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April Shanne Subiera
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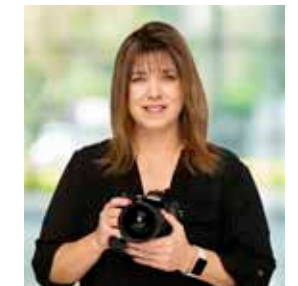
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Robbyn Moore
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Nick Polaski
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If you are interested in contributing or nominating someone for a feature, please email us at Chris.csotty@realproducersmag.com or Terra.csotty@realproducersmag.com.

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LEADING WITH A
NO-EXCUSE ATTITUDE

Julie

MORAITIS

» top producer

By Robbyn Moore
Photos by Jennifer Arnett with Starloft Photography

In 2021, Real Producers magazine showcased Julie Moraitis as an “Agent on the Rise.” Since then, she has surpassed milestones beyond her imagination. The prestigious eXp Realty ICON award graced her not once or twice, but three times, honoring her excellence in both production and cultural standards.

Julie is an agent and associate broker with The Luxe Group of eXp Realty. She recently unveiled a stunning new office in downtown Plymouth at 843 Penniman Ave., right in the heart of the hustle and bustle of the downtown community, a testament to her thriving business. She also recently acquired her associate broker license, enhancing her knowledge and skills in the industry. Julie has helped put on three very successful real estate events called “Level Up” in Metro Detroit, each hosting over 200 guests, providing leadership and inspiration to real estate professionals in the area.

Julie is in her eighth year of selling real estate and consistently ranks in the top 5% in Metro Detroit for production. In addition to multiple ICON awards, she has received numerous other awards, including Hour Detroit Top Producer, Real Producers Top 300 and Homesnap Excellence in Client Service Award, among others. Julie sold 38 homes for \$20 million in 2022 as a solo agent with a transaction coordinator, all while leading a group of local agents and assisting new agents as a certified mentor with eXp Realty.

Julie’s business acumen is nothing short of remarkable. She has taken her real estate venture to new heights by leveraging technology, but that’s not all — her husband, Lee, brings his expertise from TownSites, his very own hyper-local digital networking platform. Together, they have created a powerhouse business blueprint, ensuring that Julie becomes the go-to agent in her community all while building strong referral partnerships with local businesses.

Julie knows the value of using her business to its fullest potential. By surrounding herself with her seasoned inside sales associate and assistant, Madeline Murawski, as well as several virtual assistants for social media and video — and by receiving expert coaching from top real estate mentors — she has paved the way for unparalleled sales growth and leadership opportunities.

Julie’s secret to success lies in her belief in the power of four lead sources: passive, active, social media and sphere. “I encourage others to find what works for each category and



pursue it relentlessly," she said. "My focus on my sphere of influence — powered by technology — has, by far, been the biggest contributor to my success in recent years. By staying connected with past clients — and through consistent marketing efforts — my transaction numbers have soared, and my average price point per deal reached new heights."

Furthermore, Julie's exceptional customer service and her lasting relationships have become her hallmarks. She loves helping people with their real estate journeys, and it shows in everything that she does. "I find immense joy in guiding my clients through their real estate transactions, knowing that I'm not only assisting them with buying or selling a property but also helping them achieve their dreams that will create lasting memories in their new home," she explained.

Julie embodies an entrepreneurial spirit and has diversified her income, bracing against the cyclical nature of real estate production. She nurtures a thriving revenue-sharing organization of hundreds,

which is fueled by her passion for talking about the brilliance of the eXp Realty model. "I feel a responsibility for and have a passion about sharing eXp Realty and everything they have to offer," she said. "I recognized that in order for agents to thrive and reach their full potential, they needed a brokerage that offered comprehensive training, robust support systems and unique opportunities for financial growth. Also, eXp provides agent ownership in the form of stock and residual income streams beyond their real estate commissions. This provides agents a pathway toward long-term financial stability and wealth creation."

Julie lives by the motto "you can get everything you want if you will just help enough other people get what they want." Together, she and her group have formed a supportive and ambitious network, pushing each other to reach new peaks of achievement. Most recently, four agents within Julie's eXp revenue-sharing organization — who have also become her best friends and support system within the business — have branched off and opened a new

business titled, "The Modern Living Collective brokered by eXp Realty" in Ann Arbor. "I feel like my birdies have left the nest," Julie confided. "I'm looking forward to watching them grow and thrive."

Julie has been married to her husband, Lee, for 30 years and cherishes her role as a mother to three wonderful daughters — Jillian, 25, Megan, 23, and Lauren, 19. Jillian lives in Chicago, Megan still resides in Northville, and Lauren is a sophomore and member of the women's college soccer team at the University of Cincinnati. Julie and Lee have raised their girls in the wonderful city of Northville, enjoying all that it has offered to her and her family. With 25 years as a Northville resident, she knows the heartbeat of her community like no other. In her free time, Julie can be found playing on the pickleball courts or traveling, especially to watch soccer games across the country or to Chicago for frequent visits. She also enjoys traveling to leadership events in destinations such as Cabo San Lucas, Phoenix, Texas, Las Vegas and Orlando.

If there is one word that describes Julie, it would be "determined." "I always set high standards for myself," she said. "I am not afraid of hard work and push through setbacks and failures by believing in my own abilities. I am super competitive, no matter what I am doing — whether it is in my career, sports, games, you name it. I am also a perfectionist. This has served me well in my career and life."

From family and business to community and technology, Julie's journey is one of passion, authenticity and emotional connection. Her unwavering determination, competitive spirit, and perfectionist drive proved to be her pillars of success. She continues to shine brightly, leaving a trail of inspiration for all aspiring real estate professionals to follow.

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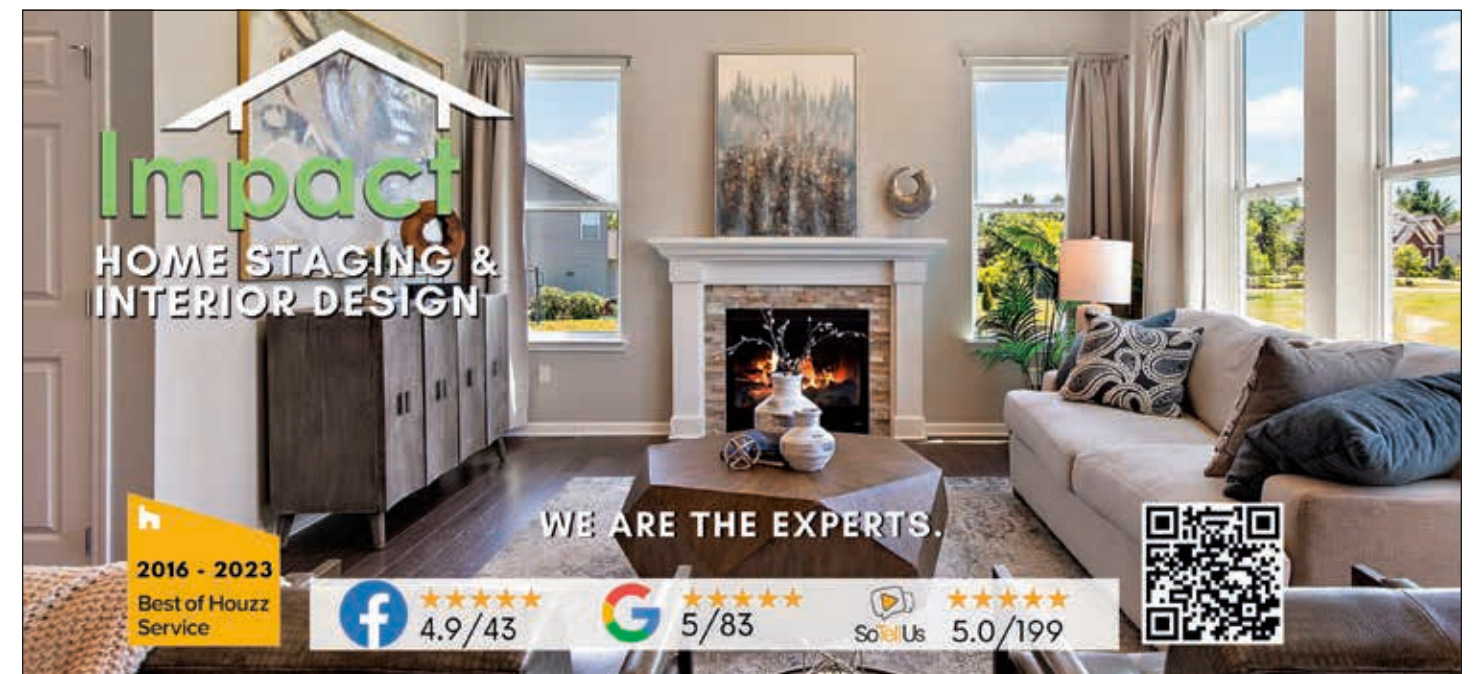
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1.) What services do you and your team provide?

We are a credit union that offers a multitude of services such as commercial lending, mortgages and car loans. As of January 2022, we gave back over \$360 million to our members with our cash-back feature.

2.) How and why did you decide on this particular industry?

The mortgage industry kind of fell into my lap. Back in 2006, I was building houses for a while. My cousin was an agent, and she had said to me: "Dan, instead of swinging a hammer in the middle of the winter, why don't you sit behind a desk and do math problems all day since you're great at math? I have a friend who can get you a loan officer position to see if you like it." Needless to say, I got the job; I exceeded all of my expectations and more. What defined my path was that I became very successful doing it, and I typically outshined my competition year in and year out.

3.) What sets your business apart from similar ones? Do you have a particular motto, creed, or basic principle that drives your business?

My biggest driver that sets me apart from others is that I treat every client and every agent like it's my last day on earth. I roll out the red carpet and treat them like royalty. I want them to remember me and know that I cared, and that I did my best for them.

4.) What do you want top-producing agents to know about your business and the services that you can offer them?

We are not a typical credit union. We have our mortgage department filled with loan processors and underwriters who are on top of a file the minute we send it to processing. We close our loans in



less than 24 days. On top of all that, we have a lot of specialty programs for first responders — teachers, firefighters, police officers, EMTs, doctors, and dentists — who apply to primary homes and vacation homes in Michigan and Florida.

5.) What do you find most fulfilling about your work?

The most fulfilling things about this job are being able to provide a very high level of customer service and getting them to the closing table. In the cases where someone cannot qualify, that does not mean I don't help them out; instead, I get to guide that person to help better their chances down the road. It's a win-win every time I get on the phone with someone.

6.) What significant changes have you seen take place in your profession throughout the years? How have you adapted to these changes to keep current in your industry and ensure that your business continues to thrive?

I think the interest rates have been the biggest thing to adapt to. When rates go from 2% to 6% essentially overnight, it can cause some paralyzing feelings about when to buy. I think the biggest message



partner spotlight q&a
 Photos by Tracie Seeley with Metro Shores Media | Photos taken at Lombardo Model Home at Concord Park in Canton

that needs to get out is: If rates go back down, home prices will go up. So it really is a half dozen, one way or the other.

7.) Tell us about your family and what you all enjoy doing together!

My family are survivalists. If it's not soccer or cheer on the weekends or weekdays with the kids, then we are Netflix junkies who are zoning out for a day.

8.) When you aren't working, what's your favorite way to spend your time?

I have a nice pool in my backyard that I enjoy being on the raft and checking out for the day, getting some sun. That's as simple as I can make it.

9.) How would you define "success"?

I define success as one thing: If you go to work every day and you enjoy doing it, then you have found success. I love what I do. I've never stared at the clock, waiting to leave. If anything, I stare at my phone, waiting for the next client to call me so I can help or for an agent who might need a great loan officer to help with one of their clients.

10.) What do you want to be remembered for?

I want to be remembered as the guy who cared. The guy who did all he could in every single situation in hopes of the best outcome.

11.) What other specific information about you/your business would you like to share with agents? Or, are there any other unique experiences or interesting details that you'd like to share with our readers?

I think this goes back to the beginning, but we are a strong credit union that is growing, is fast in our processing time, and has some of the best rates and programs out there. Not to mention that we also pay those clients a 0.25% cash back off their mortgage balance every January. Those clients will always



balances with DFCU. This is calculated each December based on the loan balance at that time and refunded in January.

3.) How and why did you pursue a career in this particular industry?

Over 20 years ago, I ran a car audio shop and was recruited into the mortgage industry by a loyal customer who couldn't get over my customer service. I have been in the mortgage industry ever since and have found that customer service and attention to detail can go a long way to maximizing member satisfaction and success rates. I have a heavy focus on a hand-holding style of guidance throughout the mortgage process from start to finish.

4.) What do you find most fulfilling about your work?

Being able to provide clear and concise expectations for our members to maximize their experience. There is no feeling quite like a new homeowner getting keys to their new home while looking back at a well-informed and responsive process.

5.) When you aren't working, what's your favorite way to spend your time?

Well, I am always working in some fashion ... When time permits, my favorite pastime is camping with my family. Making memories like these are very important and will last a lifetime.

6.) Is there any other information about you or your business that you would like to share with the real estate community?

You will love working with me or anyone else at DFCU!

remember you for referring them to DFCU because of our service and incentives.

Name: Josh Gannon
Title/Position: Producing Sales Manager
Name of Team: Member Direct
Number of Years at the Company: 2
Website: dfcufinancial.com
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2.) What sets your business apart from similar ones?

We offer a yearly 0.25% cash back based on mortgage and loan

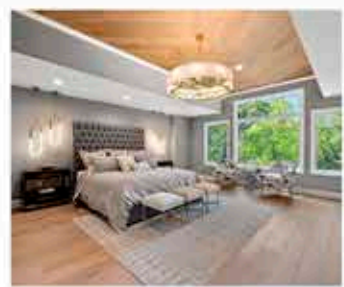
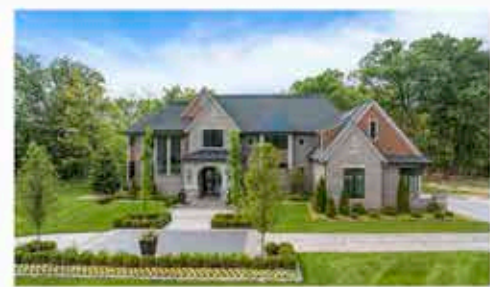
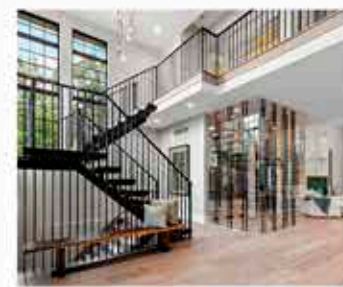


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Jerry & Danielle Johnson

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Many people have heard the saying “when you love what you do, you’ll never work a day in your life.” For husband-and-wife duo, Jerry and Danielle Johnson, they have a different take on the adage: “When you work with the love of your life, you’ll never work a day in your life.”

Jerry and Danielle’s love for each other and for what they do is evident in the tremendous success that they have achieved these past three years in real estate together. By leveraging their unique strengths and unwavering support for one another, they have produced a remarkable career volume of \$28 million and earned eXp Realty ICON Awards for 2022 and 2023.

Jerry began his real estate career in October of 2019. He was working as an area sales manager at Safelite AutoGlass for Michigan and Ohio when he was let go of his job. With a background as a builder — having built 60 houses in the past — plus his extensive sales experience, Jerry knew real estate would be a great fit for him.

As for Danielle, she had always wanted to work in real estate. She was working in the dental industry as an office manager for 20 years when Jerry entered the business. Less than a year later, she was right by his side. “My job was very stressful and demanding, so Jerry told me to put my notice in and said, ‘Let’s build this real estate business together.’ I finally took the plunge, and I got to team up with the love of my life,” she said, smiling.

“It was the greatest decision we ever made,” Jerry added.

Together for nine years, Jerry and Danielle have learned to work as a team in life and in business. When it comes to real estate, Danielle uses her administrative skills to manage business operations and marketing, including their large social



media presence, while Jerry focuses on finding properties and active listings. They both attribute their quick success to their strong communication skills, problem-solving mindset and commitment to always putting their clients’ needs first.

The biggest challenge they have encountered thus far hasn’t been working together, but rather, working apart. “The biggest challenge is your mind,” Jerry explained. “Whatever you tell it, it becomes reality.” Both Jerry and Danielle have had to overcome many personal adversities in the past and have exhibited tremendous resolve.

In 1985, Jerry was in a near-death motorcycle accident. The doctors said he would never walk again, or if he did, it would be with a cane or crutch. Through hard work and determination and by “the grace of God,” he can not only walk today but also run.

The two most defining moments for both Jerry and Danielle, however, were becoming born-again Christians and having each of their three children. They are a blended family with six kids and two grandkids. When they are not working, they enjoy traveling, working out, hiking and reading. They are both actively involved in various charities, including Christy’s Legacy of Hope, Metro Detroit Share, and the Jude August Foundation.

dynamic duo

By Chris Menezes
Photos by Tracie Seeley with Metro
Shores Media
Photos taken at Lombardo Homes
Model at Trailwoods of Ann Arbor in
Scio Township





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”

As Jerry and Danielle continue to grow their team at eXp Realty, they look forward to helping more families find homes as well as business owners find properties. They are concurrently growing the residential and commercial sides of their business and recently began working with a senior living community on finding sites for development.

The most rewarding parts of the couple’s business are helping first-time homebuyers realize that they can become a homeowner and “watching their faces light up at the closing table in amazement.” They also love being able to work with each other and support each other’s goals and dreams every day.

For other couples looking to go into business together, Jerry and Danielle advise leaning on each other’s strengths and focusing on the positive aspects that each person brings to the table. “We would encourage other husband-and-wife teams to really sit down and figure out what each person offers,” Jerry said. “Throw out all negatives and focus on the positive aspects of what each of you do.”

As they continue their real estate journey, the resilience, adaptability and passion that Jerry and Danielle have for helping others — and the endless love and support they give each other — will undoubtedly lead to even greater success for this power couple in the future.



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wendy.hewitt@dfcufinancial.com
C: 734.748.1433

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SIMON SALEH

▶▶ rising star

By Robbyn Moore
Photos by Jennifer Arnett with Starloft Photography
Photos taken at Lombardo Model Home at Concord Park in Canton

An Inspiring Business Journey

In early 2020, the pandemic had a devastating effect on the global economy, leading to widespread job loss and financial instability. After being laid off from his job at Beaumont Health due to COVID-19, Simon Saleh was one of the millions of people who found themselves without work and was struggling to make ends meet. With bills piling up and no income coming in, Simon's situation was

dire. While job opportunities were scarce, he had to find a way to support himself.

Feeling hopeless about his future, a YouTube ad about real estate courses caught Simon's attention. He decided to enroll in an online course since Michigan offices were closed due to COVID-19. However, this meant Simon had

to drive three hours to Cleveland to take the real estate test a few weeks later, which he successfully passed.

With a fresh real estate license and a fearless attitude, Simon joined the team at Keller Williams Legacy. At the beginning of 2021, his social media began to grow faster than he had ever imagined. "In less than two years in the real estate industry, I sold over \$5 million from Instagram and Facebook alone," he said. "For that reason, I decided to continue educating my clients through social media, and that's where I created my brand, 'Simon Says Sold.'" Simon has now surpassed \$19 million in sales.

Simon's professional background entails serving as the chairman of the Student Career Services Foundation and also working as an emergency room paramedic at Beaumont Health. "Given my passion for public service, I contested for the Michigan State Representative position in August of 2020," Simon shared. "Although I was unsuccessful in the election, I remain dedicated to serving my community by volunteering with various nonprofit organizations and community events."

At the core of Simon is a passionate, selfless man who puts community, service and the needs of his clients above himself. He negotiates deals using creative and innovative techniques that get the best deal possible for his clients. Additionally, he follows the Keller Williams Legacy business model of prioritizing God, family and business. "It's a win-win deal or no deal at all," Simon said. "I also make the buying or selling process simple for my clients by guiding them into a step-by-step process while treating them equally, respectfully and with loyalty."

In addition to his real estate work, Simon is a donor of the Dearborn Education Foundation and Rahma Worldwide, which helps families with clothing, medicine and food across the world.

Born in Yemen, Simon immigrated to the United States with his family when he was 13 years old. He earned an associate degree from Henry Ford College in 2016





“
Every day
that I arrive
at work, I
am grateful
for taking a
chance on a
YouTube ad.
”

and studied business at Wayne State University and Wayne County Community College. At the beginning of March of 2023, Simon realized a professional dream and opened his own office to launch Simon & Associates Real Estate in East Dearborn as an independent broker.

“What I love about having my own team and office space is that I am in control of my own environment,” Simon shared. “We have a total of 10 agents on our team, and we’re working on growing more by the end of the year. We all share the same objective, which is to serve our clients ethically, responsibly and respectfully.” In 2023, Simon & Associates Real Estate doubled its production and GCI, and as for Simon, he was nominated for the 2023 Growth Agent of the Year Award by Keller Williams Legacy.

“Every day that I arrive at work, I am grateful for taking a chance on a YouTube ad,” Simon said. “In a short amount of time, I have assisted many families in their real estate endeavors while keeping my eye on the latest developments, updates and news in the real estate market. This ensures that I am current with changing trends and can provide the best possible service to my clients.”

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