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MARIA
Starkey

*Event
Recap
Inside*

AGENT ON THE RISE: Sam Fayz

MEET THE REALTOR®: Herman Ruiz Jr.

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A Heart for Service

Where properties change hands, dreams are realized, and investments are made, Maria Starkey stands as a beacon of success and service. With a career spanning over two decades, she has navigated the ever-changing real estate market, consistently achieving remarkable milestones.

In 1998, Maria took the leap into full-time realty work. Her very first transaction involved a client who trusted in a new agent, setting the stage for a phenomenal career. "My very first home sale sold for \$1.25 million! I was sold!" she recalled.

Before embarking on her real estate career, Maria worked in sales, selling office furniture systems. However, life events would soon lead her to her true calling. "Upon having my third child in 1996, I made the decision to take the real estate course and test," she explained. "I joined a local office and quickly determined that I wasn't ready for a career in real estate. Two years later, after having my fourth child, I jumped in with both feet."

MARIA Starkey



Maria's decision to enter real estate was motivated by her passion for helping people buy and sell homes, as well as the need to support her growing family. "Every path led me to what I excelled in. At an early age, I worked in different types of customer service and sales positions," she said. "Helping people buy and sell homes intrigued me, and I was hopeful that it could aid me in supporting my large family."

Maria's journey was not without its challenges, but she drew strength from her family's background in hospitality and customer service. "My family owns a local fine dining restaurant," she shared. "My whole life, I learned how to show hospitality, give customer service, go the extra mile for customers and clients, and provide an exceptional experience."

As a mother of four sons and a stepson, Maria's family played a significant role in shaping her path. "Raising five sons has had a tremendous role in who I am today," she admitted. "Nothing like children to teach you more than you ever thought you needed to learn."

Maria's dedication to her clients has earned her numerous accolades, including being named "Agent of the Year" an impressive 14 times by her office. She

also ranks in the top 5% of REALTORS® in Metro Detroit, according to Hour Detroit magazine, and holds the prestigious position of #153 among the top agents in Michigan, as recognized by RealTrends.

One of Maria's standout achievements was in 2022, a year she describes as "by far, my most successful year as a real estate agent." She helped 50 families buy and sell their homes, making a positive change in their lives. Her husband, Mike Starkey, has also joined the real estate profession, which promises to enhance their service to clients.

Despite her success in the real estate industry, Maria acknowledges that it has had its difficulties. "One of the biggest challenges as an agent is finding the time to fill the many different roles that are required in order to meet your clients' needs," she explained. "Selling real estate is only part of the job description. Becoming a marketer, advertiser, administrator, problem solver, planner, counselor, educator, and much more can leave an agent feeling spread thin and overwhelmed."

To overcome these challenges, Maria sought support from her brokerage, which provided essential tools, marketing assistance, training, coaching and guidance.



This allowed her to focus on areas where she could be of the most service to her clients.

Maria envisions herself persistently collaborating with her husband within the real estate industry at MBA Realty - Real Estate One. Her goal is to nurture enduring connections with clients while aiding more families in traversing the perpetually shifting real estate landscape. For Maria, the most cherished aspect of being an agent resides in her ability to create a beneficial impact on the lives of her clients.

"Having the capacity to bring about a positive change in the lives of many is deeply fulfilling," Maria said. "Even when circumstances don't unfold as expected, I strive to be a reassuring presence, helping clients see new opportunities on the horizon."

Maria is an active member of the 100 Women Who Care, which supports and donates to local charitable organizations. Additionally, she and Mike support the youth group in their local church, providing a welcoming environment for the kids to enjoy their time together.

Outside of her real estate career, Maria is passionate about decorating her home, creating beautiful landscapes and gardens, boating, hosting and entertaining, and spending quality time with her family, especially with her children and grandchildren.

Maria's message to fellow agents is clear: "Strive to become experienced in this business so you may be able to improve and continuously learn how to be of the most value to your clients. Work hard for your clients, and the rest will take care of itself. This business is not about serving yourself: It is about serving your clients."

Maria's journey within the realm of real estate is proof of her dedication, resilience, and unwavering commitment to making a positive impact on the lives of those she serves. With her husband by her side and a heart full of passion, Maria's future in real estate is as bright as ever.



Having the capacity to bring about a positive change in the lives of many is deeply fulfilling.

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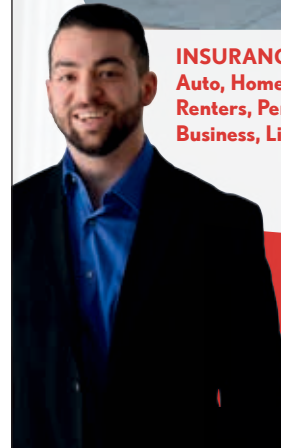
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► agent on the rise

SAM

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Photos by Tracie Seeley with Metro Shores Media
Photos taken at the Lombardo Homes Model at Concord Park in Canton



In the realm of real estate, one encounters two kinds of professionals: those who merely transact properties and those who are like Sam Fayz. Sam embodies an extraordinary fusion of devotion, fervor, and steadfast commitment to his vocation. At the tender age of 25, he has already left a lasting mark on the vibrant Dearborn Heights real estate landscape, serving as both an agent and property manager at Real Estate One.

Sam has been an agent for seven years, a remarkable feat for someone who started straight out of high school. “I jumped into the world of real estate at age 18,” Sam recalled. “My dad, who is also my broker, gave me the thumbs up to get my licenses. He had just one condition — that I go to college, too.”

For Sam, balancing a burgeoning real estate career with college wasn’t easy. He spent around six to 10 hours a day, roughly three to five days a week, attending classes while also working

part time as an agent. In April of 2020, he achieved a significant milestone by graduating with a bachelor’s degree in business management with a minor in finance. “Getting a degree seemed like a good idea anyway,” Sam said. “Being able to fall back on my degree just in case made me feel secure. Nevertheless, I knew that having a degree in business would help my image as an agent.”

Sam’s journey into real estate was greatly influenced by his father, Mike Fayz, who is not only his mentor but also his broker. “My dad arrived in America at a young age, with the weight of his father’s passing on his shoulders. Despite the odds stacked against him, his family came here in pursuit of the American Dream,” Sam shared. “Witnessing his unwavering determination, tireless efforts, and remarkable achievements over the span of more than 30 years has left an indelible mark on me.”

The Fayz family’s connection to real estate runs deep. Sam worked as a runner and secretary at his father’s brokerage when he was just 16, gaining hands-on experience in the industry before officially becoming licensed. “In this role, I began to dip my toes into the industry,” Sam said. “My tasks included ordering inspections, collecting inspection reports, sending contracts for e-signatures through platforms like DocuSign — basically, everything that did not require a license, I was doing. It was during this period that I realized becoming an agent was the path I wanted to pursue.”

Sam’s dedication to his profession has not gone unnoticed. He achieved Company Sales Awards in both 2021 and 2022, a testament to his commitment to excellence. “2021 became my first proper year as a full-time agent,” Sam said. “After the wild ride that was 2020, things started looking brighter. My career took off steadily, and I’ve been on that upward trend ever since.”

“
IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY,
MAINTAIN YOUR EQUILIBRIUM AND
KEEP YOUR MOTIVATION ABLAZE.”

Sam is not alone on his real estate journey. He is part of the Fayz Group, a family team comprising his two brothers — Alex and Ali — and his father, Mike. “The collective experience we bring to the table spans an impressive 40 years, making our team a wealth of knowledge,” Sam explained. “Flexibility is our forte — when one of us is unable to attend a showing, another seamlessly steps in.”

The Fayz Group’s collaborative approach sets them apart. “In many cases, we will take on clients together to assure our buyers and sellers that they are getting the best service possible,” Sam said proudly.

Sam’s passion for real estate extends beyond sales: He is actively working toward obtaining his broker’s license within the next six months. “Looking ahead, my ambition is to establish my very own real estate brokerage or expand my father’s brokerage in the coming three to five years,” he said. “With the course already on my radar for next month, I’m committed to this trajectory. The concept of nurturing and expanding a business has always held a special place in my heart.”

Outside of real estate, Sam remains deeply connected to his family. “We are a family of seven,” he shared. “My mom, Aida, raised five boys, with me being the fourth in line.” The Fayz family shares a love for the outdoors, engaging in activities such as fishing, hiking and snowboarding. Sam is also a martial artist, holding a brown belt in Brazilian jiu-jitsu and teaching kickboxing and jiu-jitsu at the Detroit Jiu-Jitsu Academy.



In addition to his personal pursuits, Sam is dedicated to giving back. “Donating to charities is a core tenet of my beliefs,” he said. “I am deeply committed to contributing to my local mosque and supporting people overseas through my regular donations.”

As a young agent who has achieved significant success in a short time, Sam offers valuable advice for those looking to follow in his footsteps. “Building a successful career in real estate is a step-by-step endeavor,” he explained. “Aim to progress by just 1% each day, and set both short-term and long-term goals to guide your trajectory.”

Sam emphasizes the importance of consistency and motivation, especially during challenging times. “In the face of adversity, maintain your equilibrium and keep your motivation ablaze,” he said. “Always remember: Consistency beats motivation 100% of the time!”

Sam’s unflinching commitment to self-improvement and dedication to his craft make him a rising star in the Dearborn Heights real estate scene. His passion for growth, collaborative approach, and allegiance to his community set him apart as an agent and as an individual. With a bright future ahead, Sam is sure to continue making an impact in the world of real estate.



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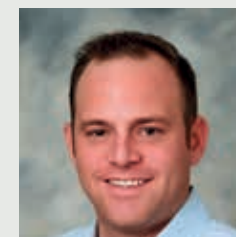
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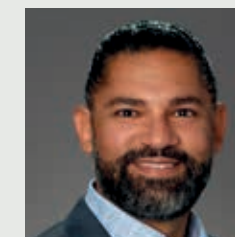
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HERMAN RUIZ JR.

Photo by Tracie Seeley with Metro Shores Media

▶▶ meet the REALTOR®

NAME: Herman Ruiz Jr.
BROKERAGE: Power House Group Realty

1. How many years have you been a real estate agent?
I have been an agent for two years.

2. What did you do before you became an agent?
Before becoming an agent, I was in high school! I am 20 years old as of July 28, 2023.

3. Where did you grow up?
Grew up in Metro Detroit in the Lincoln Park area.

4. What are you passionate about right now in your business?
I am more than passionate about efficiency. Being able to provide knowledge and — even more importantly — security are where my priorities lie.

5. What is something about you no one knows?
Most people don't know my age and that my values lie in family rather than monetary value.

6. What has been the most rewarding part of your business?
Some of the most rewarding things that come with selling real estate have been seeing all of the smiles and moments of excitement when I am able to hand over the keys to happy buyers as well as guiding people through something so important and emotional as buying or selling a home.

7. What was your biggest challenge as an agent?
Biggest challenge as an agent is being able to make a large enough impact on someone's life to the point where they trust you with something as large as a home purchase.

8. Favorite song/quote/book?
Favorite song is "Off the Wall" by Michael Jackson.

The quote I live by is: "Enjoy yourself. It's later than you think."

The book that I feel everyone should read is "Think and Grow Rich" by Napoleon Hill.

9. Tell us about your family/pets!
I have both parents and a younger brother. Everything I do is for them, as well as for my little doggy, Ace.

10. Who is someone who inspires you?
My mother, who sacrificed everything to give us a chance. Seeing someone be so selfless and do everything that needs to be done without a complaint — from working to cooking to cleaning to taking care of us to moving us out of Detroit and into Lincoln Park so we may live a better life.



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Thank you for attending our
CHEERS TO 5 YEARS EVENT!

Backdrop photos by Stylish Detroit
 Event photos by Starloft Photography

We extend our sincerest gratitude to everyone who joined us for our Cheers to 5 Years Event held at the Whiskey Factory in Detroit. It was truly a night to remember as we commemorated half a decade of accomplishments, growth, and cherished relationships.

Our event was also a prime opportunity for meaningful connections and invaluable networking. Professionals from diverse industries came together to forge new alliances, share insights, and celebrate each other's successes.

In the words of Sam Sakla from Keller Williams Professionals: "Great to connect with colleagues and network with new faces in the industry." This sentiment encapsulates the spirit of camaraderie and collaboration that permeated the event. It's moments like these that remind us of the power of

community and the importance of coming together to support one another.

Thank you to our Host — The Whiskey Factory — our VIP Sponsors — Alliance Title of Michigan, Capital Mortgage Funding, DFCU Financial, and Lombardo Homes — as well as our Support Sponsor — Title Solutions Agency. Thank you to Jennifer Arnett from Starloft Photography for capturing photos and to Stylish Detroit for taking backdrop photos and video at the event. Special thank-you to the team at Hardcore Mortgage for podcasting live during the event!

Here's to many more years of achievement, growth, and memorable moments together. Cheers to five years, and cheers to the journey ahead!





WAYNE COUNTY
RP **2023** BY THE NUMBERS

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

\$3,186,411,558

SALES VOLUME



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TOTAL TRANSACTIONS



35
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\$10,621,372

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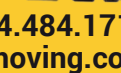
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