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▶ top producer

Photos by Gina Dinverno Photography

Adriana SARTI



Guiding Dreams Into Reality

In the heart of Macomb County, there's a force to be reckoned with, and her name is Adriana Sarti. Her career spans over two and a half decades, and her passion for homes and her dedication to her clients have propelled her to the forefront of the industry. As an agent with Realty Executives Home Towne, Adriana's not just selling properties: She's fulfilling dreams.

"I love helping people realize their dreams of home-ownership and being with them on their journey," Adriana said. "It's so rewarding to be a trusted advisor on aspects such as pricing, timing and staging."

Adriana's path into real estate wasn't a straightforward one. After briefly dabbling in the industry in 1997, she made the decision to step back to focus on raising her family. Her passion for homes, however, never waned. "Before having children, I worked in business administration. While raising children, 'mom' was my full-time — and favorite — job," she shared. "When my kids were older, I went back to work and re-discovered my passion for homes while managing a cabinet business and a building company."

Adriana was ultimately guided back to real estate because of her deep-rooted connection to her family and her admiration for her father's entrepreneurial spirit. "My parents, especially my dad — who was an immigrant — shared a similar dream of helping families create the home they envisioned," she said. "His work ethic and ability to start a business from the ground up have encouraged me that I can accomplish anything I set my mind to."

Since re-entering the real estate arena in 2019, Adriana has left a memorable mark. In the last four years, she has obtained an impressive \$60 million in sales and has received numerous accolades such as recognitions from Hour Detroit magazine and Realty Executives.

Adriana believes that success is when she can make a difference in a person's life. "Watching people's dreams come to life through the building process is the most rewarding part of my business," she shared. "I feel that the builder, superintendent, field and office staff of Cherry Creek Building are my team. They contribute to my success by putting out an exceptional product and by helping me guide my clients to select the best options — but it's not without its challenges. Setting expectations on timing can be tricky. People are so excited about their new homes being completed that they tend to want to rush the process."

Despite the challenges, Adriana supports her clients, and her ethical approach to her business has set her apart. "Doing a good job is important, but being a good person is more important," she said. "If you do your job ethically, everything else will fall into place."

Outside of her thriving career, Adriana finds comfort in spending time with her family and indulging



in her hobbies. Whether she's cheering on her favorite hockey team, delving into her favorite book, "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes," or supporting charitable causes close to her heart, Adriana's zest for life is contagious.

Adriana is filled with gratitude for the opportunities she's been blessed with. "I truly love my job, and it brings me immense joy to contribute to the

process of helping people fulfill their dreams of homeownership," she said. "The experiences I've gained and the challenges I've overcome have only fueled my dedication to making a meaningful impact."

For Adriana, being a real estate agent isn't just a profession: It's a calling. As she continues on her journey of guiding dreams into reality, she knows that the best is yet to come.

“

The experiences I've gained and the challenges I've overcome have only fueled my dedication to making a meaningful impact.





DISPELLING 7 MYTHS ABOUT NAR'S PROPOSED SETTLEMENT

You can help correct the record about the association's proposed settlement to resolve nationwide claims brought by home sellers.

National Association of REALTORS® leaders have been talking to reporters and members full-time over the past month to correct the record about the association's decision to resolve nationwide claims brought by home sellers. You can help by challenging inaccurate information that you see appearing in social media posts, news articles or elsewhere.

Myth 1: The proposed settlement covers only a fraction of members.

FACT: Nearly every real estate professional who is a REALTOR®, a member of NAR, is covered by the release that NAR negotiated in the settlement. The

agreement would release NAR; more than 1 million NAR members; all state, territorial and local REALTOR® associations; all association-owned MLSs; and all brokerages with an NAR member as principal whose residential transaction volume in 2022 was \$2 billion or below from liability for the types of claims brought in these cases on behalf of home sellers related to broker commissions.

To be clear, NAR members are covered by the settlement unless:

- They are affiliated with HomeServices of America or one of its affiliates, or
- They are employees of a defendant in the remaining Gibson/Umpa lawsuits in Missouri. *(Note: All independent contractors affiliated with these defendants are covered.)*

Myth 2: NAR left large corporate brokerages and affiliated agents to fend for themselves.

FACT: NAR fought to include as many people and companies in the release as possible and achieved a release for everyone it could. Well over 1 million members are covered, as are tens of thousands of businesses operated by REALTORS®. But, despite NAR's efforts, the plaintiffs did not agree to include everybody. Those that are not released — the largest companies in our industry — are no worse off now than they were before the settlement. In fact, many are better off, as thousands of their independent contractor real estate agents are released by the settlement. Additionally, NAR's settlement provides an avenue for most large corporate brokerages with an NAR member as principal and more than \$2 billion in residential volume in 2022 that were not included in the settlement to pursue inclusion in the release. But the settlement does not obligate them to opt into the settlement. These brokerages will have 60 days after plaintiffs file the motion for preliminary approval of the settlement to complete Appendix C of the settlement agreement, which is required to opt into the settlement if they choose to do so. *(See the estimated timeline and download the settlement and its appendices at facts.realtor.)*

Myth 3: NAR requires a standard 6% commission.

FACT: You know this is untrue, but it's a myth that has persisted in the media. NAR does not set commissions — they are negotiable. The rule that has been the subject of litigation requires only that listing brokers communicate an offer of compensation. That offer can be any amount, including zero. And other rules throughout the MLS Handbook and NAR policy expressly prohibit MLSs, associations and brokers from setting or suggesting any such amount that should be included in that field.

Myth 4: NAR will raise dues to fund the settlement.

FACT: NAR will not change membership dues for 2024 or 2025 because of this settlement.

Myth 5: Brokers representing buyers now have to work for free.

FACT: Under the proposed settlement, the types of compensation available for brokers working with buyers would continue to take multiple forms, including but not limited to a fixed-fee commission paid directly by consumers; concessions from the seller (as long as such

concessions are not conditioned on the retention of or payment to a cooperating broker, buyer broker, or other buyer representative); or a portion of the listing broker's compensation. NAR has long believed that it is in the interest of the sellers, buyers, and their brokers to make offers of compensation; however, using the MLS to communicate offers of compensation will no longer be an option. Compensation will continue to be negotiable and should always be negotiated between agents and the consumers they represent.

Myth 6: The practice change will do away with offers of compensation to brokers representing buyers.

FACT: Offers of compensation are an option consumers can pursue off-MLS through negotiation and consultation with real estate professionals. The settlement also expressly provides that sellers may communicate seller concessions — such as buyer closing costs — via the MLS, provided that such concessions are not conditioned on the use of or payment to a buyer broker.

Myth 7: NAR settled because the plaintiffs' allegations are true.

FACT: As the settlement makes clear, NAR denies any wrongdoing in connection with the MLS cooperative compensation model rule. Cooperative compensation arrangements facilitate the process of selling a home and help ensure equal opportunity for buyers. It has always been NAR's goal to resolve this litigation in a way that preserves consumer choice and protects our members to the greatest extent possible. This settlement achieves both of those goals and provides a path forward for the industry and the association.

**At press time on April 10, in addition to HomeServices of America and its related companies, the remaining defendants not covered by NAR's settlement are: At World Properties, LLC; Douglas Elliman, Inc.; Douglas Elliman Realty, LLC; eXp Realty, LLC; eXp World Holdings, Inc.; Hanna Holdings, Inc.; HomeSmart International, LLC; Howard Hanna Real Estate Services; Realty ONE Group, Inc.; Redfin Corporation; United Real Estate; and Weichert, REALTORS®.*

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2023 BY THE NUMBERS

Here's what the top 300 agents in MACOMB COUNTY sold

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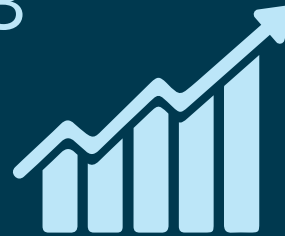


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AVERAGE TRANSACTIONS PER AGENT

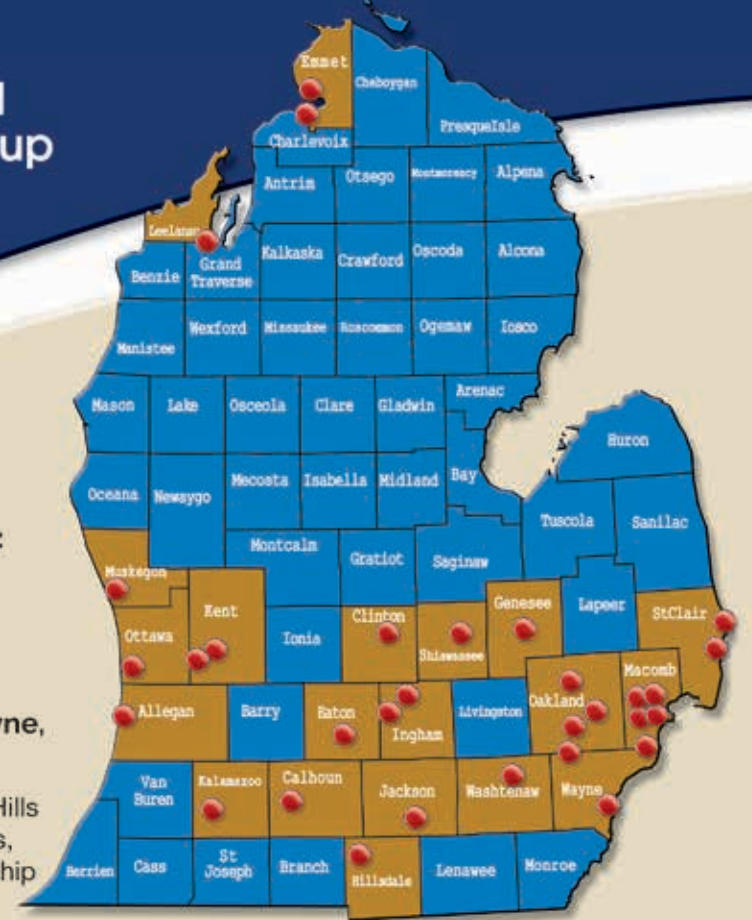
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Jen Hicks



agent spotlight ◀◀

Photos by Melissa Douglas Co.
Photos taken at the Lombardo Homes Model
at Stillwater Crossing in Macomb Township

Rocking the Real Estate Boat

For Jen Hicks, real estate is much more than dollars and cents. A seasoned real estate agent at RE/MAX First, she brings a unique blend of knowledge and dedication — and a passion for making dreams come true. With 11 years of industry experience, Jen is a force to be reckoned with.

Jen began real estate in August of 2012 after a career shift from being a high school social studies teacher for seven years. She initially dabbled in real estate as a part-time gig to supplement her income while being a stay-at-home mom, but little did she know that this transition would evolve into a lifelong commitment. “Meeting new people, forming relationships, and helping my clients sell and find their new home was exciting and fulfilling to me, so I decided to go full time during my first year in business,” she explained. “My business grew each year.”

Jen grew up in Grosse Pointe, Michigan, and was influenced by her parents, who instilled in her strong morals and values, and the importance of always doing the right thing. Armed with these principles, Jen earned a College of Education degree from Wayne State University, which equipped her with the essential skills for her future career in teaching and, ultimately, in real estate.

Life has its ups and downs, and for Jen, it was no different. She faced her share of struggles and tribulations, but it was how she overcame them that shaped her. With the unwavering support of her family and friends, she persevered through thick and thin, using each challenge as an opportunity for personal growth.



Jen’s past experiences have played a significant role in defining her path. She believes that the journey is just as important as the destination, and it’s her ability to adapt to change and learn from her ordeals that has made her the successful agent she is today.

Jen’s passion for her business is evident in her commitment to building relationships with her clients and to changing people’s lives for the better. She thrives on guiding her clients through the complex process of buying or selling a home, creating lasting bonds along the way.

One aspect that sets Jen apart is her dedication to her clients as a solo agent. While many agents work with a team of other agents and support staff, Jen takes pride in offering her clients a personalized experience where every interaction reflects her commitment to excellence.

To Jen, the most rewarding aspect of her career is “being a part of either closing a chapter in a client’s life or starting a new chapter.” Her role as an agent allows her to help people transition into new phases of their lives, and this is a responsibility she takes to heart.

Every career has its challenges, and for Jen, it’s the current lack of inventory in the real estate market. However, she doesn’t let obstacles deter her. Her ability to think outside the box and come up with creative solutions and incentives to assist her clients is a testament to her dedication.

As Jen looks to the future, her goal is to build a team of highly skilled and reputable professionals. She envisions a successful real estate business that will support her children as they enter college, further motivating her to excel in her field.

One of the key ingredients to Jen’s success is her love for her profession. “Building new relationships and making dreams become a reality” is her favorite part of being an agent, and this passion shines through in every facet of her work.

To Jen, success is about creating long-lasting relationships with loved ones, providing for her family’s needs, and creating cherished memories together. It’s also about being humble, doing the right thing, and taking pride in one’s work. For Jen, success is not just about personal

Meeting new people, forming relationships, and helping my clients sell and find their new home was exciting and fulfilling to me, so I decided to go full time during my first year in business.

achievements: It's about the impact one has on the lives of others.

Outside of her career, Jen is a devoted mother to her son, Brayden, 14, and her daughter, Bailey, 12. When she's not working or driving her kids to their sporting events, they spend quality time together boating, exploring new restaurants or playing games. Family is the cornerstone of Jen's life, and she strives to make the most of her time with her children.

Jen's interests extend beyond the world of real estate. She enjoys reading nonfiction books, listening to 90s music, and watching comedy or drama movies. Additionally, she is actively involved in philanthropic work as a foster parent to animals with The ReJoyceful Animal Rescue. Her compassion for defenseless animals motivates her to make a positive impact on their lives.

Summers in Michigan offer a unique charm, and Jen takes full advantage of it. She embraces the beauty of the state, which is surrounded by lakes, by spending her leisure time boating and fishing. Her hobbies reflect her love for the outdoors and the natural wonders Michigan has to offer.

Jen's story — marked by resilience, compassion, and a relentless pursuit of excellence — serves as an inspiration for those who aspire to create lasting bonds, change lives, and build dreams ... one home at a time.



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Brian Heitmann

with Height Control Lawn and Landscape LLC

Cultivating Dreams and Landscapes

▶▶ partner spotlight

Photos by Gina Dinverno Photography

In the sprawling suburbs of Shelby Township, a name synonymous with quality and commitment stands tall — Brian Heitmann, the owner of Height Control Lawn & Landscape LLC. Established in 2007, the company has flourished under Brian's dedicated leadership, offering a comprehensive range of services from general lawn care to intricate landscape construction. Brian's journey is not just about transforming yards: It's a tale of passion and the pursuit of excellence.

"I have been cutting grass since I was 12 years old," Brian shared. "I was

the kid in the neighborhood who went around and cut your grass and shoveled your snow."

It was this early exposure to the world of landscaping that sowed the seeds of Brian's future endeavors. As a young graduate from Oakland University, with a degree in human resources in the challenging economic climate of 2010, Brian faced adversity head-on and chose to expand his landscaping business.

Over the years, Height Control has evolved, embracing new challenges



and diversifying its services. In 2020, a significant milestone was reached when Brian acquired a landscape yard, providing a centralized hub for the company's fleet of trucks, trailers and equipment. The expansion didn't stop there, however: Height Control ventured into specialized services such as yard drainage and commercial snow removal.

Brian's entrepreneurial spirit also led to installing putting greens and collaborating with pool builders to create backyard oases. "When clients deal with my company, they first deal with me personally during the consultation process," he explained. This personal touch sets Height Control apart, because Brian is not just the owner: He's the face of the company, ensuring that clients' dreams are brought to life. For him, accessibility is key, and he takes pride in being hands-on — from answering the phone to overseeing projects.

Height Control specializes in creating designs, revamping existing landscapes, and providing comprehensive solutions for new constructions. It's a testament to Brian's commitment to delivering top-notch services, tailored to the unique needs of each client. "We do a lot of landscape projects for

newly bought houses or new constructions," Brian explained.

For Brian, the true satisfaction lies in the positive responses of his clients. "Seeing the clients' reactions to how much they like the finished product and how pleased they are with the whole process from start to finish is what I find most fulfilling," he said.

As Brian reflects on changes in the industry, he observes a shift toward low-maintenance yet stylish landscape designs. "People do not have time to maintain their yards, so we come up with low-maintenance but elegant landscape designs that will last a lifetime," he said.

In his personal life, Brian's joy multiplies within the embrace of his family. Married for over a decade to Jessica, he shares his life with three girls, including twins — Olivia, 8, Angelina, 6, and Samantha, 6. As a family, they like to spend their time playing in the pool at home or escaping to Brian's parents' cottage up north. Brian's happy place involves wakesurfing on the boat while the kids enjoy tubing — a perfect blend of leisure and family bonding.

Success, according to Brian, is subjective: It could be anything that involves

overcoming challenges in a project or achieving personal targets. "Success is in the eye of the beholder," he said. Brian's definition of success also extends to how he conducts himself around people. He hopes that people — not just clients, but employees, contractors and suppliers — will remember him for the way he treated them with respect.

In Brian's world, building lasting relationships is a priority. "I try to create a client for life," he said. The loyalty of both clients and employees speaks volumes about the trust he inspires. With a career that spans from the age of 14 to 37, Brian has cultivated not only landscapes but also a legacy of integrity, dedication and client satisfaction.



Photo by Morgan Seagram

As the sun sets on the suburban lawns of Shelby Township, Brian continues to shape dreams and landscapes, leaving an indelible mark on the community he serves. For Height Control Lawn and Landscape LLC, the journey is not just about business — it's the story of a man who turned a childhood passion into a thriving enterprise.

To learn more about Height Control Lawn & Landscape LLC, visit heightcontrollawnlandscape.com.

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"I was fortunate to be featured in the March of 2019 issue of Real Producers of Oakland County. Following, I ordered a stack of reprints that I have been able to use as a marketing tool. Mainly, I have provided them to sellers during listing appointments, which I feel has been very effective. I would encourage others to do the same."

— **Chris Pero**, Max Broock, REALTORS®



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TONY HADDAD

agent spotlight ◀◀

Photos by Gina Dinverno Photography
Photos taken at the Lombardo Homes Model
at Stillwater Crossing in Macomb Township

CRAFTING SUCCESS WITH HEART AND DEDICATION

Tony Haddad, the driving force behind Tony Haddad & Associates with Keller Williams Lakeside, is no ordinary agent. He has been involved in real estate for over 17 years and has proven himself to be a relentless achiever, amassing a career that speaks volumes about his commitment. His journey in real estate has been nothing short of remarkable, adorned with accolades such as Top Selling Agent of the Year at his firm.

As a dedicated member of the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR), Tony has been characterized by his unstoppable pursuit of excellence. In addition to his impressive achievements, he holds the distinction of being a Keller Williams Luxury Agent, Certified Financing Specialist, and Certified Property Manager, as well as a Zillow 5-Star Agent. These accolades have placed him in the top 3% of real estate professionals nationwide.

Tony was raised in Detroit, and his road to becoming an agent was heavily influenced by his wife, Dana, who supported him through thick and thin. Armed with a degree in business administration, Tony has been shaped by life's ups and downs, including the loss of loved ones and the challenges posed by illness. Through it all, his dedicated focus on family and the desire to provide for them have been the driving forces behind his success.

Tony is currently passionate about growing the luxury section of his business. His dedication to serving clients who are seeking upscale



properties reflects his commitment to excellence. He also finds immense reward in helping first-time buyers and works with clients across multiple generations. For Tony, he gets a thrill out of competing against multiple offers and emerging victorious.

Tony's path to success, however, has not been without its challenges. Early in his career, he sought to understand the intricate details of a home's inner workings, final finishes, and various architectural styles. To overcome this, he tapped into a valuable resource — learning from inspectors and delving into the book "Learn the Lingo of Houses." Tony's desire for continuous learning and improvement shines through in his accomplishments.

For Tony, real estate isn't just a profession: It's a pivotal part of his future dreams and goals. He aims to expand his portfolio of properties and focus on the luxury market, ensuring that his clients continue to receive the best service possible.

Tony believes that success is synonymous with happiness, and as an agent, he finds great joy in his work. His favorite aspects of his job are when he gets to show homes, navigate negotiations, and witness the happiness of his clients.

Family plays a central role in Tony's life. His wife, Dana, is a registered nurse with a career spanning 25 years. Their daughter, Helena, is a junior at Michigan State University and

WHEN ASKED WHAT HE WANTS TO BE REMEMBERED FOR, TONY'S ANSWER IS STRAIGHTFORWARD:

AS SOMEONE WHO YOU WOULD TRUST TO HANDLE YOUR MOTHER'S, DAUGHTER'S OR SON'S BIGGEST PURCHASE.

studying neurology while their son, Roman, is a high school junior and a football player. Together, they relish spending time in Northern Michigan, having family dinners, playing dominoes, and recently, embracing pickleball.

Outside of his professional life, Tony's interests extend to gardening, trap and skeet shooting, and playing the popular sport of pickleball. These hobbies offer a balance to his demanding real estate career, allowing him to relax and recharge.

For up-and-coming agents in the industry, Tony underscores the importance of mastering the terms and contracts, and the intricate details of homes. As an advocate for his clients, Tony goes the extra mile to ensure they have the best possible experience.

When asked what he wants to be remembered for, Tony's answer is straightforward: "As someone who you would trust to handle your mother's, daughter's or son's biggest purchase." His commitment to treating every transaction as if it were his own reflects his firm dedication to his clients' well-being.

Tony emphasizes the importance of real estate transactions, acknowledging that they are the most significant purchases in people's lives. With a deep sense of responsibility, he approaches each deal with the utmost care and diligence, making sure that his clients' dreams are realized. Tony, a true real estate professional and a man of unwavering integrity, continues to inspire and set the highest standards in the industry.



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