



by: Lorraine Campos

Sometimes when you're searching for something that's just the right fit, you have to trust your intuition to lead you directly to it. This was certainly the case for East Valley boutique owner Tina Nunez, owner of [DAG Boutique](#) in the Dana Park Village.

"When I was searching for retail space to open my boutique, I initially looked all over Scottsdale, and then in Tempe. Someone asked me if I had been to Dana Park, and once I found my space there, I knew it was the perfect place to open DAG," says Nunez, a native of Arizona, who also lived in Las Vegas for several years before returning to her home state. "There are a lot of exciting things happening in this shopping center; for instance, there's a Pita Jungle and a Guitar Center opening here soon, and I think the more the East Valley continues to grow, business will continue to boom in this area."

DAG is the jewel box of Dana Park Village, and once you walk into the store, you can feel a welcoming ambience; the employees are personable, knowledgeable in regards to trends, and experienced in the fashion industry. The décor is elegant and chic, with beautiful chandeliers and a sitting area complete with current fashion magazines. "I think what sets DAG apart from other boutiques in the area is that we genuinely want to bring our customers a sense of style and individuality that is often bypassed by other boutique owners who are afraid to take a risk in selling particular styles," says Nunez. Aide De La Torre, my buyer, plays a huge role in this area, because she has countless years of experience working in LA in the fashion industry, and has even worked for designer Sue Wong. Aide is adept at pinpointing what our customers are looking for and what trends will appeal to them." In addition to carrying a diverse selection of clothing, DAG also has eclectic jewelry, handbags, and gift items you wouldn't normally find in other local boutiques. Sifting through the racks of clothing, you can easily find a comfortable denim and lace button down top that's perfect for a weekend barbeque or road trip, and then stumble upon a gorgeous peplum blouse adorned in sequins for a holiday party. DAG carries designer jeans as well as very affordable styles of denim, and the assortment of accessories to complete any look is impressive.

Another facet of Nunez's business philosophy is to ensure that all customers feel at home and comfortable shopping at DAG. "I always loved the feeling of someone making me look and feel good after walking out of their store, and I wanted to do the same for other women. Ultimately, it's about building a relationship with our customers. If there's something we can assist our customers with to give them an individualized shopping experience, we pride ourselves on helping them achieve that goal. Whether it's helping a customer shop for a date night with her husband, assisting a teenage girl find age-appropriate clothing to wear back-to-school, or even to school dances, or helping a plus size woman find the perfect outfit that makes her feel beautiful, confident, and secure; I don't think there's anything better than that. That's one reason I went into this business."

The clothing at DAG is noticeably different from other local retailers when it comes to durability as well. Fabrics are both distinctive and yet sturdy and wearable. Another quality that differentiates DAG from other local boutiques is their customer service. As you walk through the store, it's clear that every employee also has a genuine interest in making customers feel like they're shopping in their sister's closet for an outfit to wear to a cocktail party or a girls night out. Tina plays a big part in creating that type of family friendly, inviting atmosphere in the store. As a mother, Nunez knows the importance of family and how crucial it is to treat customers like family. "We have sponsored modeling competitions and pageants out of our store, and that's something that's important to me, as a woman: to teach young girls that if you are self-confident, anything is possible, and that goals are attainable through hard work." Nunez is quick to point out that "DAG" stands for the initials of her children: Diego, Angelina, and Gabriel.

"Before opening my store in November of 2012, almost a year ago, I wanted to do this for my children, especially my daughter. I wanted them to see that if I could create this business out of a vision and a dream, that they could achieve anything, and that when you are passionate about something, the possibilities are endless." When it comes to Valley shops, DAG is certainly a diamond in the rough. Visit DAG at Dana Park in Mesa, and explore the endless fashion possibilities this gem of a boutique has to offer.

*DAG is located next to Barnes and Noble in the Dana Park Village Shopping Center in Mesa, located on Val Vista, just off the US 60 freeway. DAG is conveniently located next to restaurants such as RA and Sauce, and near AJ's Fine Foods. Visit [facebook.com/DAGboutique](https://www.facebook.com/DAGboutique) or find them on Instagram at DAGBOUTIQUE.*