
- Embrace being an underdog and let the hunger prove that we can still win

#### John Kobs - I love hearing you talk about your leadership philosophy, on display during Covid for the whole world to learn from. Can you share more about your inspiration and how you kept your team motivated?

Andre:

- Covid was a tough and transformative time. I found myself in uncharted territory, like all of you.
- We created new rituals that would get us through, starting with mindfulness
- We also leaned into our culture of winning and camaraderie.

#### John Kobs - I couldn't agree more. How do you think some of that change transpired at home? Did Covid change how you think about home?

Andre:

- You realize how few things are really important in life.
- Become super appreciative of all the small moments that you might otherwise miss.
- That camaraderie, the closeness really showed through. I think everyone going through the challenges of being isolated created a new level of empathy and compassion.

#### John Kobs - What's the best piece of advice you've ever received or given to others?

Andre:

- Kobe Bryant taught me to Play the Long Game and Enjoy the Process
- Business people are used to operating in environments where they get feedback and results quickly, especially in tech (milestones, product launches, winning deals). But,

sports is not like that. It's a grind. Success takes years.

- I believe improving the rental marketplace - what all of you are focused on - is also about making big and long-term bets.

### **John Kobs - Why did you invest in Apartment List?**

#### **Andre:**

- The Apartment List mission, delivering everyone a home they love, really resonates with me.
  - Home is where life happens, where special memories are created with my family - and where most of the world spent the last year.
- The business fundamentals are really strong
  - A profitable company with fast growing revenue
  - It's established, so not a risky bet, yet still so early in their company story
  - Hearing John talk about his vision and what the company could be one day really inspires me, and I'm excited to be in at this unique and pivotal juncture.

### **John Kobs - You have opened a lot of doors to get other players investing. It really feels like you are trying to break down doors and get new voices involved in the tech world. What do you think the business world can learn from athletes?**

#### **Andre:**

- 100% of athletes have a grind to them. We're all problem solvers as far as figuring out our weaknesses and turning them into strengths, having a respect for the game, which is a business.
- You see more and more in professional sports that it's about the sport, but obviously it's also about the business - and I think there's a lot we can learn from each other to make real magic happen.

### **John Kobs - Any final advice you have for our audience here, leaders in the multifamily industry?**

#### **Andre:**

- Home is about much more than 4 walls, it's a feeling, it's a community.
- You have such an important job, of delivering this spirit of home to millions of renters. Embrace it, but don't take it for granted. Don't rest on how it's always been.
- One thing that inspired me about investing in Apartment List is that they are eager to do things differently, and I love how this entire event is an opportunity to think about how we can all push boundaries together.



# 2021 Rental Market Predictions

**Speaker:** Dr. Igor Popov - Chief Economist, Apartment List

**Session Description:** The ensuing economic consequences of the pandemic are poised to transform the housing market in lasting ways. It is too early to predict lasting magnitudes as we continue to learn and adapt together, but we should already be aware of the key mechanisms to expect as COVID-19 continues to reshape the housing market. Join Apartment List's Chief Economist, Dr. Igor Popov as he reflects on how the pandemic has impacted us all, revisiting his early March predictions and how he anticipates these trends will play out throughout the rest of 2021.

## Notes/Takeaways:

- **Change Ahead:** As COVID-19 cases drop and businesses reopen at full capacity, we expect another period of rapid change in the housing market. Moreover, pandemic preferences are not necessarily a good proxy for post-pandemic preferences.
  - Not a snap back to the 2010's, this rebound will be dynamic
- **Remote Work:** Remote work will reshape urban geography in the coming years, and remote workers are significantly more likely to be planning a move today than those working on-site. The preferences of these mobile remote workers are likely to determine the next set of winners and losers in the housing market.
  - Companies that were able to operate virtually had no choice but to jump in head first
  - This move to remote work is not exclusive to the tech sector
  - 29% of jobs are remote friendly (59,000)
    - In some markets this percentage is much higher (San Jose), and in other markets it is much lower
  - Survey: 4 in 10 respondents who were currently working remotely expect to have the virtual work option moving forward
- **The Untethered Class:** In particular, the industry should look to “untethered workers” to lead the next wave of migration -- those who are able to work remotely and are not tied down by homeownership or school-aged children. 1 in 4 high income renters is “untethered” in this way, and remote workers planning a move cite “affordability” as their top priority.
  - 6% of Americans fit this definition of the untethered class
  - 25% of are high income renters are part of the untethered class
  - A-List asked a sample how likely they are to move in the next year, 55% of untethered workers expect to make a move in the next year
- **Urban Shuffle:** Cities are in for a busy summer. Urban amenity demand remains strong, and many who left pricey, urban areas during the pandemic did not leave for good.

- What factors are most/least important factors for living choice? Most important factor was having access to a housing market that is affordable. Access to natural amenities and urban amenities are the two most important/ determining factors.
- The pandemic hit pause on urbanization, what's next?
  - In 2020, location started to matter less and this impacted rent prices
    - The more expensive a market was going into the pandemic, the rent prices dropped. The less expensive market going into the pandemic, the rent prices rose.
  - Renters are searching for greater density - 41% of searches moving across city lines were looking for greater density.
  - Preference for pet friendliness, flexibility (short term leases),
    - Urban cores are bracing for an urban shuffle
- **Policy & Technology Shifts:** The shifts we expect in the housing market will meet rapidly changing policy & technology innovations. Policy makers and product designers alike will drive new proposed solutions for the ills and new pain points we discovered throughout the pandemic. Expect the world to look quite different in just a few years.
  - Stark relationship between who can work from home and incomes
  - The pandemic brought very unequal inequality, and we should expect policy debate
  - “Remote work is never going to be as bad as it is today”
    - The technological acceleration is going to transform how easy it is to work remotely
    - Your brain works better without stress, and the experience of remote work will be better than it is today.

## Apartment List Product Roadmap

**Speakers:** Apartment List team

**Session Description:** The Apartment List team will share an update on what we've learned from renters throughout an unprecedented 2020, alongside our plans for 2021 and beyond. We'll provide an inside look at the key challenges we're seeing in the rental marketplace, as well as data and consumer insights around what inform this knowledge, and a look ahead at what we're committed to solving together in the years to come.

### Notes/Takeaways

- Rental marketplaces today provide lots of choices and information which can be overwhelming for renters and properties
  - Information overload - 75% said renting is extremely stressful
  - Being overwhelmed means renters may never see a great property

- We believe that the future lies in actively helping renters with their search - allowing leasing agents & marketers to sign more leases
- Apartment List is taking the lead here by introducing and embodying a concierge experience for renters and properties alike
  - A great renter concierge stands out, listens to your needs, and offers a personalized recommendation that fits those needs.
  - They also serves the other side of the market marketplace: properties
  - Flexible pricing program helps clients position themselves to renters
- This year, we are offering renters more guidance in searching at the right prices and right places; and helping to connect renters with properties offering great prices
  - First focus point: Helping renters find the right location *and* the right price
    - 4 in 10 renters moved outside their specified location
    - 6 in 10 spent over their budget
    - Flexible Matches help renters explore apartments just outside of their preferences (“flexing”). Based on data points
      - Goals: Make flexing more personalized, adjust search results on the fly, and guide renters towards success (not toward dead ends)
  - Second focus point: Properties offering significant concessions to renters should get greater visibility
    - Renters want to find a great value, and properties want to attract renters through providing a great value
    - Most rental marketplaces don’t do anything to help each side of the market find one another
    - Renters are having to work just as hard (spreadsheets comparing lease dates across prices to find the best value)
      - Goals: Bridge the gap between these two sides of the market by making properties that a great value *more* discoverable
- We are also developing solutions to help properties set flexible pricing that works for them, and improving conversion rates by nurturing interested renters on behalf of the leasing agents when appropriate
  - Increased exposure with prime positioning - “Lift Program”
  - Flexible pricing delivers almost 2X leases
    - Our goal is to make flexible pricing a self-service, while offering suggestions and insights
    - We’ve leveraged our insights to provide a custom experience to a subset of renters so we can hand them off to you when we have a strong intent signal

# Fireside Chat with Luke Marklin

**Speaker** - Luke Marklin CEO, Bellhop

## Notes/Takeaways

- Luke and his wife have moved 8 times over the past 10 years, which prompted him to join Bellhop
- How do you keep the Bellhop spirit - that empathy, compassion, commitment and genuine care for people - alive in a hybrid remote model AND within a company that is growing like crazy right now?
  - Have clear values for what you stand for and don't compromise on them
    - Spend time answering the question: "Why are we doing what we do?"
  - Celebrate like crazy when you see those values on display
    - "When you see your culture in action, really celebrate it!"
  - Hire people that reflect those values
- 3 issues that need to be solved in the moving space
  - The Stigma: Animosity and tension exists between the customer and the company (bad Yelp reviews, hidden fees, etc.)
  - Archaic practices: You rarely can book online, there's no streamlined process.
  - Missing a one stop shop: Moving is a chaotic, complex process and companies need to be a true *partner* by taking the burden off customers. No one has been able to bring all the support you need under one roof - and we're building a platform that will enable you to do that.
    - Bellhop is the only company that provides a technology-driven, seamless moving experience
- Bellhop strives to set the standard by creating a customer centric, digitally advanced moving experience.
  - Need to invest in partnerships and technology
- How will we improve the industry?
  - We modernize it - we apply the same expectations for everything else we do to moving.
  - We integrate it - People move less frequently not because of the cost, but because of the hassle.
    - 75% of people say they put off moving because of the hassle.
- Bellhop and Apartment List have aligned values and want to set higher standards for renters / movers / properties
  - Data driven, customer centric, on a mission to make a painful process simplistic and dare we say - fun?
  - The partnership felt like an obvious fit - Apartment List has the opportunity to offer their communities a concession that's worth more to the renter, taking away the hard, dreaded part of renting a new space by streamlining the move day process.
- What is the value of Apartment List x Bellhop Partnership for properties?
  - The moving concession is cheaper than free rent
  - You can now work with a modern, centralized customer service oriented mover versus hundreds of mom and pops

## Spark Day 3 - Advocacy & Action

### The 2000s Made Me Gay,

**Speaker:** Grace Perry, Comedian & Author

#### Notes/Takeaways

- “The 2000s Made Me Gay” explores how entertainment has big impact on how we live and perceive our lives.
- The book is part social commentary and part memoir
- Perry explains how media for teenagers celebrates gayness much more than it did early 2000s
- Throughout the book, the author explores what it was like to come out in an era right before the gay entertainment boom
  - Discusses her early love for the movie “Mean Girls” - the humor, the writing, and the clever pacing.
  - Describes the positive relationship between “adult-ness” and “teen satisfaction” - she loved jokes and topics that were mature and hard for young people to grasp.
    - Grace loved Mean Girls because of the advanced and adult jokes
    - Later she realized how offensive Mean Girls actually was, with the entire plot being driven by the falling out between Janis and Regina.
      - Regina telling everyone that Janis was “lesbian,” ostracizing Janis and destroying their friendship
      - Being lesbian was “bad” in the movie
  - Perry also discusses her experiences in her religion class
    - Her teacher explained to class that homosexuality was like substance abuse.
      - “Everyone has a predisposition to substance abuse, and they must live to resist it”
      - Perry wasn’t harmed by this comment in a personal way at the time, but she disagreed with him
      - She was able to brush off his homophobia, especially from someone she trusted or admired
  - Mean Girls and Catholic School came together to make Grace feel bad
    - She doesn’t solely blame her Catholic upbringing for the negative feelings she had toward queerness

# Creating Access to Housing in America

**Speaker:** Tyrone Poole- President & Founder, OneApp

## Notes/Takeaways

- OneApp is a company previously known as NoAppFee.
- Tyrone went to school to be a fireman - he got his EMT and fire science degree
  - Graduated 4th in his class and got into the Fire academy on his very first attempt
  - In the first week of academy, he tore his leg and was in and out of the hospital for 9 months
    - He got evicted from his apartment and moved into a homeless shelter
    - Was the oldest sibling of 8 so moving back home was not an option
- In the first week at the shelter, he got an award letter telling him that he could live anywhere for a year.
  - Applied to so many apartments and got denied from every apartment
- The most painful time for Tyrone was when he was sitting in the homeless shelter, not applying to any apartments
  - No money or motivation to apply = most painful experience
- Finally, Tyrone was approved for an apartment that was in walking distance from the shelter
- Property management companies make decisions based off an algorithm that determines who meets requirements
  - This inspired him to create a platform that shows renters exactly where they are qualified to live
    - He pitched his concept during a competition and won - he got the investments needed to build a prototype
    - The whole concept: “Know Before You Go”
      - Saves renters money on application fees.
- OneApp ran into an issue, 33% of people applied to properties that denied them, 57% applied to properties where they conditionally passed, and only 10% applied where they were approved
  - Tyrone discovered how important community was for renters - people had specific needs in regards to location and community
    - Profound Insight: “Community equates to wealth”
  - “We have to keep people in their community, we can’t just move them to where pins are green”
- If someone is going to spend half of their money every month on rent, they have the right to *care* about where they live and *have preferences* - regardless of their privilege.
  - Created OneApp Guaranteed
  - Discovered that 71% of the people were denied because of their rental history
  - Less than 2% of people apply with a co-signer, and having a co-signer guarantees approval
  - OneApp Guaranteed gives renter a Guarantee, which gives renters greater access to housing and lessens the burden

# Breaking Barriers Panel

Speaker: Desiree Gruber - CEO at Full Picture, Co-Founder DGNL Ventures & Project Runway, Evelyn Rusli, Anjula Acharia, Mike Magpayo

## Notes/Takeaways

- Anjula Acharia - CEO, A-Series Investment and Management
  - In her early career, she launched Lady Gaga, 50 Cent and Britney Spears in India artists like Lady Gaga
  - 
  - How Anjula balances her multifaceted career:
    - She strives to help women achieve their goals and their dreams, especially within the entertainment space
    - She wants to elevate and empower women who want to change the game, whether that's in the philanthropy or entertainment space
  - What inspires Anjula?
    - Consultation with who you are working with is where the magic happens
      - Discussing the clients dreams and goals - Anjula gets inspired from these ambitions and leverages her resources to make them reality
    - Anjula's mantra - "I will meet the right people at the right time"
  - Anjula brought Priyanka Chopra Jonas from Bollywood to Hollywood
    - Anjula saw Priyanka on the TV at her parents house, having no connection to the entertainment industry
      - She felt that Priyanka would be a star in America, and thought America needed new representation of South Asian people in the entertainment space
      - She wanted to change the narrative for South Asian people in America
- Evelyn Rusli - Founder & CEO, Yumi
  - Started Yumi, a company breaking the mold on baby food
    - Previously was a renowned tech journalist for The New York Times
  - How did Evelyn make the big jump from renowned journalist to entrepreneur
    - She always wanted to shed light on important stories and help people make sense of them
    - She sees a parallel between her former and current career
    - Learned how important the first 1000 days are of a humans life, she wrote a story about it and became fascinated with the subject
    - Steps within her career in tech journalism exposed her to the power of entrepreneurship and innovation
      - "If you give me a lover and a place to stand, I can move the world"
    - "What if I just had one story? One story that I could work towards every day to change the world?"
    - "Startups often die of indigestion"
      - Have someone that becomes a force function in your life and career - someone that keeps your goals focused, and aligned
  - How Evelyn coaches herself:
    - Evelyn and her co-founder utilizes the list technique on a daily basis

- “It helps connect the physical world with your mental goals”
          - Her and co-founder do check-ins every month or two to evaluate goals and progress towards those goals
- Mike Magpayo - Head Coach, University of California Riverside
  - Only division 1 basketball coach of Asian American team
  - How Mike approaches life, “Do everything with purpose.”
    - In the basketball world, players must have an intentional plan and execute that plan.
      - You must be able to evaluate that plan and make adjustments
    - Going through the 2008 recession, he took out a notebook and wrote some new goals down - this helped him gain a new purpose and led him to his D1 coaching career
    - He recommends taking the first set, and writing some letters to the universe
  - How does Mike deal with bad days and arrive at events ready for showtime?
    - “Head coaches aren’t allowed to have bad days.”
    - The goal is to continually focus on the process, set a standard for the team, and meet those standards everyday.
      - Joy is something that Mike values and he brings that value to the court everyday. He must uphold that value and enforce the standard of having a good attitude.
    - Was demoted 3 years into his coaching career
      - Set backs aren’t what make you weak
      - How you respond is what becomes a force of strength

#### Lessons Learned:

- “People don't remember the facts, they remember the stories” - Desiree
  - Think about your own story, and think about the one thing that makes uncomfortable or embarrassed
- Don't be afraid to show your defects
- Turn the negatives into positives - how did your adversity bring light to the world?
- “I'm an album, not a single” - Anjula Acharia. It's okay to fail
- “You can't hate on hard work”



# Mary's Story

Speaker: Mary Dillon, Graduate Student & Author

## Notes/Takeaways

- Mary Dillon is from New Orleans and from a young age, she had an estranged relationship with her father
- Mary was the first person in her family to graduate from college, won a prestigious award, and traveled the world
- Works for one of the biggest charter schools, Kimp School
- Early Life:
  - Suffered the effects of hurricane Katrina, switching schools, and the death of her uncle
  - She was full of anger, and it took teachers pushing and believing in her to find peace.
    - Countless hours, and sleepless nights led to her winning a scholarship. She was given a private school education, computers, and transportation
      - She entered a new world and was under stress everyday
    - After a Black community member was shot by a neighborhood watchman - who was charged not guilty - one of her school classmates asked, "You seriously think he didn't deserve to die?"
  - Her mother worked two jobs tirelessly, but she always heard "work harder to achieve your goals."
  - Everyday, she showed up to school insecure about herself - Mary started the race at a very different starting line.
  - Discomfort, tensions, and insecurities swarmed her body daily.
    - "How should I dress?"
    - "Am I speaking correctly?"
  - At the age of 15, she met a black boy from her neighborhood who listened to her, cared for her, and made her feel less alone
    - By the age of 16, she was pregnant with his child
    - Mary broke the news to her family 6 months into her pregnancy
    - School mates made comments about Mary "not being able to afford raising a child"
  - During her third trimester, her school decided to not let her attend classes
    - Mary cried on the couch every day
  - Mary kept her baby, went to college, and worked part time at Walmart, and raised her child
  - Her middle school teacher, named Leslie, supported her every step of the way - was her advisor, mentor, and cheerleader.
    - Mary became Leslie's mentor in motherhood, and helping her navigate the world of being a working mother
    - Together, they are writing a book on their rare, interracial friendship within a racially divided world.
    - Lesson learned from each other: "Advocate for yourself"
  - She was able to find an apartment for herself, her son, and her son's father. A co-signer

### Key Takeaways:

- Accept the fact that we have the ability to make quick assumptions and questions - own those judgements, and counteract them
- Ask yourself where your biases and judgements come from. How can you mitigate them”?
- Surround yourself with people who challenge your point of view - Ask yourself, how diverse is my circle, my media, and my sources of information?
  - “Find an advocate and be an advocate”
- Today, Mary is a 4th grade teacher and student pursuing a graduate degree in education.
  - She is a mother of two boys, and is madly in love with her high school sweetheart
  - She is constantly pushing herself to challenge her own personal biases and gain new points of view

## Spotlight on Apartment List

**Speakers:** Sue Nallapeta, Selvish Capers, Meghan York, and Jamiah Prince

### Notes/Takeaways:

- Jamiah Prince - Senior Client Success Manager, Apartment List
  - Exclusion of any kind is not tolerated by Apartment List
  - Jamiah makes it her goal to work with clients and ensure they are aligned with A-List values and standards.
    - She makes it her goal to remove exclusive / harmful language from rental agreements
  - Home Bridge program provides temporary safe havens to those that face adversity (ex: natural disaster)
    - Has donated 7,000+ nights of living to people in need
- Meghan York - Senior User Researcher and Designer, Apartment List
  - Meghan’s approach to DEI initiatives at Apartment List
    - Start with education and seek out the many resources that provide useful knowledge and insights
    - The first steps are important - take the initiative to educate yourself and listen
  - How Apartment List translates its core values into action:
    - During Pride, A-List puts their values into practice and help LGBTQ+ youth
    - Hosted a virtual art show and auctioned off work to raise money for the LGBTQ+ community
- Selvish Capers - Talent Sourcer, Apartment List
  - How Selvish strives to create a Diverse workforce at Apartment List
    - Internally, A-List has updated its career page and developed workshops and trainings that help remove biases throughout the recruiting process
    - A core value at A-List is doing the right thing
      - Create an environment that *celebrates* and *elevates* diverse voices at Apartment List
      - Employee Resource Groups bring like minded people together within the company, and help bring intersectionality and allyship among employees

Check out Apartment List's DEI resources and culture recommendations, [here](#).

## Cooking Session and Chat!

Leader - Kelis Rogers, Grammy Nominated Singer, Songwriter & Chef and Matthew Woods, Apartment List Chief Revenue Officer.

- How did Kellis pick up cooking?
  - Touring inspired her and exposed her to array of different cultures
  - Cooking school revolutionized everything in her life
    - Had a realization she could walk away from music and her life wouldn't shatter
- Traveling has allowed Kelsi to expose her kids to different cultures and ultimately prove we aren't all that different
- The same doesn't always mean equal
  - We don't need to wipe out all the differences that what makes us special
  - We don't want to forget entire generations of cultures - it's important for our culture
- It's not about not seeing the color - it's about seeing it, respecting it and building on that. It's about acknowledging it. It's a GOOD thing!
- When it comes to Arepas - fresh toppings are EVERYTHING!

## Kelis Recipe - Colombian Arepas with Ahi Sauce

### Equipment Needed:

- Large mixing bowl
- Wooden spoon
- Skillet for cooking Arepas
- Cheese grater
- Measuring spoons
- Measuring cups
- Large pot to boil water

### Arepa Ingredients:

- 3 cups Masa Harina - Venezuelan P.A.N.
- cornmeal (pre-cooked white cornmeal) or any other pre-cooked Masa Harina
- ½ teaspoon of salt (true preferred)
- 7 cups of boiling water
- 1 fresh jalapeño
- 2 tablespoons of canola oil
- ¾ pound of queso Cota, substitute with feta or Spanish white cheese or omit completely if dairy free
- Bacon (optional)

### Ahi Sauce Ingredients

- 2 habanero peppers, stemmed and chopped
- ¼ cup distilled white vinegar
- 1 bunch fresh cilantro chopped (about 2 cups)
- ½ large yellow onion, chopped

- 1 bunch scallions, trimmed and chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, smashed and chopped
- 2 tomatoes, chopped
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/4 cup of unrefined coconut oil
- Juice of 1 lime

### **Cooking Instructions**

Put the masa and the salt in a large bowl. Slowly pour in the boiling water, mixing with a wooden spoon to form a dough. Knead the dough a few times while it's still in the bowl to form a ball. Scoop up ¼ cup of the dough (about 2 ½ ounces), press in some of the bacon (omit if not eating meat) and shape into a disc that's about ½ inch thick and 3 inches across. Preheat a grill to medium low heat, or heat the oil in a skillet over medium-low heat. Grill the Arepas or cook them in a skillet until golden brown, 6 - 8 minutes per side, turning them only once. Crumble the cheese. Sprinkle the cheese and the toppings of your choice on the Arepas. Sprinkle with a little salt (the amount of salt will depend on your choice of topping) and serve.

### **Ahi Sauce on Top**

Aji is a spicy sauce made of fresh tomatoes and peppers. It's really big in South America and so easy to make. Just throw everything in a food processor or blender and in no time you will have an unbelievably fresh sauce. I make a big batch and keep it in a Mason jar in the fridge. There's nothing it's not good on – although I wouldn't encourage you to put it on your dessert. Like the Arepas, I was first introduced to the aji sauce by my husband. I have now gone on to make it my own and I'm hooked. I think it'll be a great addition to your kitchen staples items.