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TABLE OF CONTENTS

06
Meet the Tampa Bay Real Producers Team

08
Preferred Partners

10
Top Producer: Bonnie Strickland

14
Making a Difference: Julie Jones

16
Rising Star: Leah Herzwurm

20
Celebrating Leaders: Jeff Borham

24
Broker Profile: Kendall Bonner

30
Behind the Scenes: Amanda Doll

36
Featured Sponsor: Compass Land & Title

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top producer



Written by Elizabeth McCabe
Photo Credit: Carol Walker/Thomas Bruce Studio

meet BONNIE STRICKLAND

top producer



Bonnie Strickland can attest to the changing times in real estate. She shares, “I was licensed in 1987. That was back before cell phone or computers. I made appointments by payphones.”

When she had children, she took a break and helped her husband start his own construction company. She continued real estate through the worst housing recession in 2010 and the BP oil spill. She comments, “It was a tough time, but I really wanted to help people in our community who found themselves in a situation that wasn’t so great.” She’s been a full-time REALTOR® ever since.

She has done remarkably well in the competitive real estate industry. Her career volume since 2010 is 567 million dollars. Last year, her total volume was over 105 million. Bonnie has been listed as one of the Top 10 Influential Realtors in Tampa Bay. She was also the proud recipient of the Top Producer award in 2017 for her volume exceeding 100 million.

What is she passionate about right now in her business? Bonnie shares, “Our amazing city and how it’s thriving.” She loves helping local people here in the community, as well as people from all over the world, relocate here. Now with the recent acquisition of

Strickland Property Group by Douglas Elliman, the third-largest luxury brokerage in the nation, Bonnie is excited for this opportunity to take her business to the next level. This is a tremendous opportunity to not only create global exposure for her clients but also her community.

“I like showing off our magnificent city, arts, restaurants, and everything Tampa Bay has to offer,” says Bonnie. “You can sell the perfect home, but the lifestyle is what makes it feel exceptional.”

Bonnie counts her blessings as a successful REALTOR®. She explains, “I thank God for my family, friends, and my team every day. I am very blessed.” Her team, which she considers her family, is very close. They help each other and encourage each other. She encourages them, “Go out of your way to help other agents, even if it’s your competition, and attempt to earn their respect. We all have a common goal – getting to the closing table.”

She sees the reward of her hard work all the time. She explains, “It’s so rewarding to see a happy family at the closing table.” Knowing that she made a difference makes her work fulfilling.



“
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“The more successful you become, the more resentment and unethical treatment you will get. The best revenge is faith, joy, success.”

Bonnie also encourages up and coming agents to go beyond the call of duty. She says, “We’ve made beds, planned memorial services, walked dogs, swept leaves out of the pool, and given boat rides to see the house by the water. Go over and beyond your clients’ expectations.”

When Bonnie isn’t selling houses, she likes spending time with her family. She is married to her husband of 33 years. They have two children: a son and a daughter. Their son, Tommy, and his wife Kim live 5 minutes away. Bonnie is a proud grandmother of her first grandson, who recently turned 1. She says, “It changed life for the better. We love being grandparents.”

Their daughter, 31, resides in Denver, Colorado. Bonnie says, “She has her own Strickland property in Denver. She worked with me for a while and loved Colorado and went back there.”

In her free time, Bonnie loves boating, fishing, and spending time with her husband at their second home in Colorado. She says, “We love hiking and sitting by the fire.”

Bonnie also makes a difference for others in the community including the local Children’s Hospital, the arts, education, and various ministries. Bonnie adds, “Before we get to the closing table, I find out what charitable organizations that my clients are passionate about and make a donation in their honor.”

Bonnie says, “I’ve been raised to give to others and it’s a great feeling to be able to do that.” She recalls winning the Bingo jackpot at her church when she was 5 years old. She jokes, “My mom gave me a look and I put it all back in the offering plate.” She’s been giving to others ever since out of her generosity.

••• She builds relationships with her clients, who often become her friends. She says, “It creates a legacy and a culture that will remain here long after I’m gone.”

That doesn’t mean real estate is always easy. Bonnie says, “Real estate is a seven day a week job – morning, noon, and night. To serve your clients, you really have to work hard.” She is known to answer questions from clients at 9 p.m. at night.

While real estate is a very competitive industry, Bonnie hopes to change the face of real estate. She explains, “There is enough for everyone. We should be helping each other.”

She has some advice for the up and coming top producer. Bonnie says, “Hard work and honesty is the secret sauce.” She also believes in the power of prayer and following the Golden Rule – treating others the way you would like to be treated.

In addition, never burn a bridge. Bonnie jokes, “You never know when you will have to go back over it.” She also encourages others to practice forgiveness. She explains,

Julie Jones

of RE/MAX Metro Sponsors the

Florida CraftArt Gallery Tour



making a difference

Written by Elizabeth McCabe



Real estate agent Julie Jones of RE/MAX Metro has a heart for the arts. She is a sponsor of the Florida CraftArt Gallery Tour which is located on 501 Central Avenue.

She says, “I have been affiliated with them for a couple of years.”

The gallery tour is described as the “ultimate shopping experience with fine jewelry, clay, glass, ornaments and more handcrafted by Florida’s most talented fine craft artists.” Fine craft art arrives every day, creating a one-of-a-kind experience.

Julie explains, “Any place with a focus on the arts drives people there and enhances their quality of life.” St. Pete has that, especially with the Art District on Central Avenue.

Florida CraftArt is a statewide nonprofit organization. Their mission, according to their website, is simple: “to grow the statewide creative economy by engaging the community and advancing Florida’s fine craft artists and their work.” Their primary goal is the “fine craft artists of Florida, helping them develop from emerging artist to profitable professional artist.” The gallery staff here is “invested in mentoring artists in product development, marketing, pricing and business practices.

Florida CraftArt was founded in 1951 and helps “advance, mentor and support Florida’s artists.” This nonprofit organization enhances St. Pete by helping visitors “discover original fine craft, such as handmade jewelry, glass, ceramics, wood and fiber.” Visit the main gallery to see more than 250 of Florida’s finest craft artists. Throughout the year, check out nine curated shows in the exhibition gallery that feature artists. Don’t miss their annual CraftArt Festival held the weekend before Thanksgiving. This popular event draws more than 10,000 to this free two-day outdoor festival.

We want to thank Julie Jones for supporting the Florida CraftArt Gallery Tour. For more information, check out their website, floridacraftart.org.



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LEAH HERZWURM



By **Dave Danielson**
Photo Credit: **Carol Walker/Thomas Bruce Studio**

Storybook Style. Happy Endings.

Watching Leah Herzwurm's brand video, you see a heartwarming story about an elderly woman who wants to sell her home – but not to just anyone. She wants a happy, young family to purchase it, fall in love with it and raise a family under its roof – just like she and her family did years earlier. Throughout the story, Leah is there step by step, helping both parties make the dream a reality.

This poignant story isn't from someone's imagination. It's a true tale from one of the many families Leah has helped in real life. It's a perfect example of how her personal, caring style has allowed her to impact so many local families in her young career — and why she has taken a rightful place as one of the region's true Rising Stars as an agent with Keller Williams Luxury International in St. Petersburg.

Strong Foundations

Growing up in Augusta, Georgia, Leah gained a very strong foundation for the future — because of her family.

“Until I was an adult, I didn't realize how many sacrifices my parents made to raise us,” Leah remembers. “I was fortunate to have a mom who stayed at home with us. And my dad worked three jobs to send us to Christian school. They both have such a strong work ethic.”

That work ethic was rooted within Leah from an early age. When she was 12, she started working as a babysitter and continued working through high school. Along the way, she began working with a local wom-

an who was starting a business using something called Facebook. It was 2010.

“Within a couple years, it grew to a multi-million dollar business. I went from babysitting to being her right-hand person,” Leah recalls. “She realized I was very talented with social media. And so I started helping her.”

In time, she went on to college. In the process, she worked two jobs, including continuing her social media management duties. She paid for her education through her jobs and scholarships and graduated from the University of Georgia.

Two weeks after graduation, Leah married Brant, her high school sweetheart. The young couple followed opportunity to Tampa. Brant began his dream job in orthopedic sales. And Leah started managing social media accounts at an ad agency. But something was missing for her.

“I wasn't passionate,” Leah admits. “I was in spreadsheets all day. I didn't feel what I did mattered.”

That's when Brant suggested real estate.

“I thought, ‘Who's going to trust me to buy a house?’ We were in an apartment, so we hadn't bought our own house. I was 22. And I had to use Google maps to get anywhere in Tampa, other than to work, the grocery store and the gym,” she laughs.

She initially pushed off the idea. But not for long.

“I didn't want to ask myself what if? So I decided to give it my all,” she recalls. “I thought I'm going to try and if it doesn't work, it's not a failure. It's a stepping stone to whatever life has in store.”

At night and on weekends she studied, passed her exams and started her real estate journey. In September 2016, she began her role with Keller Williams.

Getting to Why

As Leah began, a crucial conversation spurred her success.

“My broker talked about the big why — the reason I got into real estate. She explained that you need something that pushes you. I didn't know what mine was until then,” Leah says.

Within moments, Leah had her answer — her why. It was helping others — including her parents.





“ I didn’t care how many doors got slammed in my face or how many times I was told ‘no’ before I got to ‘yes.’ I was determined to do this for them. ”



And they had always had a dream to go to Alaska,” she remembers.

With every closing, Leah put aside money. After a year and a half, she surprised her parents with a week-long trip to Alaska.

“Being able to do that for them really pushed me,” Leah explains. “I didn’t care how many doors got slammed in my face or how many times I was told ‘no’ before I got to ‘yes.’ I was determined to do this for them.”

That motivation created uncommon results. During her first 12 months, Leah completed 24 transactions. In 2017, she earned Rookie of the Year honors in her office with \$4.5 million in volume. That number grew to \$12 million on 37 units in 2018, and a spot as a Top Five Agent in the Keller Williams office.

Those lofty numbers came from a place of helping — and no sale was too small.

Real Results
So far about 70 families have benefited from Leah’s brand of hard work and caring. Recently, she invited them to a “Thanks A Brunch” client appreciation event she hosted at one

of the city’s nicest venues. She stood to welcome and thank them, and looked into the faces of those families.

“I started crying,” she remembers. “It means so much to see those families who trusted me and all the relationships. They’re part of my family. It’s so much more than a job to me.”

For the future, Leah plans to build her own team and continue mentoring other agents. In the meantime, by giving of herself, Leah receives priceless rewards.

“For me, success is working hard to enrich your life and that of others around you,” she explains.

Sometimes life does have a storybook ending. Just ask those who’ve worked with Leah Herzwurm. They know that, no matter what it takes, Leah will do everything possible to give their real estate stories happy endings.

•••

“We talked about my parents and growing up. They are my heroes. I’m still in awe of what all they were able to provide,” she emphasizes. “And then, when I was in college, my dad was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer.”

As her father’s treatment plan began, her mom flew in an airplane for the first time to accompany her father for care in Houston at MD Anderson Cancer Center.

“That made me realize they had been married 42 years and had never gone on a big trip together.





▶▶ celebrating leaders

JEFF BORHAM

GROWING DAY BY DAY



By Dave Danielson
Photo Credit: Carol Walker/Thomas Bruce Studio

As head of his own team with Keller Williams Realty, Jeff Borham has a lot to be proud of. In fact, through the last few years, he and his team have become one of the fastest-growing real estate teams around. Yet, each day, Jeff takes time to reflect on improvement — day by day.

“For me, it’s always about being better the next day than I was the day before,” he smiles. “When you look in the mirror, can you say I rocked it today? If you can, then that’s success. Because that means you put your energy in, you got stuff done and you’re moving forward.”

FIRST STEPS

A Palm Harbor native, Jeff’s journey started when he returned from the University of South Florida.

From the start, he seemed to have a natural inclination toward real estate.

He bought his first house, remodeled it, sold it and made a profit.

From there, he moved to Tuscany at Innisbrook in Palm Harbor where he bought a condo.

“When I was buying that condo, the sales manager liked me, so I was offered a part-time position to show model homes on Sundays,” Jeff remembers. “I was waiting tables at Longhorn here in Palm Harbor. So I said, ‘Sure I can do that on Sundays.’ I did, and suddenly I was outselling the other tour guides.”

Soon, they brought him on as a full-time sales assistant. Within six months, Jeff had sold 77 condos. His real estate career had started.

In 2007 and 2008, Jeff moved into new home sales and a large condo conversion in Orlando.

“We were selling lots of condos in 2008 until the real estate market and stock market really crashed in October 2008. At that point, the bottom just fell out,” Jeff recalls.

Following that, Jeff moved home and took time to help his grandparents. His grandmother was very sick.

In July 2009, Jeff’s grandmother passed away and he returned to real estate, joining a commercial broker-

age in Tampa Bay, led by a real estate attorney and commercial broker.

As Jeff says, “I worked side by side with her for two and a half years, learning the commercial side of the business, and also how to do the residential side of the business the lawyer way.”

REINVENTING RESULTS

In 2012, after gaining experience selling properties to a wide range of clients, Jeff moved to Keller Williams. While he had already built success, Jeff soon learned he would need to take his efforts to a new level.

“I came to Keller Williams in January 2012, and I sold \$2 million, and honestly I didn’t think I needed to go to the training sessions, nor did I think I needed to be mentored,” he remembers. “And then I looked around and saw people out-producing me, so I asked myself, ‘What am I doing wrong here?’”

At that point, an important mentor entered Jeff’s world.



“

GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY IS ALSO AN IMPORTANT ASPECT OF WHAT JEFF DOES. IN FACT, HE AND HIS TEAM MAKE ONGOING EFFORTS TO SUPPORT THE LOCAL MEALS ON WHEELS ORGANIZATION, AS WELL AS FOSTERING HOPE, A NON-PROFIT GROUP THAT SUPPORTS TO FOSTER CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN THE REGION.

”



...

“Howard Weinstein came along and started coaching me,” Jeff explains. “I started my new journey, and I went to every Keller Williams training in 2013 and 2014.”

The results showed. In 2013, Jeff’s production climbed to \$5.5 million — then to \$8.5 million in 2014. That was just the start. He started building his team with Amanda Doll on the operations side, along with his brother Bill Borham and real estate agent Matt Bennett. In the process, volume spiked to \$21 million in 2015.

The climb has continued — with over \$46.5 million on 181 units in 2018.

Jeff’s pride goes beyond numbers.

“We want to make sure that we’re providing opportunity for everyone,” he explains. “You may want to invest in real estate, or you may need to net more money, or you may have the dream of home ownership. Whatever your opportunity in real estate is, we’re going to work to provide it.”

ENJOYING THE JOURNEY

As Jeff points out, reaching success with a sense of balance is vital.

“When you’re humming along in real estate, you’ve got to put your energy there and make your money,” he emphasizes. “And then it’s important to take a break. Put your phone on the charger during dinner and have that family time. Then, when they go to bed if you need to work more, get your phone out, and do what you need to do. Give yourself time to recharge so you don’t burn out.”

With that in mind, Jeff looks forward to time with his wife, Somer, and their two children Ryder and Raelyn. He also enjoys financial news, following the stock market and college football.

MAKING AN IMPACT

Jeff enjoys coaching and mentoring and has been very involved in leading training sessions for agents throughout the market center. Jeff has been very involved with Business Network International, serving as the group’s area Vice President and President. As Jeff thinks back on his own success, he has advice for those who are building their own success story.

“One of the main things is to stay focused on what your lead generation method is,” he says. “If you’re going to build a database, build a database. If you’re going to prospect, prospect. Just really dial in on how you’re going to get your business.”

Giving back to the community is also an important aspect of what Jeff does. In fact, he and his team make ongoing efforts to support the local Meals on Wheels organization, as well as Fostering Hope, a non-profit group that supports foster children and families in the region.

As Jeff and his team continue their work and focusing on continual improvement, results and recognition keep coming, as well.

In addition to earning a spot as the market center’s number one team, they’ve earned a spot among the list of groups included in the Wall Street Journal Top 1,000 listing, along with the distinction of being a state of Florida Top 100 team.

As Jeff looks to the future, he takes time to reflect on being the best he can be — day by day.

“I think it’s about working to be better. Looking at everything we’re doing, how do we make it one step better than we were before? How do I show up being one step better? I always want to be the leader I need to be.”





By Dave Danielson
Photo Credit: Allie Serrano of Allie Serrano Portraits, LLC



KENDALL BONNER

BRINGING OUT THE BEST

» broker profile



Growing up in California, Kendall Bonner had no way of knowing her future would take her to where she is today — across the nation to become the broker/owner of RE/MAX Capital Realty.

But each step along the way, she’s built a strong reputation for bringing out the best around her.

PURSUING HER PATH

Looking back, real estate wasn’t Kendall’s dream career at first.

“In high school, I always wanted to be a teacher. My mom was a doctor, and she said, ‘Teachers don’t make any money,’ and she said, ‘J.D., M.D., Ph.D. Pick one.’ My mom was an M.D., and I knew I didn’t want to be a doctor, because I know what that life looked like,” Kendall says.

As she moved ahead with her education, Kendall looked ahead at the possibilities. She decided on law school. At the

age of 24, Kendall earned her juris doctorate degree from Loyola Law School in Los Angeles, which is also where she had met her husband, Bill.

“We got married on Saturday, graduated from law school on Sunday and on Tuesday, we were in a car driving to Florida,” she smiles.

It was 2003, and the thought of pursuing her Ph.D. crossed her mind, but Bill convinced her that working as a lawyer would be a good path to take — especially since they needed to pay off student loans.

So Kendall dove into life as an attorney, practicing criminal defense, workers compensation defense, and more.

In 2007, Bill started his own law firm and Kendall joined him for several years.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES

By 2011, Bill and Kendall had started a family with two children. Kendall had an interesting thought.

•••

Kendall takes pride in building her team with a powerful blend of collaboration, growth, community, inspiration and aspiration.



"I decided to get my real estate license. I said I'll just do it for fun. I'll do it part-time. I'm a lawyer. I'll do four deals a year, and I'll just work with the million dollar clients," she laughs. "Like every person who gets into real estate, I was a bit naive."

Kendall received a recruiting letter from Century 21 Shaw Realty Group. She kept the letter for two years before approaching them. They hired her.

"I went to every training I could for 30 days, and realized it's a full-time job," she laughs. "I talked to Bill and said I didn't want to take any more bankruptcy clients, and that I'd be going into real estate full time."

Within 30 days, she had her first two listings.

A BROKER IS BORN

Time as a real estate agent went fast. A couple of years passed, and Kendall had even started her own title company. Soon, she received a new offer.

"I got a call soliciting me to open a franchise for RE/MAX. I wasn't sure it was real, so I didn't answer," she says. "Then they called again, and I realized it was a legitimate sales call. I had always said I didn't want to be a broker, but I was curious."

Kendall did her research and then was invited to the company's R4 meeting. In the process, she met company founder Dave Liniger.

"During that meeting, I got to know what the company was about and what it aspired to be," she remembers. "I purchased the franchise in 2014. I felt confident in how to run a business because of the experience that I had gained at the law firm. My husband and I sold the firm, and within the first three months, we had 10 agents."

As the team grew, so did the results. In 2017, they were named Florida

RE/MAX brokerage of the year. And in 2018, RE/MAX Capital Realty amassed an astounding 540 transactions, representing \$150 million with an expanded team of 54 agents. In the process, the brokerage was named to the Real Trends 500 for 2018.

MANUFACTURING RESULTS

That kind of growth and success doesn't just happen organically. Kendall does the recruiting groundwork that builds the tea — that manufactures results.

"I went out, made calls, met people and asked them to sit down with me," she emphasizes. "I didn't have a reputation as a broker at that time. I didn't have systems like I do today. I had to build it all. It was a good time."

Kendall takes pride in building her team with a powerful blend of collaboration, growth, community, inspiration and aspiration.

As Kendall points out, "I'd love to keep growing. And that can come in many forms. I always want to make sure that our agents are doing as much or more of what they aspire to do. That could be in terms of price point, compensation or helping them maximize what they're doing."

Kendall and Bill also work to bring out the best in their community through a number of groups, including Children's Miracle Network and Motto Mortgage Mission Against Hunger.

"We collect donations to help families and children who don't have food. It's sad and scary with all the resources this country has, it's sad. It means a lot to be able to contribute toward that."

LEARNING FROM A LEADER

Kendall has advice and an important reminder about achieving a work/life balance in the business.

"When you start a business or create a high-level aspiration, it becomes your

baby. Children need attention," she says. "They are at their most vulnerable state at a young age... and the same with your business if you want to protect it and get it to the next level."

For all that Kendall has achieved, she finds true fulfillment in bringing out the best in those around her.

"You get passionate about the things that matter to you. I love coaching and helping people achieve their passion and dreams. That makes me happy," she smiles. "I don't see myself as a broker only. I see myself as a business leader, but I'm an example to help others be their own business leaders. That's my favorite part ... I have a great team and staff. They make me look good, because they're so awesome."



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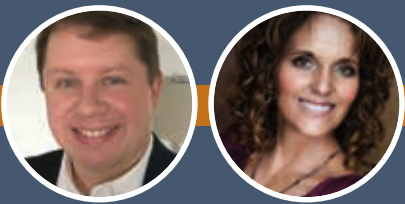
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By Dave Danielson
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AMANDA DOLL

ALL-AROUND ACTION

▶▶ behind the scenes

In 2015, Jeff Borham had reached an impressive level of success as a team leader in Tampa Bay as part of Keller Williams Realty. Now he was interviewing a new team candidate, looking for a way to take that success to the next level. He found it in Amanda Doll.

Today, Amanda is Vice President of Operations & Growth with Team Borham. In just four years, she has been a driving force in the team's success behind the scenes through a committed brand of all-around action.

CRUCIAL CONVERSATION

Amanda remembers that first meeting.

"Four years ago, I joined Jeff. At the time it was him and his brother on the team and Jeff said, 'I want to blow this up,'" she smiles.

She joined the team and that level of success has come to pass.

"In 2014, Jeff was doing all the listings and his brother was working with all the buyers. That year, they finished with 35 transactions, representing \$8.5 million," Amanda says. "I joined in March 2015, and that year it was pretty much the three of us until the end of the summer when we brought on a part-time agent."

During 2015, the team completed an astounding 85 transactions with \$21 million. To say it was a busy time would be an understatement.

"My first 180 days, I got very familiar with what I had to do, and then I worked on the efficiency," Amanda explains. "The first year was like running a marathon while drinking out of a firehose and juggling. It was a time of long days, long hours and a lot of learning."



The team grew, along with its success. And last year, the team completed 181 transactions representing \$46.5 million.

WHATEVER IT TAKES

Amanda drew on her past corporate experience, and set to work right away doing anything — and everything — she could along the way to support the team.

"I transitioned through every one of the roles," Amanda remembers. "I did everything at first. I was the Executive Assistant. I was a listings coordinator, I was a transaction manager, the scheduler, the phone answerer, the event planner, and

the errand runner. As we've grown, I was able to leverage myself out of particular roles and get the right people in place which pushed me to grown fast in my leadership."

Today, the team has about 20 members, including four operations team members who report to Amanda.

GROWING WITHIN

One of Amanda's primary roles involves recruiting. One question she always asks a candidate is what motivates them.





“ONE OF THE GREAT THINGS WE DO IN OUR ORGANIZATION ... IS WE PRIDE OURSELVES ON PROMOTING FROM WITHIN. I WOULD RATHER PROMOTE SOMEONE UP WHO I’VE WORKED WITH AND KNOW, THAN TO LOOK ON THE OUTSIDE”

••• “For some people, it may be money or time,” she says. “For me, I’m motivated by the opportunity and knowledge. The training and culture that Keller Williams offers are great. Our team is just a product of that, and that’s what has kept me here.”

As Amanda has grown and achieved new levels of success herself, she takes great pride and gets a sense of fulfillment from seeing the organization grow and mature. As she says, even though she takes pride in her role, she never wants to be indispensable or irreplaceable.

“I’m proud to know this organization would run without me. I come from a corporate background, with procedures, guidelines and systems that are there for a reason — so that people could come in and pick it up,” she explains. “If you’re running an organization and you’re the

reason that it’s running, God forbid something happens to you tomorrow, because the whole thing could go under. You just can’t sustain that as you grow.”

With that in mind, the team has put a strong emphasis on having a road map in place through processes and systems.

As Amanda says, “It’s about putting those things into place and making sure they’re documented, making sure everyone knows them, and anyone could come in and do them if something happened to someone tomorrow.”

Growing the team isn’t just a matter of adding new people. It’s also essential to sustain a sense of growth for the people already on the team.

“One of the great things we do in our organization ... is we pride ourselves on promoting from within. I would rather promote someone up who I’ve worked with and know, than to look on the outside,” Amanda points out. “So in doing that, a lot of the people who are in the organization are cross-trained, so if someone goes on vacation, someone else can fill their shoes. If someone is out sick or has an emergency, we can fill their shoes, and that gives us an opportunity to get an idea for each role. At the same time, it provides that coverage, and it’s an even deeper comradery.”

While some may feel threatened by bringing in superior talent, Team Borham embraces it.

“My goal is always to hire someone for the job who can do it much better than I could ever be,” she emphasizes. “That’s how we approach things here.”

LEADERSHIP BY EXAMPLE

While Amanda and the team members have each made important, ongoing contributions to build the organization, she credits one person in particular — Jeff Borham himself.

“When I interviewed in 2014, Jeff said he needed someone to run this side of the business, so I held him to it. If I would have gotten into it and he wasn’t willing to let go, or he was micromanaging, I would have gotten out of business with him a long time ago,” Amanda recalls. “This is a 50-50 relationship. Jeff had to be willing to continue to grow himself as this organization grew. He pours into people daily and he leads by example. I’m very fortunate to be in business with Jeff, and we are blessed as an organization to have him.”

With commitment, teamwork and a spirit of all-around action, Amanda is energized for the future.

“I wake up every day with such excitement to get out the door and do what I’m passionate about,” she smiles. “If you have that, the rest of it falls into place.”

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By Dave Danielson

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If you ask people what their experience is like working with Compass Land & Title, you'll hear expressions like "wow," "unmatched professionalism" and "super customer service."

Those words are music to Phil Yost's ears. That's the result he was after when he started Compass Land & Title in 2004. For Phil, he wanted to create an experience unlike any other.

At the time, he was a restaurant owner in Seaside. As he worked on a new deal with a real estate investor, he remem-



bers working with a title company. In the process, he felt the service was delivered in an almost begrudging way. He saw an opportunity.

"I was doing a ton of real estate transactions personally. I've owned a lot of different businesses and I've always been customer service oriented, so the hospitality aspect of things has been second nature for me," he remembers. "I thought if I open a title company, and use what I know about customer service and the hospitality business, we could make a real difference."



RELENTLESS EXCELLENCE

Since its start 15 years ago, Compass Land & Title has developed a reputation for results. In fact, Phil challenges his team members to experience world-class service for themselves — to understand what receiving true excellence feels like. So he invited his team to stay at a Ritz-Carlton, with the company picking up the tab.

Compass Land & Title is a locally owned company with a passion for giving back, as well. This relentless pursuit of excellence has created real results.

For all of his organization's success, the thing that means the most to Phil is what each title deal represents.

"I love fixing problems," Phil explains. "When we get our title search, we get a real estate contract, and then we order a title search from the underwriter. The underwriter sends it back, and there's a schedule within the title commitment and lists all the things we need to accomplish to convey free and clear title... so we're tasked with unraveling this and getting it closed."

Phil smiles at the results he and his team help create in partnership with real estate agents throughout the region.

"At the end of the day, this is people's biggest purchase of their life. It's a really satisfying feeling at the closing table, and you see people who are so happy to be in their new house, or people who are downsizing and happy to sell it," he emphasizes. "It just really feels good to fix problems for people."





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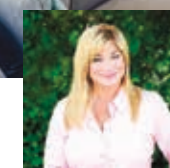
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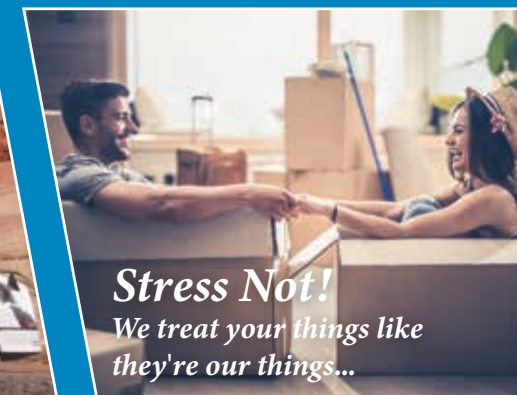


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