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For articles, coverage, and advertising, contact Brian Gowdy at 719-313-3028; brian.gowdy@realproducersmag.com.



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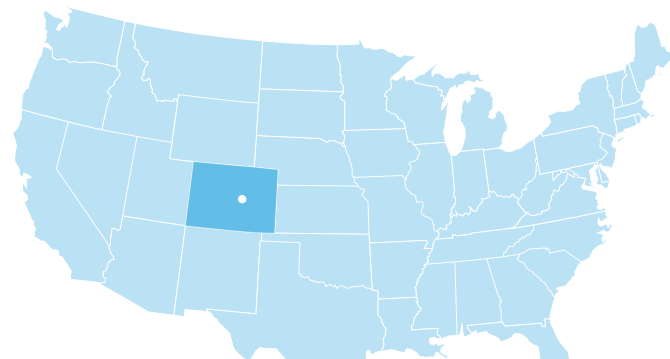


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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

As I write this Publisher's Note, some four weeks in advance of its publication date, our nation is in the midst of a powerful movement seeking justice. While much can be said about these current events, I recognize that this magazine exists not for you to hear my personal views and values, but for you to hear the voices and stories of your colleagues in the real estate industry. My hope is that by continuing to introduce you to influencers within the community through this magazine – revealing not only what you might have in common but what might make you different from one another – it can serve as a vehicle for positivity and even for challenging your perspective. Hard conversations are rightfully being had all around us right now, but here in *Colorado Springs Real Producers*, we commit to our mission of connecting, elevating, and inspiring real estate professionals. Of being a community that supports and cherishes every top producer and respects your unique story.



Thank you,
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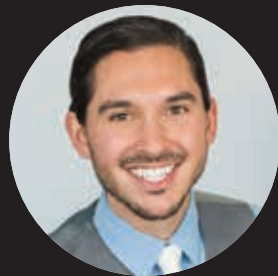
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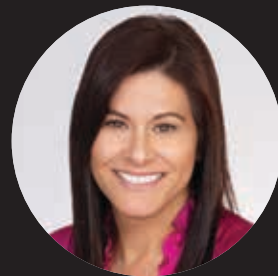
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MEET THE COLORADO SPRINGS REAL PRODUCERS TEAM



Brian Gowdy
Owner / Publisher /
Advertising Sales
brian.gowdy@realproducersmag.com
719-313-3028



Andrea Hoffman
Ad Specialist
andrea.hoffman@n2pub.com



Heidi Mossman
Photographer
303-877-1279



Katie Luster-Work
Photographer
719-963-9321



Robert O'Brien
Account Executive / Writer
bob.obrien@realproducersmag.com



Barbara Gart
Writer



Sara Cripe
Social Media Manager
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Geneva Eilertson
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Jessica DANIELS

STRUCTURE REAL ESTATE GROUP

By Barbara Gart | Photography by Heidi Mossman of Capture Life Photography

Jessica Daniels is a rare agent who not only specializes in buying and selling homes, but also has the background and expertise to help her clients design or renovate to create the home of their dreams. It only takes a few minutes talking to Jessica to realize that her greatest joy is making her clients happy and helping them visualize what their home can become. This self-described “house nerd” has been helping clients find the perfect home in Colorado Springs since 2015, but what brought her to the Springs originally was not houses, but baseball.

Jessica grew up in Twin Falls, Idaho, a small town on Snake River Canyon, with beautiful waterfalls, hiking and camping. Jessica and her husband Mike met working in Minor League Baseball and were offered a position in Colorado Springs with the Sky Sox. While she and Mike loved living in Colorado Springs, the baseball schedule can be extremely stressful, so when they decided to start a family, they left baseball for new careers. Mike opened up an insurance agency while Jessica opened a home décor and furniture store. She loved design consultation, but with two young kids at home, she realized it was not the right time for a brick and mortar business and sold the store. Jessica got her certification and taught school for five years, but after a while, she missed the creativity she felt working with “all things home related,” and in 2015, she got her real estate license and hasn’t looked back since.

Although she is a licensed agent, Jessica refers to herself as a “Home Specialist.” She says most REALTORS® help people buy and sell houses, but aren’t necessarily able to help with design or building a home from the ground up. What sets Jessica apart is she has the experience and expertise to help clients in three areas of homeownership. First, she can assist with the traditional buying and selling of homes. Second, she has her own

design company, Jessica Daniels Designs, and works with clients on home design, décor and renovations. Lastly, she has worked extensively with custom home builders and can help clients purchase land and build a new home from the ground up. Jessica loves working in all three areas that complement each other. She says, “I love helping someone buy a house and then renovate it before they move in to make it exactly what they want. Or the moment when we do a renovation or build, and they walk in and say it’s perfect.”

Jessica truly has the best interests of her clients in mind with every design she does and wants to design to their style, not her own. Nowhere is this more apparent than when asked who her dream client is. Jessica answered, “Someone who tells me ‘We don’t know what we want. We only know what we don’t want.’” She then will ask lots of questions and talk with them about their likes and dislikes. She also looks at pictures with her clients and has them complete a design guide questionnaire. Through this process, she can tell their style, color palette, what they’re drawn to, and says it’s the ultimate privilege for them to put their trust in her to do the design for them. She loves having a big unveiling, and since she is going off of

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“

I love helping someone buy a house and then renovate it before they move in to make it exactly what they want.

Or the moment when we do a renovation or build, and they walk in and say it’s perfect.

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their desires, her clients are always happy in the end. Jessica says a lot of designers have a certain style, and a lot of their designs start to look similar because they gravitate towards what they like over and over. Jessica is different in that she really listens to what her clients like and designs to “match their tastes and preferences, not my own. They’re the ones living in it, and I want it to match their style.” And since she is a REALTOR® in addition to a designer, she also knows where it’s wise to invest in renovations and where it’s not, so her clients are not putting too much money into a renovation and not getting it back when they sell.

Jessica’s third area of real estate lies in new builds and buying land. Jessica’s expertise and background in this field include land acquisition, wells and septic systems, soils testing, foundations, layout design and understanding zoning and city requirements. These are complex issues, and because she has extensive experience in this area, she knows what to expect or where she can find the answer if she doesn’t know. Often, Jessica will partner with other REALTORS® whose clients are buying land, going with new build construction or doing large scale renovations. She loves to support other REALTORS® and never wants to upstage them. In fact, she often consults with other REALTORS® privately, so they can take the information and give it to their clients directly. As Jessica says, “We’re all in this together.”



Jessica has always loved houses, design, architecture, problem-solving and helping people, so what she is doing now in real estate is the perfect fit for her personality and skill set. Her biggest reward is helping people and “serving my clients well.” No-where is this more apparent than in the first home she ever sold. Jessica says, “From that very first trans-



action, I’ve gotten eight other client referrals, helped eight other families to buy, sell or renovate. That’s my favorite story because it affirms I’m reaching my goal to truly help people. Your home impacts so much of your life, and having eight referrals from my first home sale tells me I’m serving my clients well.”

We’re all in this *together.*”

The other aspect she finds most rewarding about real estate is that she gets to be creative. She says, “It’s fulfilling to see something that was, envision what it can be and see that come to fruition. The ‘before and after’ and the journey from conception to reality is extremely exciting and fulfilling for me. And it’s even better to when my clients see the end results and they’re shocked and wowed by it.”

When asked what advice she would give up-and-coming agents, Jessica says to focus on the client and how you can serve them. She points to the fact that a lot of people get into the industry based on the promise to make a lot of money. Jessica says, “If you focus on that, everything you do is not genuine. Whereas if you focus on serving and your clients’ needs and how you can be a real, authentic influence in their life, you’re going to not only be more productive but feel more fulfilled as a result.



...

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This industry is more about serving people than it is about putting up big numbers. I feel like the agents I have met who are really good at what they do, who get a lot of referrals and have a consistent business, are genuine and there to serve."

Outside of real estate, Jessica enjoys spending time with her husband Mike and their three kids, Madax, Beckett and Whitaker, who are all named after baseball players. Even the family dog Fenway is named after a baseball park! They love going to concerts, sporting events, hiking and exploring everything Colorado Springs has to offer.

Jessica is also involved in The Success Collective, an organization that is founded with the idea of female entrepreneurs supporting one another. Jessica says, "So many times in life, we can become competitive, especially when you're an ambitious driven person, there can be a spirit of competition. I think it's really important to recognize that instead of seeing other ambitious women as competitors, when you can see them as allies and band together, you can accomplish so much good in the world." She goes on to say the organization not only focuses on entrepreneurs supporting each other in business, but they also use their resources, collective skills and talents to further invest in and support the community around them.

Jessica is also deeply passionate about her family and keeps her kids in mind with everything she does. She wants to teach her daughter to be a strong, independent woman who cares about others and teach her sons that hard work pays off. One of Jessica's favorite quotes is "Be humble. Be hungry. And always be the hardest worker in the room." Based on the work she is doing with her clients, her family and her volunteering, she is certainly living up to that quote, and achieving her goal of serving her clients and her community extremely well.



"The first things that come to mind when I think of Jessica are her energy and creativity. She has such good, positive energy all the time. It is contagious and gets everyone else around her going too. This is most obvious in meetings and working with clients. She has a big heart and just really wants to help everybody that she can. That was most evident when helping her with a family that came to the United States from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. She did not give up until she got them into a home to call their own."

—BRYAN EMRICK,
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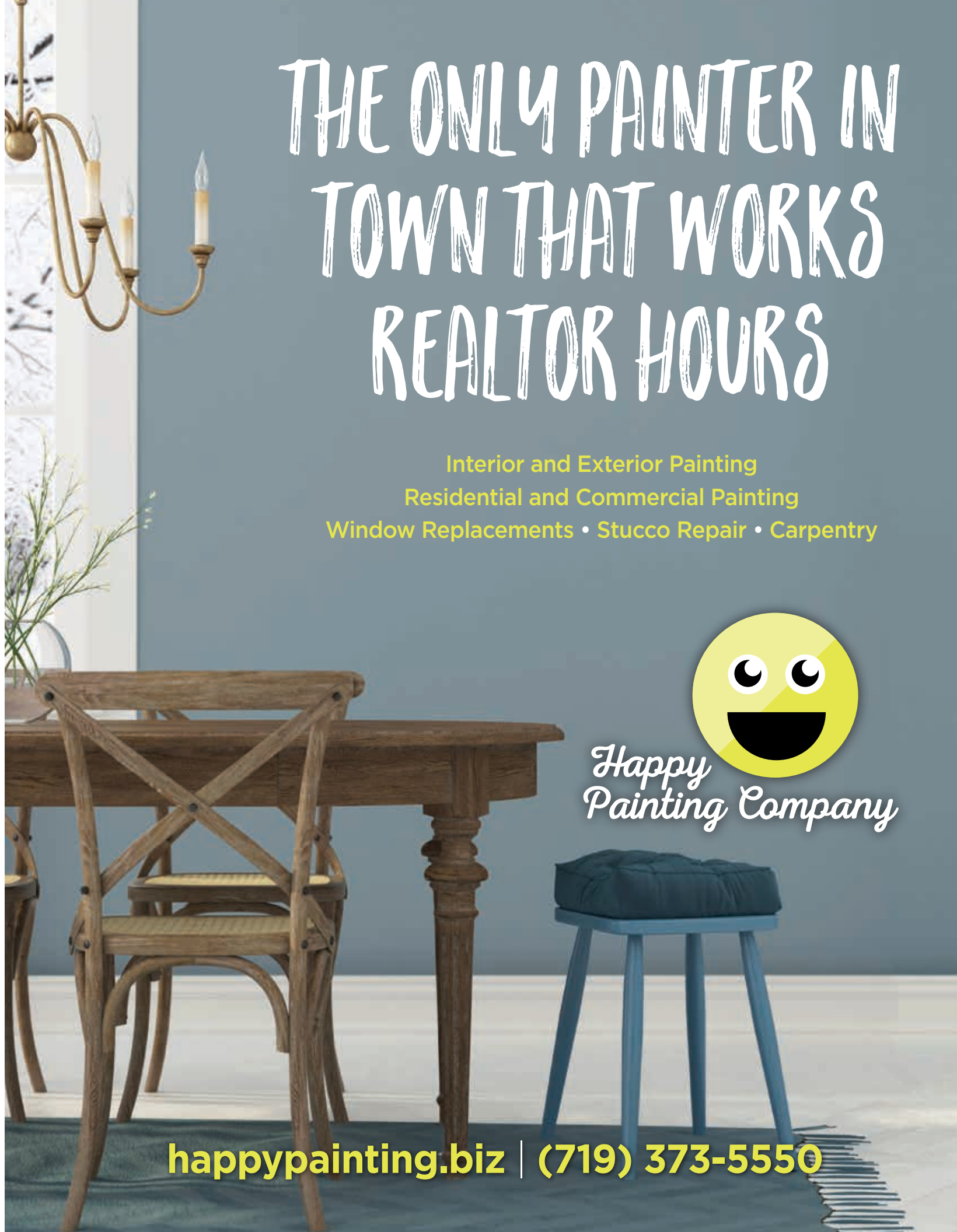
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JOSHUA BOUWKAMP

The Cutting Edge, Realtors®

By **Barbara Gart**
Photography courtesy of **Katie Luster-Work**
of Katie Marie Photography

Josh Bouwkamp brings a unique perspective to real estate. Not only was he homeschooled in a family with seven kids, but he also has lived in Colorado Springs for over 24 years and is an expert on the different areas and neighborhoods within the city. Josh was born in Wisconsin, but moved to Colorado for the first time with his family in 1986. As Josh says, “I’m not a native but I got here as fast as I could.” Josh’s family lived in Colorado until 1995, when they moved to Rochester, Minnesota, and Josh completed high school at public school for the first time. Josh grew to love Minnesota and considers it his second home, but missed the beauty of Colorado and moved back after he graduated high school.

Josh began his career in concrete construction and worked in the industry for 17 years. He retired from concrete work in 2016 and went to work for an engineering company. Josh calls the move “a great experience” and found the transition from working in construction to an office environment very eye-opening and educational. In 2018, he decided to get his real estate license and went from working full-time to becoming a full-time student. Although the licensing exam was nerve-racking, he passed with over 90% and excitedly “jumped into real estate with both feet.”

“Building those **RELATIONSHIPS** is what it’s about and everything else will follow.”



After passing his exam, Josh began looking for a brokerage that could provide great training and leadership. He found both with Coldwell Banker and his mentor, Chris Lutyen. Josh says Coldwell Banker didn’t have a formal mentor program, but Chris made himself available to Josh whenever he had questions, and the questions turned into a mentorship which eventually turned into a friendship. Josh appreciates that Chris took him “under his wing,” which was a great way to start his real estate career and learn the business.

In the spring of 2020, Josh moved to The Cutting Edge, Realtors®. Josh says, “After meeting with Gary Martinez, one of the

Managing Partners, I realized this is where I wanted to be and hang my license. I felt like Coldwell Banker had given me a great foundation in real estate, and I really wanted to branch out and see what I could do with TCER.” Josh loves the culture of The Cutting Edge, Realtors® and says it “feels like family.”

When asked what sets him apart from other agents, Josh says his unorthodox education has given him a unique perspective on life and people, which he brings into his business. He also prides himself on being there for his clients 24/7. He says he always answers his phone or texts back, and he makes sure he is not so busy where he can’t handle each transaction as if it was his only one. “That’s how I approach my business, being very hands-on, make myself available, provide as stress-free experience as possible, and be there every step of the way.” Being there for his clients doesn’t end at the closing table either. Josh says, “I want to go above and beyond for my clients, just because we close the deal that doesn’t end our relationship or my commitment to you as your agent.”

Another aspect that sets Josh apart is his knowledge of the city. He says he’s noticed a lot of agents are new to Colorado, but he has lived here so long “I rarely use GPS in my car because I know the city so well.” Josh says living here for so long, he knows all of the neighborhoods and makes it a point to stay educated about what’s going on in the community, schools and keeping up with changes and new things coming into town. While he has sold homes all over Colorado Springs, he specializes in the eastern part of town in the 80922/80923 zip codes, including Springs Ranch where he lives.



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Initially, going from construction to real estate was challenging for Josh. He realized he is a people person and found that doing foundation and engineering work, he didn't get the personal relationships like he wanted. Now that he's in real estate, he says, "I feel like I have those relationships now, and it's much easier to build them in real estate. I love talking with people, I love the business, I love grabbing coffee and getting to know people. Building those relationships is what it's about and everything else will follow."

Josh may have only been in the business for two years, but he has developed a favorite real estate story in that time. He worked with a client last year to list their home, and there were many obstacles to overcome with the sale. Josh says he "kept on persevering, kept fighting and moving forward, finding solutions for issues we were confronted with, and in the end, we sold the house with grit and determination." He says it was a great feeling when they finally got to the closing table.

Watching families find homes they love is one of Josh's greatest rewards. He says, "I love helping people find the perfect home. I don't think there's a better feeling. I love seeing my clients smile, imagining their furniture in the home and living there. It's such a great feeling to see people so happy."

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“That’s how I approach my business, being very **HANDS-ON**, make myself **AVAILABLE**, provide as **STRESS-FREE** experience as possible, and be there every step of the way.”

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Josh says that if he had any advice to give to up-and-coming agents, it would be to keep grinding. He says, "It's not easy, but keep working, you're going to have dry spells, but never give up. Take all the training you can, start building those relationships and educate yourself. Don't focus on the numbers, but focus on gaining knowledge and building relationships and the rest will follow."

Josh says he's blessed to live in Colorado and enjoys exploring the state with his daughter Amaris. The two like to go hiking, camping, skiing, off-roading, swimming and go to concerts at Red Rocks. Josh also loves to give back, volunteering at Amaris' school, and for the non-profit COSILoveYou and with the Care and Share Food Bank for Southern Colorado. His favorite quote is, "Never let another man do for you what you are fully capable of doing for yourself," and it's pretty clear that this rising star is fully capable of having a very bright future.




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▲ real producer

Jermaine Butler

By Robert O'Brien
Photography by Heidi Mossman of Capture Life Photography

When Jermaine Butler was asked what he most wants people to know about him, his answer was, “I just want them to know that I am building a business for the long haul, not just until the next thing comes along. I’ll do this until I can’t do it anymore. I take my... this business...very seriously.”

...



When Jermaine Butler was asked what he most wants people to know about him, his answer was, “I just want them to know that I am building a business for the long haul, not just until the next thing comes along. I’ll do this until I can’t do it anymore. I take my...this business...very seriously.”

“Very hard-working” is a consistent theme for those describing how and why Jermaine has found success as a REALTOR®. This would include a diverse group of friends, co-workers and supervisors, such as Chris Lutyen, Managing Broker at Chris’ Real Estate home since 2013, Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage: “Jermaine is an extremely

thoughtful agent and he’s a very hard worker.” Lutyen goes on to say “he just always works extremely hard, not only for his clients but for the industry as well. He’s always putting in the extra effort and going the extra mile.” The Managing Broker concludes that Jermaine is a consistent top producer, hitting “high marks” every year.

While Butler has always been a hard worker that effort did not translate into what one would think of as “career success.” He had a bit of a winding road in his journey to Top Producing REALTOR®. There were the years after high school where Butler labored mightily in what he

refers to as “workforce” jobs. The military life, he decided, was not for him. And college? Not yet. “I wasn’t into either at the time,” he remembers.

Jermaine comes from a military family, starting with his “granddad,” an Army Master Sergeant who, after “serving all over the world,” according to Butler, decided to remain in Colorado Springs after retiring from the service. Jermaine’s mom and dad met in the Springs; his dad was in the army and his mother eventually joined the service. There was an intervening period where Jermaine and his mom moved to Philadelphia, the original home of the family, but eventually, he moved back to Colorado Springs and lived with his grandmother with whom he says “I was very, very close.” Jermaine’s mother, upon completing her service, moved back to this area and Colorado Springs has been the “family home” ever since.

“My first job out of high school was at MCI, which became MCI/Worldcom, in telemarketing—sales,” explains Butler. “At the time, the company had 5,000 employees in Colorado Springs, so it was one of THE companies to work for.” Jermaine explains that at that point he was living with his mother. With his new job and income, he was able to buy his first car. “It’s surprising how many people I know in real estate worked for MCI at some point,” he noted. It was a time when Colorado Springs was a relatively small town with a very large tech footprint, including such companies as Hewlett Packard.



“
My goal is
always to help
my client find
the home they
can love.
”



While still working at MCI, Butler took a part-time job with Airborne Express (now DHL) and became part of a plane crew. “We loaded freight into metal containers called ‘cans’ and then loaded those onto the planes,” he explains. He’d do his shift at MCI during the day and then go immediately to the Airborne job for several hours of hard labor. Note: This is where the “very hard-working” legend began.

Eventually, Butler says, he left MCI and became a full-time delivery driver with Airborne. “That’s when I went from not knowing how to get around town very well to learning every part of the Springs and the surrounding area. Before that job, I didn’t even know the west side of town existed!”

In 2005, Butler left Airborne and went into military security as a civilian but says that a friend of his was doing well in flipping houses in Atlanta, and that is when he first became interested in a possible career in real estate. “It was an epiphany,” he says. “I didn’t want to just do ‘jobs’ for the rest of my life.”

After getting his real estate license, Butler went to work for The Herman Group (now ERA Herman Group Real Estate) in 2010. “I really learned a lot about the profession there,” remembers Jermaine. “I really didn’t have any formal office training...so I had to learn to use a computer, how to FAX...some basic stuff.” He says he did learn how to get around a real estate office and how to prospect, do deals, etc.”

In 2012, Butler says he hit a “rough patch,” income-wise, so he took a part-time job with FedEx. “I worked at FedEx from 2:30

am to 7:00 am, went home to change then went to work in real estate until the evening.” Rinse, repeat. He says he got used to being sleep deprived.

After a year of working two jobs, in 2013, a friend at Coldwell Banker told Butler there was an opportunity in the relocation team at that agency. “I really appreciated the opportunity at ERA Herman Group, but I felt the opportunity with the relocation team would be a great fit for me.” Butler joined Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage and has been with the agency ever since.

Butler points out that growing a book of business from scratch in 2012-’13, there wasn’t really wasn’t a robust Zillow or Realtor.com

“
Help people and the
money will come.
”

to rely on...it took knocking on doors and lots of phone calls. He worked expired listings neighborhood by neighborhood. He worked For Sale By Owner listings. His persistence and hard work eventually paid off. Jermaine says in his first year at Coldwell he did 33 “deals.” Then in 2014, 40. And from then on it’s been in the range of 50 per year.

In 2015, Butler met his partner, Whitney, and in 2016 they were blessed with a baby girl, who they named Zuri. Jermaine says

the name is Swahili for “beautiful.” “And she is,” he says with pride. He adds that having a child...and a family unit...has changed him. “Now I have to consider the future of my partner, my daughter...my family.” He says it really brings focus to everything he does, in both his personal and professional life.

In talking about his successful career in real estate, Butler feels that the jobs he had before becoming a REALTOR® prepared him for the hard work it would take to truly build a lasting career. For example, in one instance he showed a client over 70 properties before they found the right one. “My goal is always to help my client find the home they can love.” Jermaine’s primary business philosophy is “help people and the money will come.”

By the way, in any spare time he has, Jermaine’s “hobby” is cooking. “I do a really good Alfredo.” He hinted he is popular on the pot luck circuit.

Finally, if what your friends say about you when you’re not around

is any measure of the quality of one’s character, here are some of the words they use to describe Jermaine Butler:

Tammy Byrd-Fulbright: “Shirt off his back, hard-working, humble, honest, funny, awesome person.”

Terry Williams: “Surrounds himself with successful people. He pushes me, I push him.”

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Certified move manager Jen works closely with caregivers such as Bob (left) and Ben (above) to assist them with their moves ensuring that great care is taken with their loved ones as well as their personal belongings.



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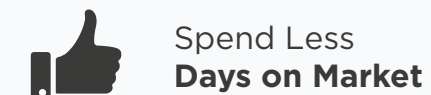
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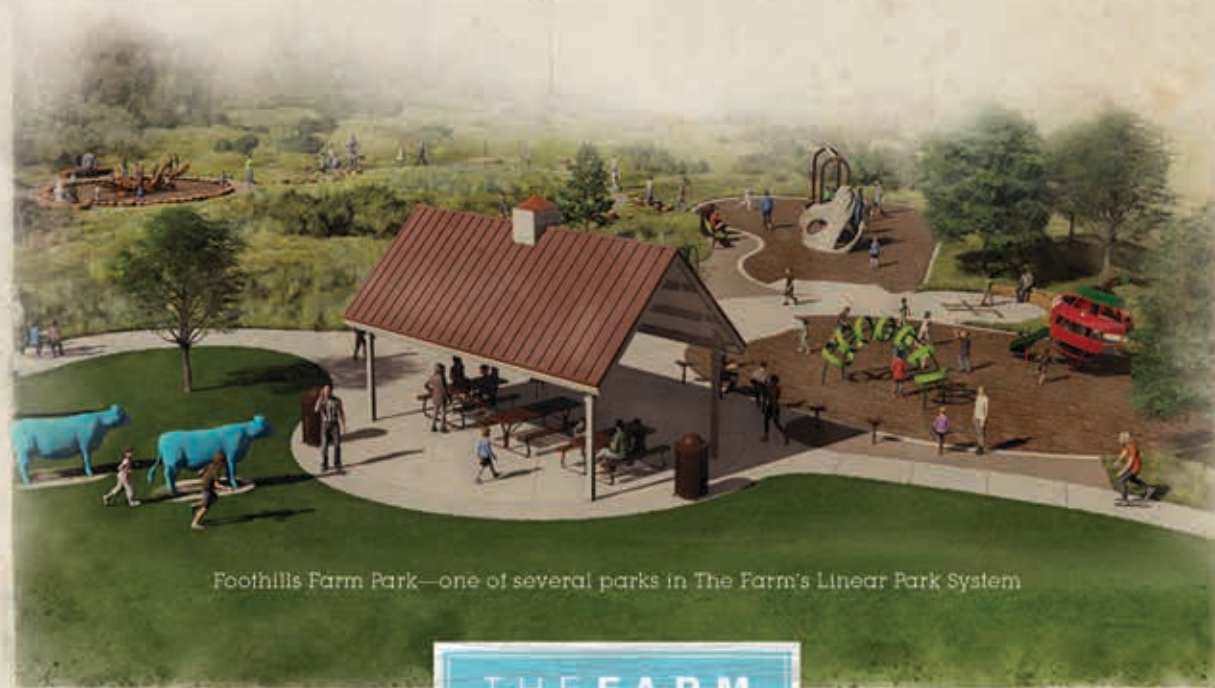
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ask the expert

5 PHOTOGRAPHY HABITS OF SUCCESSFUL AGENTS



By Dmitry Choukline,
PixVid
www.pixvid.net
833-715-7150

Being real estate photographers, we have the opportunity to work with a lot of amazing real estate agents. When you photograph thousands of homes, you start to notice what makes the successful agents stand out. Here are the top five habits of successful agents when it comes to marketing their listing.

LET THE PROPERTY DETERMINE YOUR MARKETING — NOT THE LISTING PRICE

Many agents skipped out on a piece of marketing because they “don’t do drones on anything less than x.” Consider all factors when determining the appropriate marketing levels such as location, price, and the marketing potential for your brand. Just because a home will sell quickly, doesn’t mean you can’t use a gorgeous listing to represent your marketing in the future.

ORGANIZATION IS THE COMMON DENOMINATOR

There is an agent that we shoot a new listing for sometimes three to four times a week. Without fail, that agent will make sure the home is cleaned, staged, photo-ready and vacant by the time we arrive every single time. We have completed over 200+ shoots for this agent in the last two years. It is possible to avoid the last-minute scramble.

BE THE CONDUCTOR — NOT THE BAND

One of the most important abilities is being a master of client management. The agent’s attitude and professionalism sets the tone for the entire transaction. Oftentimes we’ve had to work around homeowners, stagers, and cleaning crew. Setting expectations and staying on top of the schedule is what sets many agents apart.

FOCUS ON WHAT'S IMPORTANT

The biggest contribution that an agent can make to their photoshoot is to make sure everything is prepped and ready to go before the photographer arrives. The words that any photographer dreads hearing is “we’re just going to move a few things from room to room.”

NOW THAT YOU'VE SET THE STAGE — TRUST YOUR PHOTOGRAPHER

The best photos we’ve ever taken have always been in a staged vacant home. Having the space and time to work out our compositions lets us figure out the best way to showcase your listing. Once your photographer arrives, give them space to work in a clean and staged home and you’ll always love the results.

When it comes down to what makes an agent successful, we’ve found that the agents who are organized, trust their team and set proper expectations always rise to the top. It is possible to avoid the last-minute scramble and those that can set the stage for the photographer will always have great photos come back.



ask the expert

Why Every REALTOR® Needs a Professional Biography



By Kara Varner

Why do your clients want to work with you? Slick marketing, social media presence, or endless advertising may capture their attention at first, however, most likely they need to have what I call a “fuzzy feel-good” feeling in order to make the commitment to secure you as their REALTOR®.

One tool that I have found over the years that is very successful for my REALTOR® clients, especially new REALTORS® or REALTORS® working with clients that are out of town, is a concise, powerful, yet RELATABLE professional biography. The biography has an isolated reputation of being only for academic, medical, and legal professionals; however, it is widely becoming a marketing device for advancing social connection. Though we are “social distancing,” and especially *because we ARE social distancing*, a biography can help tell your “story,” relay your expertise, and “connect” you to your prospective client in a way that Facebook pages and LinkedIn Profiles are not able to.

What exactly is a Professional Biography?

A professional biography is a one to four paragraph document about you and your career journey utilizing strategic and influential storytelling. A well-crafted biography can establish and deepen the “know, like and trust” factors that prospects often need before investing in you and your service.

What does a biography do?

A professional biography communicates “who you are” and “what you have done” *quickly* to the reader. It can detail credentials, hobbies and interests, and family. Yes, even your Labradoodle can get a shout out!

As a REALTOR®, how do you best use a Professional Biography?

You might need a professional biography when...

- You mail or distribute marketing information via a binder/folder
- Participate in networking events
- Publish an article or write a guest post
- Speak at conferences, affiliations or almost anywhere
- For inclusion in company literature
- Link to your bio from your social media
- Post it on your website

Quick tips for crafting your bio:

- Capture the reader’s attention through an engaging summary. Make sure to write in third person.
- Provide the basics: name, profession, and expertise.
- Relay career highlights with quantifiable data.
- Are you known for anything specific in your industry?
- Include credentials and education.
- Follow up with appropriate hobbies or interests and interject a little personality or humor.

Give me a call if you need help structuring your biography. I’m always here to help!

Kara Varner, MAOM, CARW, CPRW, CRS-MTC, CEIC

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