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Avondale Bowl  
May 8th at 12pm  
*Details on page 50*

Special Edition:  
***Influential  
Couples***

FEBRUARY 2020



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“We are truly happy with the experience of working with Ania and Tim. They saved the day when another mortgage company told us we were not approved. Very patient with inexperienced buyer who has questions. 100% would refer to my friends and family. Thank you!!

-Julie D.

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-Keon W.



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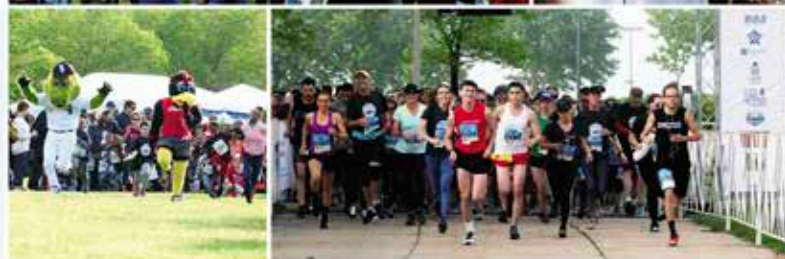
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## *publisher's* **NOTE**



Photo by Heather Allison Love Photography

It is with great pleasure to present our 2nd issue of Influential Couples in Chicago Real Estate. In the fall of 2018, our team had the idea of crafting an issue of Chicago Real Producers solely dedicated to highlighting spouses and partners who work together in their real estate businesses. After our February 2019 issue hit mailboxes, the positive feedback we received from the Real Producers community was overwhelming so we decided to do it again in 2020!



**Andy Burton**  
Publisher, *Chicago Real Producers*  
andy.burton@RealProducersMag.com

Most of you reading this know that my wife and I work together so I have an abundance of mutual respect for the REALTORS® who were nominated to be featured in this issue. I think back to last year and all of the things that have changed in my life. We have a six-month-old in addition to three other children which brings an entirely new dynamic to our household. Two children in diapers simultaneously is not fun in case you were wondering. We hired an operations specialist to help take the load off of my wife which has been a tremendous blessing.

As you will read from the agents' journeys in this edition, working side-by-side with a loved one takes an immense amount of concentrated focus and energy. Imagine if everyone on a basketball team practiced individually and then attempted to play in a game together. I would argue that it is equally as necessary to reconnect, plan strategically, and check-in periodically if you work closely with a spouse, as it is to physically be working in your business.

We want to give a shout out to NEMA Chicago for hosting our Winter event this month. I would also like to thank our fantastic panelists. I feel the topic and discussion genuinely reconnects our community heading into the new decade. Photos will appear in our March issue. Lastly, please save the date for Friday, May 8th from 12pm-3pm for our Spring Event hosted by Avondale Bowl (3118 N. Milwaukee Ave. Chicago, IL 60618). Event details can be found on page 50.



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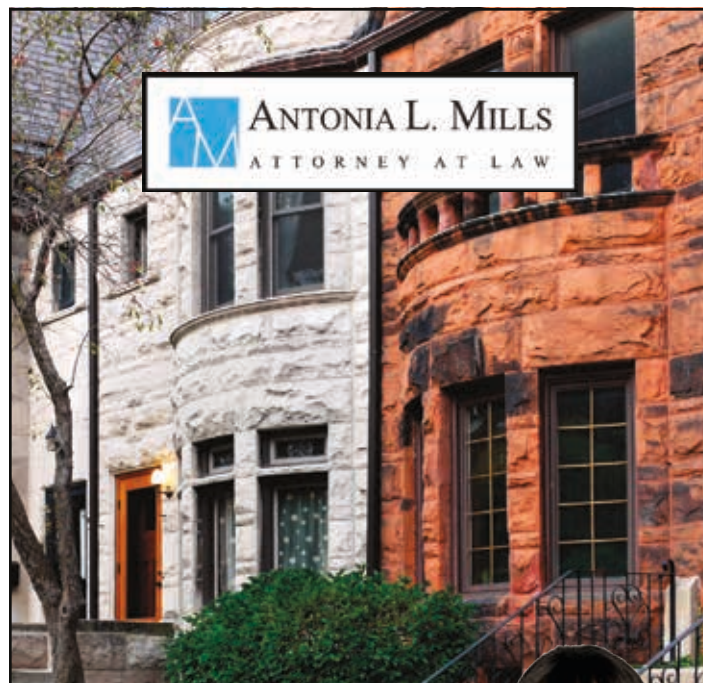
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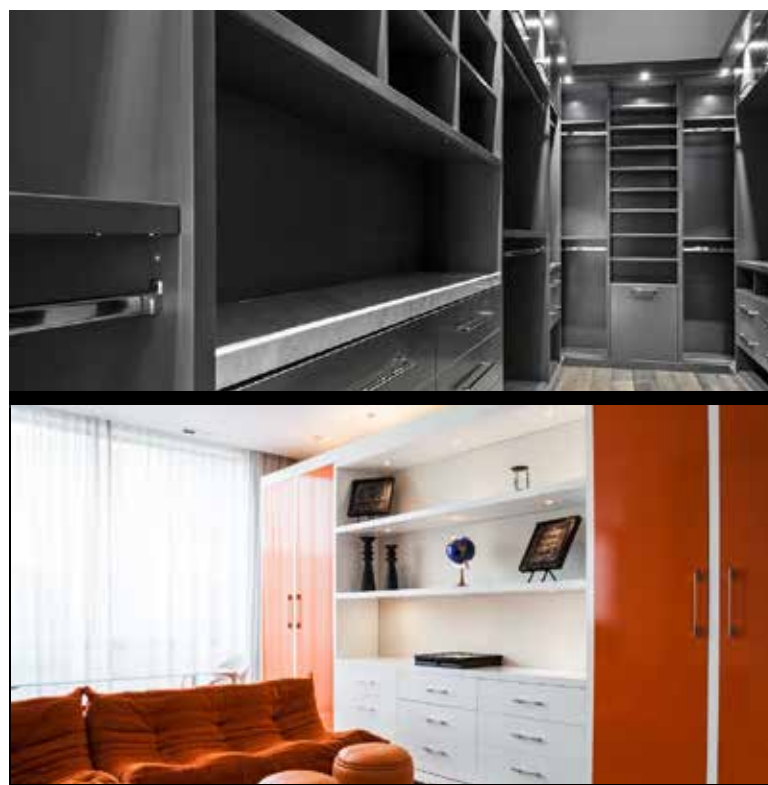

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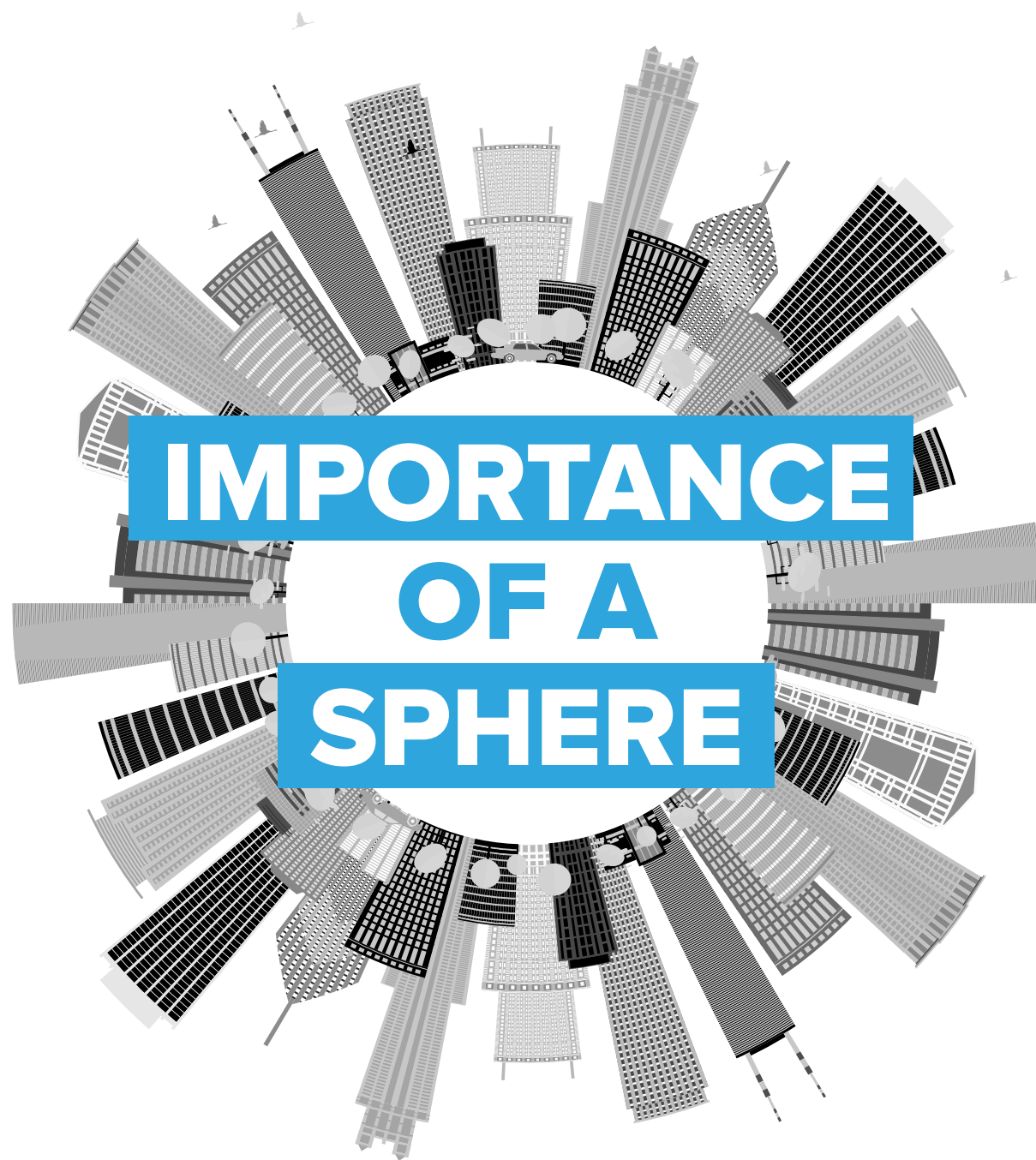

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# IMPORTANCE OF A SPHERE



By Mike Opyd

**If you want to succeed in real estate there are literally only two things you need to do: (1) build a sphere (a database) of at least 50 to 100 people (to start with), and (2) market to this sphere constantly! The rest of what you do is just a bonus on top of these two things.**

A REALTOR'S® database, or sphere, is the lifeline of his or her business. These are the people that if marketed to properly, will send you business constantly for many years.

Compiling a database and putting together a plan to market to it, is the first thing I tell every new agent to do. True, it is not the most fun thing to do and it can be very time-con-

suming in the beginning, but building it right away is like pouring the foundation for a building. It is the core of every successful agent's business. Just ask any top producer. I'll bet almost every one of them has a large database that they market to constantly.

Chasing and throwing money at cold leads is a complete waste of time and resources. This is especially true for new agents who do not have these resources

to waste. Instead, an agent should put a large part of their budget toward marketing to their database, and they should market to them at least thirty times a year. This is the best way to ensure that you will have a consistent source of clients coming in.

That said, you do not have to spend a lot of time marketing to your database. I personally only spend about 30 to 60 minutes a month marketing to my database. If you can't spare 60 minutes a month to market yourself to the people who will be sending you most of your business, then you need to take a serious look at your days and see where you are wasting time and make it a point to carve out some for your people.

FYI, posting on social media does not count as marketing to your database. Posting on social media is something that should be done in addition to the marketing targeted to your database.

A database is also what allows agents to scale up their businesses. Over the years, I've noticed that REALTOR® businesses typically start to take off in years five to seven. This is because most of their early clients are now at the stage in their lives where they are ready to scale up. If an agent is properly marketing themselves to these past clients, they will be the ones getting the call, not someone else. This usually means that not only will the agent get the listing, but also the sale, and that is where the takeoff happens because when people buy again, it is usually at a higher price point. So, generally, at this point, you will be able to double up every time those clients are ready to move. The best part though? Not only will the price point of your old clients' new purchases move up, but so will that of the friends and family they will refer to you.

I don't know about you, but I would much rather speak to a client who was referred to me than to a cold lead. With most referrals, your clients will already have done most of the work for you. You will just need to show the lead why your clients referred them to you.

To take the importance of your sphere one step further, consider this: according to a survey conducted by the National Association of REALTORS®, in 2019 of buyers and sellers who actually bought or sold, 86 percent said they would use their agent again, but only 24 percent did use the same agent again.

Yes, you read that correctly. My mouth dropped when I read this. Following up with your past clients is one of the easiest things to do but clearly most agents do not have a game plan for this.

Let me put this in context for you. Let's run some quick numbers using the percentages found in this survey:

### The Numbers Don't Lie

Let's look at Chicago as an example:

- Chicago averages 50,000 closed sales per year.
- 86 percent (number of clients who stated they would use their agent again) of those 50,000 closings = 43,000 clients

- 24 percent (used the same agent again) of those 43,000 clients = 10,320 clients

So, roughly, that means 32,680 buyers and sellers who said they would use their agent again, did not end up using their agent again! According to the Chicago Association of REALTORS®, in 2018 the median price point of both condos and single-family homes combined was \$280,000. That means roughly \$9,150,400,000 worth of real estate was up for grabs all because some agents did not have a plan in place to contact their clients after their deals closed.

I know this may seem like an extreme example, and there are probably a ton of other factors to consider here, but the point is, an agent's sphere or database, is the lifeline of their business. If it is neglected, that agent may well risk becoming one of the 87 percent of REALTORS® whose business fails within the first five years.

### About the Author:

Mike Opyd is the owner of RE/MAX NEXT, a brokerage specifically designed to help an agent's business grow without the limitations of a traditional real estate company. In addition to owning RE/MAX NEXT, Mike is a Top Producing Agent. He has been recognized by Chicago Agent Magazine as a "Who's Who" REALTOR® in 2014, 2015, 2017, 2018, and 2019.

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# Darrell & Jill SCOTT

Diving Into Business Together



Jill and Darrell Scott love to travel off the beaten path, especially if it takes them to the water. Both are scuba-certified, and plan trips every fall that allow them to dive and explore new underwater wildlife. They also often travel up to their cottage in Indiana where they can water ski and wakeboard.

Much like their outlook on adventure travel, Jill and Darrell dove right into working together as a married couple and haven't looked back since. But their adventures began long before that.

Though the couple first connected in Chicago in 2013, they had attended the same high school (Noblesville High School) in a small town in Indiana. In fact, their families lived just one-and-a-half miles apart. But because Jill was a freshman when Darrell was a senior, they didn't cross paths until a Colts game brought them together in 2013.

Because they came from the same hometown, the connection was immediate. The couple dated for three years before Darrell popped the question and the two were married in August of 2017. They have a French bulldog named Walter, and their son, Declan, was born in April 2019.

The Scotts work together at the Scott Group, but neither Jill nor Darrell went into real estate right out of college.

Darrell graduated with a degree in architecture from Ball State University. He finished his master's program in 2010 right after the



Darrell and Jill with their son, Declan.

“

While our approach is different, we both want the same outcome: to find the perfect homes for our clients.

”

- Darrell Scott

market crashed and when many architects were being laid off. Wanting to redirect his love of architecture into a new career, he decided to get his real estate license.

When Jill and Darrell met, Jill was working in marketing for TV and radio. Darrell's crazy work schedule made it difficult for the couple to see each other enough—Jill was working during the week and Darrell's weekends were filled with showings. When he found himself spread too thin one weekend, Darrell bribed Jill into covering a client for him and Jill was hooked. She left her graphic design job behind to join Darrell in real estate.

“Though our schedules can still be very hectic, I think we've found a much better balance working in real estate,” says Jill. “Especially now that we have Declan, we need to prioritize him and be okay [with] telling our clients we're booked at certain times. I think we've found a lot of success in working together.”

The Scotts claim that support and patience are key to working with your spouse. They also emphasize the importance of not talking about work 24/7—even during the busiest of weeks. And much like any relationship, it helps them to know and understand each other's strengths



Photo credit: Alina Tsvor

and weaknesses to identify which role each of them best plays in their business.

“Jill's style is personal. She's fascinated by our clients' life stories and focuses on the relationships she builds throughout the process,” claims Darrell. “I'm more architecturally driven and focus on the numbers and intricacies of the industry. But while our approach is different, we both want the same outcome: to find the perfect homes for our clients.”

Like other REALTORS®, the Scotts love building valuable relationships with their clients.

“No two clients are the same, so it's exciting to find a solution that fits their specific needs,” explains Jill. “It's so rewarding to realize that our clients put 100 percent of their trust in us with one of the biggest financial decisions of their life.”

Working together has the added benefit of watching your spouse thrive. Each day Darrell and Jill are able to watch each other grow individually, together as a couple, and with other team members, which has been a rewarding experience for both of them.

Though the future surely has great things in store for the Scotts, their focus is on learning more about the industry.

“We believe it's important to never stop learning,” notes Darrell. “You have to go to all the seminars you can, learn from other agents regardless of their volume, and learn anything you can from anyone. That's a sure way to find success.”



Darrell and Jill at the Great Wall in China



Darrell and Jill scuba diving in Cozumel, Mexico

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▶▶ partner spotlight

By Jennifer Mitchell  
Photos by Heather Allison Love Photography

**JIM**  
HECHTMAN  
Managing Partner of  
The Hechtman Group Ltd

## Helping Businesses Hit Home Runs

In addition to helping his clients grow their business, Jim Hechtman has two great loves: family and sports. His most memorable moments include marrying his wife, Tricia, starting a family, working with his father for twenty-three years, watching the Bears win the Super Bowl and the Cubs win the World Series, all fall into those two buckets. In his spare time, he loves golfing, playing basketball, and spending time with his wife and two sons, Owen (17) and Emmitt (14). Jim's passion for helping others and his competitive drive are the roots of the success of The Hechtman Group.

Jim is the managing partner of The Hechtman Group Ltd, which was founded by him and his father in 1993. The firm specializes in accounting, tax, and business consulting services for individuals, small business owners, and entrepreneurs, with a focus on the real estate industry.

"The many IRS requirements and unique state and federal tax laws make residential and commercial real estate accounting especially complex," states Jim. "So it's essential for real estate companies to



partner with a CPA who specializes within the sector both to ensure compliance and to maximize returns and growth opportunities."

The Hechtman Group Ltd does much more than help people file their tax returns. In addition to tax planning and compliance work, Jim and his team help clients optimize and organize their financial affairs and set them up to think about growing their business.

After graduating from the University of Michigan, Jim worked as a staff accountant at Altschuler Melvoin and Glasser (AM&G). While there, he fine-tuned his knowledge of tax and accounting, but he always felt that something was missing at the large regional firm. The absence of client interaction helped him decide to pivot and pursue a degree in psychology. ●●●



Jim with his team at The Hechtman Group Ltd

“I was about to start on that path when my father decided to leave his firm. He convinced me to start a new firm with him to see what it’s like to work with small businesses,” explains Jim. “I found that I could practice the financial consulting which I really enjoyed, while also dipping into business psychology as I helped my clients grow their businesses. It turned out to be the best of both worlds.” This evolved into the relationship focus the firm continues to employ throughout its client base.

As more and more of Jim’s clients and friends began to get involved with real estate, Jim developed an expertise in real estate taxation and accounting.



Of course, running a business isn’t without its ups and downs. The financial crisis of 2008 meant Jim had to go without pay for a few months. However, he claims it was the best worst thing that ever happened to him.

“It made me realize that I had to be far more intentional about growth and planning for myself and my clients,” says Jim. “It was a tremendous learning experience early on.”

It is experiences like this that Jim shares with his staff in the hopes of teaching future generations of accountants. A service business is about people and relationships. Sharing personal experiences, especially ones that help shape your future, are important to earn clients’ trust. Through this focus



the firm has grown to 20 people with professionals in each age group so that all clients can have relationships with a contemporary.

“I’m always focused on the future and constantly reinvesting in the growth of our staff,” notes Jim. “I hope they can learn from my experiences to be one step ahead of other CPA professionals.”

Jim certainly has a lot to share. Through his commitment to perseverance and dedication to providing the best service possible, he’s managed to continually grow his company without taking on any debt. It is his perseverance, his long-term strategic vision, and his uncompromised integrity that he hopes will enable the firm to continue to grow its client base in the Chicago area.

For those entrepreneurial-minded folks hoping to start their own businesses, Jim advises that it’s okay to build your resources slowly and steadily.

“Don’t underestimate the value of patience, commitment, and the ability to say ‘no’ when it’s not the

right opportunity,” notes Jim. “And always focus on the balance between dedicating time to your family and dedicating time toward growing a successful business.”

**“Residential and commercial real estate accounting is complex so it’s essential for real estate companies to partner with a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) who specializes in the industry.”**

For more information on the services at The Hechtman Group Ltd please visit [www.thehechtmangroup.com](http://www.thehechtmangroup.com) or call (847) 256-3100.



Jim’s father, Jay Hechtman.

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Braiden and his four siblings camping out together at home.



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Emily is all smiles as she hangs out in her new tent!



Isaac, Ivy, and Eli have hand-packed a stack of care packages that are ready to get shipped out for young warriors all across the United States.

# CAMP OUT FROM CANCER: A LOOK AT WHAT A TENT CAN DO



By April Schippers

**Camp Out From Cancer supports children who are battling cancer by providing a happy means of escape from the daily stresses and fears that they experience. By gifting these children with one of our care packages, we aim to put a smile on their faces (and those of their families) as they bravely endure their cancer treatments. Each Camp Out From Cancer care package includes an indoor tent, books, snacks, a flashlight, glow bracelets, and a Camp Out From Cancer bag in which to carry everything in.**

### Our Story

In June 2011, Isaac Parris was diagnosed with Medulloblastoma, a malignant form of brain cancer. He was five years old and had just finished Kindergarten. Instead of a summer spent riding his bike, swimming in the neighbor's pool, and making up games to occupy the warm summer days, Isaac underwent brain surgery, followed by six weeks of daily cranial and spinal proton radiation treatments that all required pretreatment fasting and anesthesia.

After finishing the radiation treatments, Isaac went through nine rounds of in-hospital chemotherapy, which required his being admitted into the hospital for several days at a time. One day during those treatments, Isaac was given a small indoor tent that he and his mother, April, set up in his hospital room.

It helped him manage his own stress because it provided him a place to play that didn't look anything like his hospital room; he could feel like a normal kid again.

On June 21, 2013, Isaac and his family went back to the hospital on his anniversary weekend to say thank you to the doctors and nurses who had treated him. This visit was a tradition, but that year Isaac (with our help) decided to make several care packages that included indoor tents to give to some of the kids who were at the hospital.

The first recipient of one of our care packages was a five-year-old girl named Sydney. She had just been diagnosed with leukemia. Isaac, who has a very quiet disposition, talked with Sydney and tried to help her feel better. After they talked, Sydney headed back to her hospital room, care package in hand. After just a few minutes, the child-life specialist at the hospital showed Isaac and his family pictures of beautiful Sydney "camping out" in her tent. In that moment, Camp Out From Cancer was born.

### Why We Do What We Do

Being involved in the world of childhood cancer can be very heavy at times. The stories from the parents of children who have received our care packages are what keep us, Isaac, April, and their family going. Here is just one example: "OMG! Where do I begin? The moment your tent arrived she has been bursting with joy. It has been her escape from her [bed]room. We decided to get her brother one, too, and invited her cousins over for a night of camping. The rest of us made our tents from linen and furniture. We cooked fish and cheesy grits (her favorites), told campfire

stories and sang songs, and later made s'mores. Before the night was over, she ran to me and said, 'Mom, I'm having so much fun.' It almost brought tears to my eyes. Who knew that something as small as a tent would bring so much joy to a child with cancer? Thank you for your generosity, and I pray one day that we can pay it forward."

### How Families and Friends Can Request a Care Package

Camp Out From Cancer always provides care packages at no cost to parents/guardians with children currently receiving treatment for cancer. They may request a care package through this link: [www.campoutfromcancer.com/lets-go-camping/refer-your-child](http://www.campoutfromcancer.com/lets-go-camping/refer-your-child). Friends and other family members of any child receiving treatment for cancer may purchase a care package for \$50 through this link: [www.campoutfromcancer.com/lets-go-camping/refer-a-friend](http://www.campoutfromcancer.com/lets-go-camping/refer-a-friend).

Camp out From Cancer also has a Special Siblings Program. It is common for the siblings of children going through cancer treatment to feel forgotten or cast aside. Created by Ivy, Isaac's younger sister, the Special Siblings Program gifts siblings with a Target gift card so they can choose a special treat they'll like, no matter their age.

### How You Can Help

**Individual Donations** - Each Camp Out From Cancer care package costs us \$50 to assemble and ship. Donors can sponsor an entire care package, make a one-time donation for an alternate amount, or become a Camp Ranger by committing to making a reoccurring monthly donation. For more information, please go to our donation page: [www.campoutfromcancer.com/get-involved/donate/](http://www.campoutfromcancer.com/get-involved/donate/).

**Community Support** - Business owners and community leaders can support Camp Out From Cancer by organizing events and fundraisers. From golf outings, to camp-ins, to after-school events, Camp Out From Cancer has been the recipient of a variety of different fundraisers. More fundraising ideas can be found by searching "community support" in our Campfire Stories blog ([www.campoutfromcancer.com/blog](http://www.campoutfromcancer.com/blog)).

**Event Sponsorship & Support** - Camp Out From Cancer organizes events throughout the year. Businesses and individuals can support our fundraising efforts by sponsoring an event, or volunteering, or by donating raffle prizes.

### About the Author

April Schippers is the Founder and President of Camp Out From Cancer. She was named one of the 15 Most Charitable Women of 2017 by Glancer Magazine and "Wonder Women" of the Week by WGN Radio. April lives in Montgomery, Illinois with her husband, Pat, three children (Isaac, Ivy, and Eli), and their bulldog, Harley. In addition to running a non-profit organization, she is also a first-grade teacher at Davis Primary in St. Charles.

For more information about Camp Out From Cancer, please visit our website: [www.campoutfromcancer.com](http://www.campoutfromcancer.com), or email us at [info@campoutfromcancer.org](mailto:info@campoutfromcancer.org).

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Joe and Nancy with their son, Bram.  
Photo credit: Shelby Kroger



# & JOE KENNEDY NANCY WEBER

## Tag Teaming Life Together

Joe Kennedy and Nancy Weber met the very same year they both entered real estate. It was the spring of 2005, and Nancy had already started her career at @properties. Joe was just about to start his career with Keller Williams, but thought he should do his due diligence and talk to someone from a different company. A friend of his knew Nancy and helped set up a meeting for them to talk about real estate.

Joe had tried a few career paths before finding real estate. He'd been working on a master's degree in counseling psychology, but after an internship, he decided that counseling wasn't for him. He moved into graphic design after that, but it was in 2001, when he started managing proper-

ties for an architect/developer, that he decided to get his license.

Nancy had switched career paths a couple times too. She had received her undergraduate degree in computer engineering and math and worked in consulting with Accenture. After a few years, she decided to go to culinary school and tried catering for a while, but when she realized that that wasn't the right career for her either, she started thinking about real estate.

Nancy already had a great deal of personal connection with the real estate industry. Her father, grandfather, and great grandfather were all architects in Chicago. Her great-grandfather, Peter Joseph Weber,





Photo credit: Shelby Kroger

... worked on many of the buildings for the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, worked with Daniel H. Burnham for a while, and then started his own architecture firm around 1900. Nancy grew up looking at architectural plans and walking job sites. She always enjoyed seeing things being created and built, and felt that a career in real estate would be a natural extension.

When Joe and Nancy met that day it was just a nice, pleasant, professional meeting. Afterwards, however, Joe couldn't get Nancy out of his mind. He resolved to ask her out to lunch. When she agreed, he asked if he could upgrade it to a dinner. Nancy thought it was just another meeting to talk about real estate. . . until Joe notably opened the car door for her.

They started dating and growing their own respective businesses. "I was drawn to Joe's independence, creativity, and kindness. I also loved how he was a good communicator, a continuous learner, and loved to travel," says Nancy.

Joe realized that Nancy could be the woman he would marry after their first international trip together to Argentina. "There's always the concern that you might be done after such a long time traveling with someone else, but we had an incredible time on that trip and got along so well. I knew it would last," he says. "I knew with Joe that I would continue to grow as a person and be loved for who I am," says Nancy.

After marrying in 2007, Joe and Nancy started discussing how they could make their lives more seamless. Being with separate companies, they couldn't cover each other's listings or do showings for the other. Nancy convinced Joe to join @properties, and they soon found how their different styles and unique strengths really complemented one another.

"We could serve our clients more effectively and provide more benefit to them," says Nancy. "We really are exact opposites in almost all ways. And it's worked well for our clients and us."

"Nancy is much more detail-oriented than I am," says Joe. "She handles the majority of the paperwork and scheduling, and I handle the day-to-day showings and most negotiations. We try and go on the majority of our listing appointments together since we bring different perspectives to the table and also personalities. Inevitably, one of us will connect a bit more with a client, and we let that person be the point person for the relationship moving forward. But we always make sure clients know that we will both be working with them, and that they can reach out to either of us at any point."

Joe and Nancy found that things really clicked when they diversified their strengths, and let each person

do what they were best at. Also, finding a balance in their work and life has been key. They only discuss work after hours if a client is in need or a deal is dependent upon it. Having separate offices definitely helps as well.

Outside of work, Joe and Nancy love being with their son, Bram (9), and their "girl," Tashi, an eleven-year-old Goldendoodle. Nancy loves to cook, garden, and has recently been taking a ceramics class. Joe is also an artist and has sold a few pieces to CB2. He is also into health and wellness, rehabbing properties, and was once big into swing dancing.

"Real estate is really what has enabled us to continue to work on our dreams and goals," says Nancy. "We're on the same wavelength most of the time, and our ability to tag team and step in for one another at any point is a true freedom and luxury that many other couples aren't able to do. We feel very fortunate."

**“ I was drawn to Joe’s independence, creativity, and kindness. I also loved how he was a good communicator, a continuous learner, and loved to travel, ”**

**SAYS NANCY.**



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cover story ◀◀

# CHRISTINA & SOHAIL

By Chris Menezes  
Photos by Carlos Miranda

*Salahuddin*

**Taking It up a Notch**

**W**hen Sohail and Christina met back in 2005, Sohail was in a challenging time in his life. He was transitioning from owning and operating a mortgage business to starting in residential sales as a REALTOR®. Upon being introduced by a mutual friend, Sohail was immediately attracted to Christina's eyes. As they began talking and getting to know each other, Christina was drawn to Sohail's intelligence and drive.

...



Sohail and Christina with their Operations Team: Astrid H. Ehrenstein (Listing & Transaction Manager) and Greg Mazalewski (Director of Sales).

Sohail indeed has drive. He started in the real estate industry as an investor at age 20, purchasing his first single-family home while finishing his degree in network engineering. With a taste for real estate, he started buying multi-unit buildings the next year and got into mortgages. Getting his mortgage business off the ground was a challenge for Sohail, as he went the first three months with no business. However, he soon learned that the key to success had to do with great communication and superior customer service.

Sohail is a big-picture kind of guy, and tends to communicate in a brief, to-the-point manner. Christina, on the other hand, is very detail-oriented in her thinking. As a project manager for a large pharmaceutical

company, she had to be very detailed and organized in her work. Within three months of dating each other, they knew they needed each other. And three years later, they married.

With Christina in his life, Sohail continued building his real estate business and saw great success. He became involved with development-built houses, bought and sold properties, and worked on large condominium conversions. As he continued to achieve his own real estate goals, he developed a passion for helping others do the same. So in 2012, he turned his focus to brokerage services and opened his own firm, the Sohail Real Estate Group.

Meanwhile, Christina stayed in the pharmaceutical industry, and along the way, they had their three daughters—Briana (16), Amera (10), and Ahriellah (7)—and picked up a couple of pets, rescuing a beagle-mix named Boots and a ferret named Summer. Then, Christina's company decided to relocate to the East Coast.

Not willing to uproot her entire family, she decided to take some time off to evaluate her next career move and possibly change paths. She always admired Sohail's work ethic. As they discussed the possibility of Christina joining his business, they began to believe that establishing a working partnership would take their business and marriage to the next level. They were right.

As Christina came on board and began handling all of the marketing and office operations, seeing to all the day-to-day details in the business, she developed an even higher level of respect for Sohail. Sohail saw and appreciated the skills and talent Christina brought to the business, and the two grew closer as they united their energies in working and contrib-

uting to the same goals. As business partners, while there were challenges to resolve, they had more rewards to celebrate together as well.

Of course, it wasn't all rose petals. There were adjustments that had to be made as they learned to work together as professionals. However, over their fourteen years together as a couple, they had already learned how to accept each other as is, to appreciate each other's differences, and still exist as one entity in spite of them, which made the transition to being business partners much easier. Additionally, they share the same work ethic, values, and passion for helping people. They are both involved with personal development, and enjoy working out, reading, and practicing their spirituality together.



**Take professional development training and coaching classes together to remain on the same page and to hold each other accountable.**

Given their years of experience working together, the advice they offer other couples who are considering getting into business together is “to establish clear expectations and stay in your lane. Take a personality assessment [test] to know both your and each other's personality type. Learn to control your emotions and ego. Take profes-



Sohail and Christina with their three daughters—Briana (16), Amera (10), and Ahriellah (7).

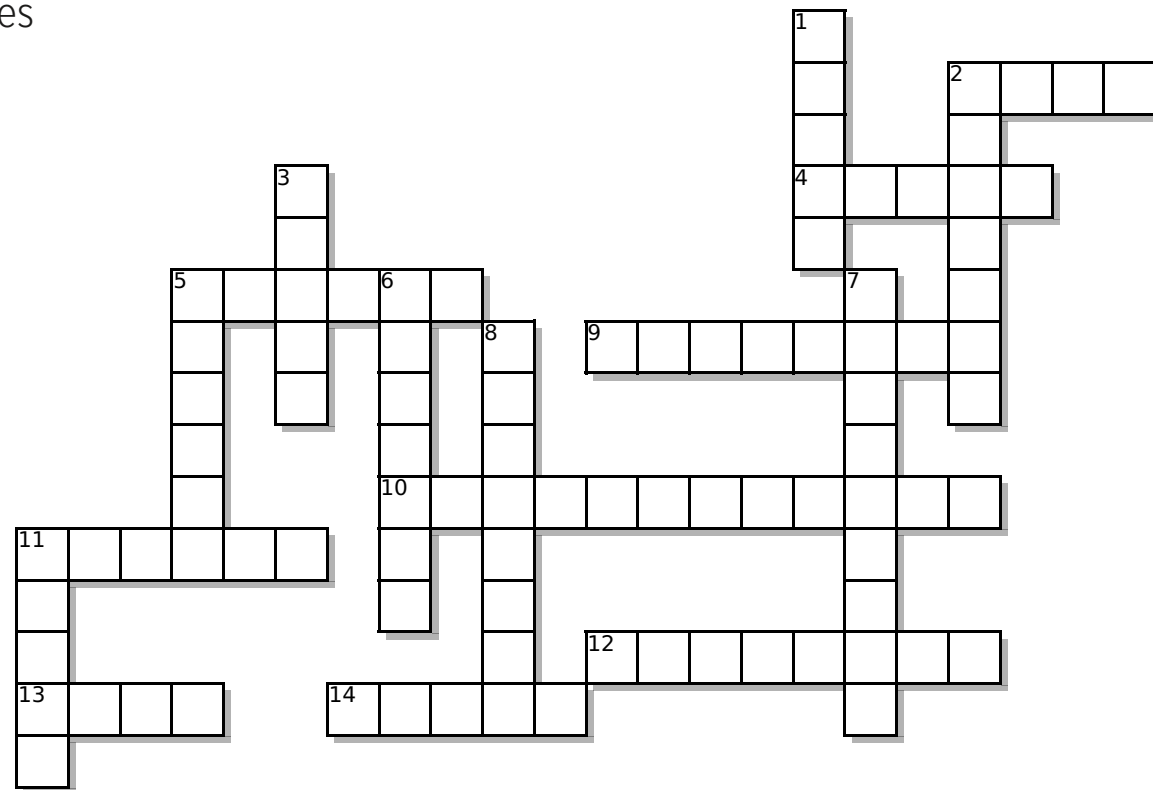
sional development training and coaching classes together to remain on the same page, and to hold each other accountable.”

With sage wisdom like that, Sohail and Christina will continue to build an amazing business and marriage together, and are ready to take both to an even higher level.

# CHICAGO

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### ACROSS

- 2 Russ and Meg are both fans of this baseball team.
- 4 The name of Russ and Meg's puppy.
- 5 One type of pet that Sohail and Christina have.
- 9 Chris and Chris drive \_\_\_\_ cars.
- 10 Christina was drawn to Sohail's \_\_\_\_\_ and drive.
- 11 Jim Hechtman has two great loves: family and \_\_\_\_\_.
- 12 Before real estate, Nancy went to \_\_\_\_ school.
- 13 Jo and Nancy's son's name.
- 14 The Mission 2 Organize team enjoys visiting \_\_\_\_ shops together.

### DOWN

- 1 Mission 2 Organize is an \_\_\_\_ organizing and concierge business.
- 2 Darrell and Jill first connected in this city.
- 3 The month Santo and Sharon got married in 1977.
- 5 The Hechtman Group Ltd. was founded by Jim and his \_\_\_\_ in 1993.
- 6 What did both Chris and Chris major in?
- 7 Santo and Sharon love being able to help clients make sound \_\_\_\_ decisions.
- 8 The type of business Sohail was transitioning out of when he met Christina.
- 11 Darrell and Jill are \_\_\_\_ certified.



Take a photo of your completed crossword puzzle and tag us on Facebook or Instagram @ChicagoRealProducers for a chance to win!

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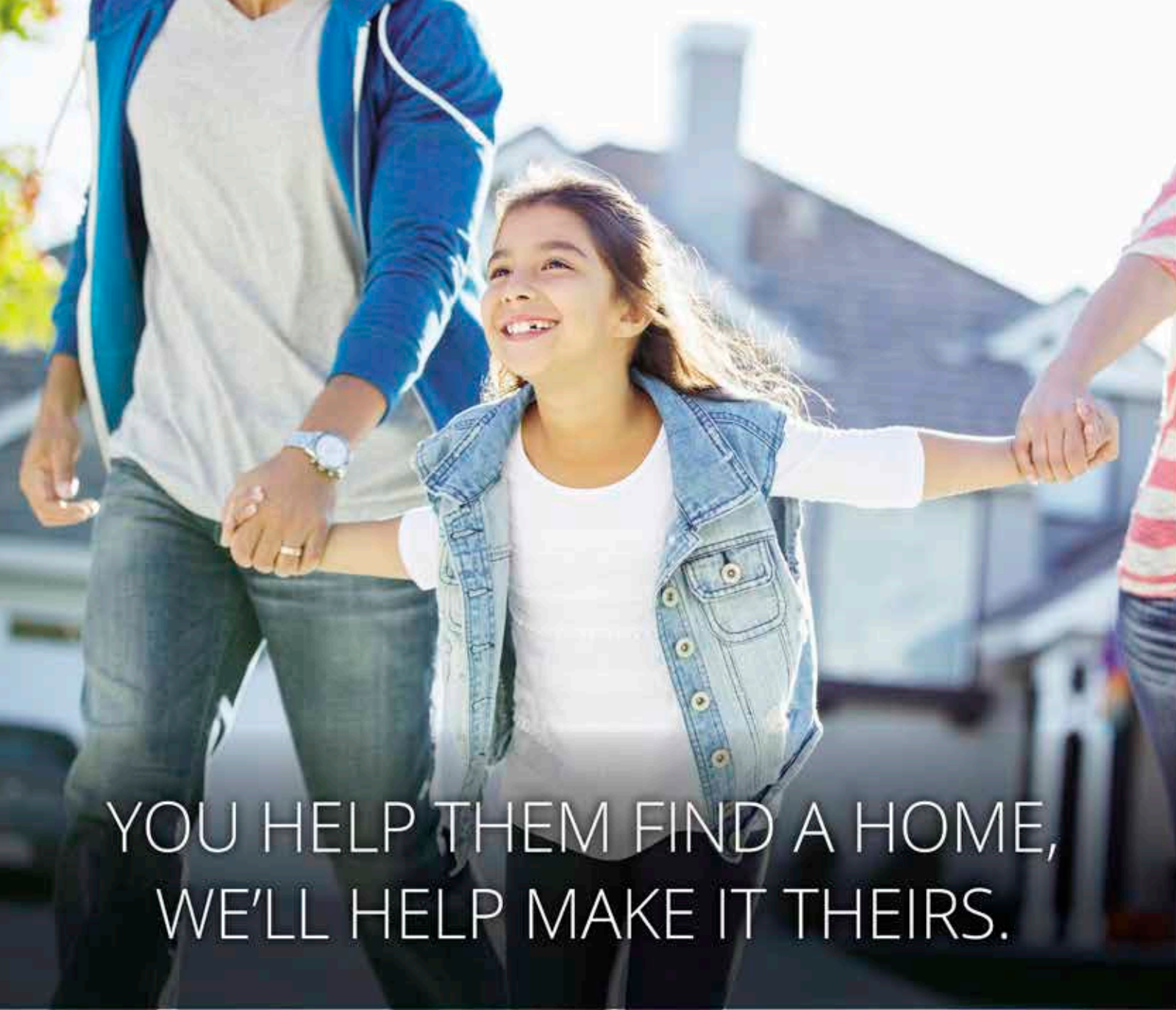
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▶ influential couples

By Jennifer Mitchell

Photos by Carlos Miranda



**Building a business together works when you have the same values and goals.** 

*— Russ Burton*

# RUSSBURTON & MEGWOOD

*Two Peas in a Modern, Charming, Well-Maintained Pod*

Russ Burton and Meg Wood of BurtonWood Residential share more than just a home and a business, they share many of the same traits. Both are only children, Illinois Wesleyan graduates, Cubs fans, and both are willing to do whatever it takes to help their clients fulfill the American Dream.

Before getting married and going into business together, Meg and Russ met in a classic way: at a frat house. And it was pretty close to love at first sight.

Within about a month, both knew their love was forever. After graduation, they both pursued careers in banking in Chicago and were married in the chapel on their college campus. The couple now has a successful business, a beautiful 15-month-old baby girl, Tessa, and an ornery puppy named Annie.

Of course, this picturesque life didn't come without hard work and a few hurdles. Shortly after getting married, both Russ and Meg were laid off from their companies within four days of each other. But the layoffs turned out to be a blessing in disguise.

...



“I had been considering venturing into real estate for a few years after getting some encouragement from a family friend,” explains Meg. “With my previous job, I wasn’t allowed to hold a real estate license. So it was truly a blessing to lose my job because it forced me to take the leap and bet on myself.”

That bet paid off. Meg dove into the world of real estate, started her own company, and within a few years she was swamped with work. In an effort to help alleviate some of Meg’s workload, Russ started taking real estate classes online and planned to get his license just to help Meg on weekends with showings and open houses. But during the process something clicked, and Russ fell in love with the idea of a career with no ceiling and more time spent with Meg. So he jumped in full-time to his business partnership with Meg.

“Building a business together works when you have the same values and goals,” states Russ. “Meg and I value the same things when it comes to our work and how we treat our clients. We also share the two huge goals of helping our clients achieve the American Dream of homeownership and being able to provide for our daughter.”

Though not for everyone, working with your spouse can be very rewarding. The key, Meg and Russ say, is finding a business—and life—partner who balances you out with complementary habits and character traits. For instance, the way Russ and Meg approached their work differed initially, but Russ has learned a lot from adopting Meg’s systems,



and Meg notes that Russ helps her loosen up on her more regimented ways and be more flexible.

Perhaps it’s because they are both only children, but they find they can both be pretty headstrong. At the same time, they welcome the challenge of opening up their minds and trying different paths, so long as the end goal is always the same.

When it comes to their future as spouses and business partners, Russ and Meg love the idea of growing a family business. They are grateful for their job’s flexibility as it provides a lot of time to spend with their daughter. And although she’s just over a year old, the idea of one day adding her to the team is exciting for both of them.

“Maybe one day our daughter will follow in our footsteps and join our team. To be able to work as one family unit—that would be a dream,” exclaims Meg. “But our daughter can be anything she wants to be. If that’s as a REALTOR®, great. If not, that’s fine too. Only time will tell.”



Meg and Russ playing with their daughter, Tessa.



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▶ partner spotlight

By Chris Menezes  
Photos by Carlos Miranda

# Schae Lewis, CPO® & Bahar Partow

## with Mission 2 Organize

### ORGANIZING THE WORLD ONE LIFE AT TIME



Mission 2 Organize's team: Schae Lewis, CPO®, Mackenzie Scott, CPO®, Ana Hurtado, and Bahar Partow.

When longtime friends Schae Lewis, CPO® and Bahar Partow formed Mission 2 Organize together in 2010, they embarked on their own mission. Not only were they going to use their “Tetris brains” to help people organize their “things,” but they were going to utilize their skills in the areas of productivity, planning, organizing, and hosting to help change lives.

As an urban organizing and concierge business, Mission 2 Organize promotes productivity and efficiency through a multitude of services, including decluttering, office/home organizing, packing and unpacking, running errands—both small and large—and event planning, which includes event management, registration, and promotion. They even have photo organizing and device decluttering services where photos can be

organized into printed photo books or digital slide shows that can be preserved and shared. Mission 2 Organize is often called upon to manage a client’s home, office, and social calendar simultaneously.

Since starting their business, Schae and Bahar have become leaders in their industry. Unlike others in their field, Mission 2 Organize (M2O) uses a team approach, always assigning a team of at least two professional organizers to any mission. They do this to guarantee their clients receive “exemplary results in half the time.” In addition, while less than 10 percent of all organizers are certified through an accredited program, 50 percent of M2O’s staff are Certified Professional Organizers®. M2O’s comprehensive, full-service work has been featured in the *Huffington Post* and on A&E’s *Hoarders*, *Windy City Live*, WGN, and more.

While Schae and Bahar have taken classes, seminars, and webinars on a wide range of topics that have expanded their understanding of productivity and organizing techniques, they have both always had a strong, natural ability and love for organizing.

“When it comes to organizing, you either have it or you don’t. We just have it! Any of us [at M2O] can walk into a room and immediately understand what needs to change in order to make it more efficient and why,” says Schae.

From their first appointment, however, Schae and Bahar realized that their job wasn’t going to be just about their client’s “stuff.” They soon learned that many of their clients needed a deeper level of organization to make the changes they wanted and needed—a level of organization that increased their personal and professional efficiency, using home management systems, scheduling, and habit creation. The role they played in their clients’ lives, therefore, soon became more like that of a coach. They weren’t just organizing spaces; they were organizing lives.

...



“

We have heard from many REALTORS® that introducing us to their client(s) was the smartest move they've made... Homes sell quicker when the buyer can see the possibilities in the cabinets, closets, and storage spaces. ”

...

When it comes to working with REALTORS® and their clients, Mission 2 Organize takes a special approach. “We don't just clear off countertops, we ensure that the home is ready to be photographed. We don't just make room in the closets and cabinets, we allow the buyer to see the potential within the home. We don't just pack and unpack, we do it in an organized fashion, bringing order to a potentially chaotic time. Professional organizers can, and should, be the best friends of any REALTOR®,” says Schae.

“We have heard from many REALTORS® that introducing us to their client(s) was the smartest move they've made. They no longer had to approach the topic of 'clutter' or physically deal with it themselves. Homes sell quicker when the buyer can see the possibilities in the cabinets, closets, and storage spaces. With Mission 2 Organize's full-service decluttering, organizing, packing and unpacking, and move management, our REALTOR® friends can stick to doing what they do best!”

Schae and Bahar's passion for helping people organize their lives goes beyond their clients. Long before YouTube was the second most-used search engine, they were uploading “how to” videos so people could see what organizing was all about, as

well as the magic it offers. Their insightful videos included folding techniques, storage options, product recommendations, and more. Today, they have over 4K subscribers, and over one million views on their channel, M2O-TV. As they continue to grow their viewership and business, they hope to create their own television show, and begin to franchise their business across the country.

As a team, Mission 2 Organize enjoys visiting sweet shops together. Taking a moment here and there to visit a donut shop or an ice cream parlor allows them time to unwind and celebrate their successes together. Schae and Bahar both like to curl up with a good book or their adorable cats, and they both practice yoga to unwind. To get pumped up however, they love to hit the dance floor and travel abroad. They also enjoy entertaining, connecting with their friends, and volunteering in their community.

“There is nothing better than putting a smile on someone's face where one didn't exist previously,” says Bahar. “We take pride in offering a helping hand when people need it. Hearing that our clients have lost weight, gotten a promotion at work, or found the love of their life because they were able to get their physical space in order is extremely rewarding. And it feels even more amazing when they tell us that the systems we created for them have persevered over many years.”

To enlist Schae Lewis, CPO® and Bahar Partow on an organizing mission for you, or for information regarding Mission 2 Organize, visit [www.Mission2Organize.com](http://www.Mission2Organize.com) or call 773-830-4070.



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► influential couples

# SHARON & SANTO RIZZO

Working Together through Thick and Thin

By Jennifer Mitchell

Photos by Heather Allison Love Photography

Much like marriage, working in real estate has its ups and downs. It requires commitment, passion, and a lot of hard work. Fortunately, Sharon and Santo Rizzo have put the time, love, and elbow grease into both their marriage and their work, which happen to coincide.

“We’ve seen many ups and downs in the market, including 20 percent interest rates and the market crash of 2008, both of which brought amazing challenges,” says Sharon. “We wrote a lot of land contracts to overcome the high-interest rates and specialized in short sales for a time to adjust to the extremely compromised market after 2008. Condo conversions used to be our specialty, but [they] have been nonexistent since 2008. It was a struggle for a while, but in the last few years, we’ve specialized in condo deconversions, which didn’t exist until just a few years ago. So we’ve found ways to overcome challenges together.”

It’s through incredible teamwork and support for each other that they have found success over the last few decades. Going back to the beginning, the Rizzos first met at the Auto Show at McCormick Place in the ’70s. When Santo, who was born in Sicily, came to America, he didn’t speak a word of

English whereas Sharon was your traditional all-American girl. They began dating, and despite their cultural differences, they quickly adjusted and eventually married in March of 1977.

At the time, Sharon was traveling a lot as a model/narrator and had a part-time audiology practice at the University of Chicago. After graduating from the University of Illinois, Santo immediately started his career in real estate. He worked with American Invsco, the largest condo developer in the country at the time, and quickly became the top salesperson in the company.

When the couple was thinking about starting a family, Sharon was still traveling almost 100,000 miles a year for her work. Not wanting to travel quite so much as a mother, Sharon joined Santo at American Invsco as a sales manager and found her calling in real estate. The couple has since thrived in the industry, forming their own business. Their three daughters—Kelly, Kristin, and Kimberly—are now in their 30s (and are all licensed REALTORS®).





“We’ve seen many ups and downs in the market and have found ways to overcome challenges together.” — Sharon Rizzo

...

“We truly enjoy what we do, and the flexible hours allow for a good home and work-life balance,” notes Santo. “Technology makes that even easier today, allowing us to work from home more often. We love spending more quality time together and strategizing on various projects.”

Sharon and Santo also love being able to help clients make sound financial decisions when it comes to their investments.

“We’re not just selling a house, we’re selling a retirement home or an investment property that will allow our clients to send their kids to college or retire with some financial independence,” explains Sharon. “We sell the American Dream through investment property real estate.”

For any REALTOR® considering the idea of going into business with their significant other, the Rizzos claim there are two keys

to success: be sure your personalities complement each other, and make sure you don’t require a whole lot of personal space.

“Santo has often been called ‘the Tony Robbins of Chicago real estate’ because his seminars and workshops are so inspiring. He’s an amazing educator, speaker, and motivator, but he can sometimes go on for too long and I’m good at keeping him in check,” laughs Sharon.

She also notes that she’s the one who stays focused on the bottom line, so the couple balances each other out well. They also provide the perfect foil to each other when it comes to their specializations in the business. While Santo’s strength lies in investment and commercial real estate, Sharon is more focused on residential properties.

When they’re not closing deals, Santo and Sharon are reading—physics and cosmology books for Santo and biographies for Sharon—and spending time with their two Maltese pups. They also love traveling to visit two of their daughters who moved to the West Coast.

With more than forty years of marriage and professional work experience under their belt, the Rizzos are proof that it’s possible to work together successfully and harmoniously as a married couple.



Santo and Sharon at a Las Vegas black tie event.



The Rizzo family at a recent dinner in Chicago’s West Loop.



The family at daughter Kelly’s 2018 wedding to actor/comedian Bob Saget. Photo credit: Nicole Goddard Photography

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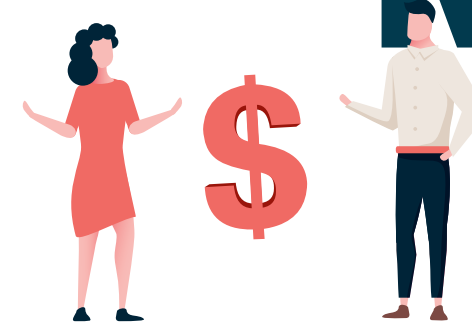


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# WHY IS IT SO DIFFICULT TO DISCUSS MONEY?

financial fitness  
By Shauna Osborne



Our finances are arguably one of, if not *the* most important, life-altering... and uncomfortable areas of our lives. Much like politics and religion, money can provoke a variety of emotions in us, from anger to fear to delight, in a split second. Yet, unlike other deeply personal topics, we don't find ourselves chomping at the bit to bring up our finances with friends in conversation or to advertise our opinions on the topic on social media. In fact, though it seems to be omnipresent in our minds, many Americans consider money to be the most difficult topic to broach with others, especially those with whom we're in close relationships. But why?

Many theories have been proposed on this subject. For many, myself included, we were raised to believe money is an impolite topic, not for discussion outside of the most private of situations. For others, it's what money symbolizes: power and control, security and independence. Undeniably, we live in a society driven by materialism, thus, despite our best efforts, our relationship with money entrenches us in the melee of influence and greed. The fact remains, money is an emotionally complex subject, grounded deeply in our ideas of self-worth and security. To lay bare our financial situation feels much too personal and too vulnerable, an unconscious metaphorical nudity.

Still, all evidence points to the fact that *not* freely communicating with loved ones on this topic can lead to negative consequences for our emotional, physical, and social well-being. The good news is, though it may cause discomfort at first, only positives can come from opening ourselves up to dialogues around money. Where to begin?

**Family and Friends.** It all starts at home. Researchers have found that growing up in a household where frank and open discussions around money occur results in adults with far less impulse spending and credit card debt. Further, by involving friends and family in your financial arena, you take advantage of the "village" of knowledge available to you and, consequently, are better pre-

pared to tackle those important money decisions yourself. Not to mention, those closest to you are most likely to hold you accountable for the financial goals you set for yourself.

**Partner/Spouse.** Recent studies show that more than 40% of American couples don't discuss how their finances will be managed before tying the knot. Yet money is also cited as a top stressor in romantic relationships, right up there with sex, parenting, and careers. Yikes. We all want to rest assured we're making sound financial decisions, and joint decision-making results in fewer financial risks. Enlisting your partner in financial decisions will lead to positive outcomes, such as more transparency in your relationship and fewer precarious economic behaviors. Sit down with your loved one for these hard conversations, making them an ally for your stronger joint fiscal future.

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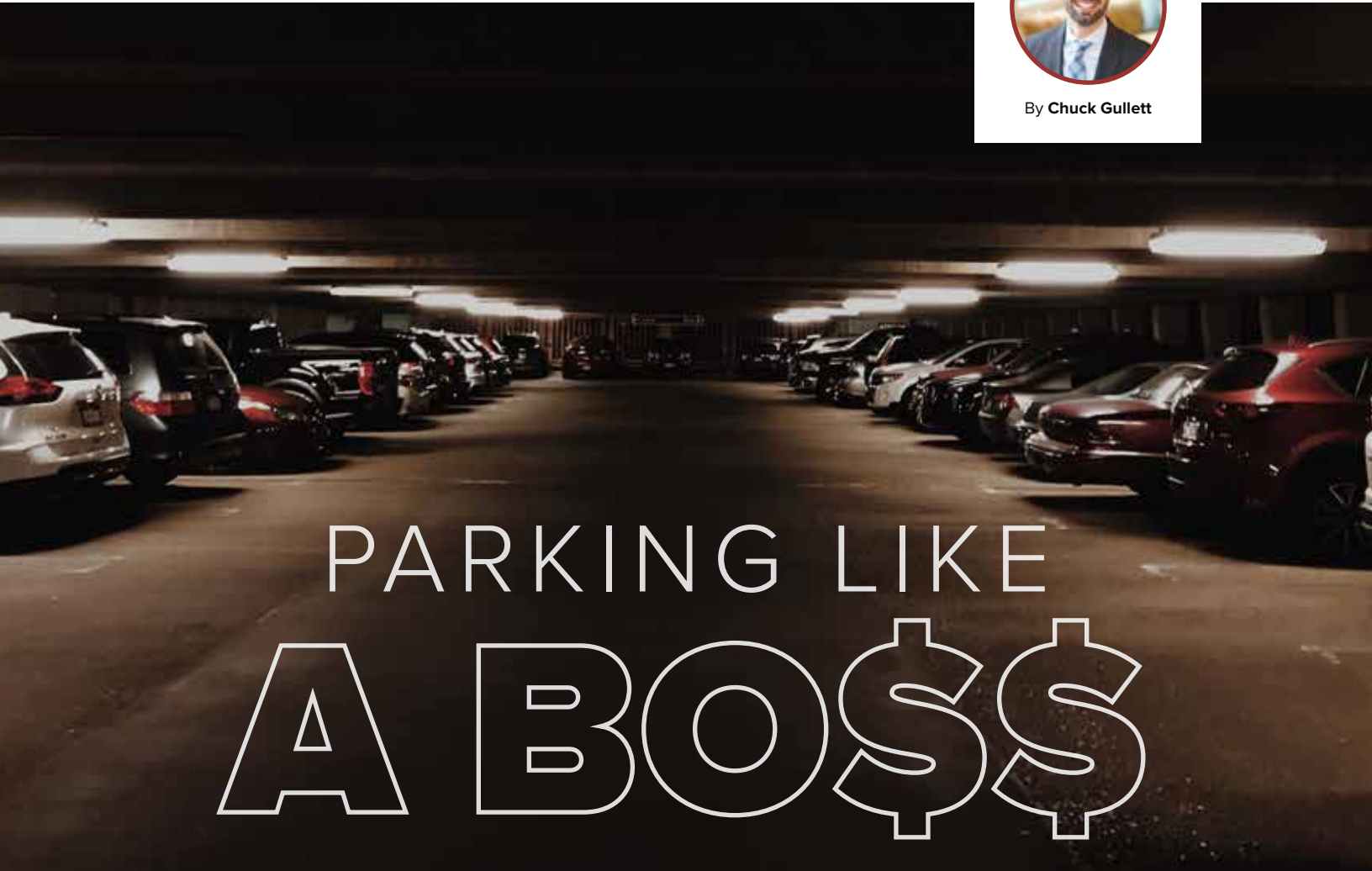


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By **Chuck Gullett**



Condo buyers living and working in Chicago's downtown neighborhoods often ask "Should I buy a parking space, even if I don't have a car?" The answer is almost always yes. Why? Mostly because it will increase the resale value of the unit, but also because a parking space is a nice investment that can provide additional income that can offset the condo unit's HOA fees.

Investors also look at purchasing parking spaces as a way to bring in steady and reliable income without the landlord hassles of dealing with renters in a condo or single-family home. I own half a dozen parking spaces downtown and they are all consistently rented out. The maintenance is practically zero with the exception of sweeping out the space once a year and throwing out the odd broken clicker once in a great while. It's basically a \$30,000 chunk of concrete with a couple of yellow stripes painted on it. At that price, it's true that parking spaces don't provide as much cash flow as other types of income property,

but the price of parking didn't plummet during the last recession. So as a method of diversifying your real estate portfolio, parking spaces should be given consideration. Parking space prices slowly and gradually increase, but the rental prices are edging up quickly as downtown Chicago grows and parking is becoming harder to find. New high-rises are taking up previously vacant lots and, often, developers aren't adding enough parking for all of their units. And most people would rather not park on the street unless they absolutely have to. With our Chicago winter weather, the heated garage is king and commands both a premium price and premium rent. But it's worth it. Be sure to buy a parking space that you would park your own car in, though, because you may be parking in it yourself someday!

As with any investment property, the key to success is making the right purchase. Open-air parking, covered parking, and heated garage parking will all have different price points and rentability. People

often sell their spaces to free up cash for other purchases and will let them go for below-market value. Set up searches in the locations you like, re-research the current rental pricing and demand, and be ready to make offers on new listings that hit the market. Many will be overpriced at first, but prices will soften if the spaces sit on the market and are not rented. Keep in mind that you can't get a mortgage on a parking space unless it is included in the purchase of other real property like a condominium. The parking space investment usually needs to be made in cash, but you could also use a home equity line of credit or a personal loan to make the purchase. Have your buyer get that "proof of funds" letter ready well before you make an offer.

To note: condo building rules may prevent you from purchasing a space unless you own a condo in the building or they may only let you lease your space to other residents in the building. A savvy real estate broker, like yourself, will know which buildings are open to investing and which locations will rent out the best.

Other things to consider for your Chicago parking space investment:

**1. Ease of access, as well as ingress/egress.**

Pull your car into the space and check the turning radius. Is it easy to do or is it a struggle? Really tight garages are the worst. The space will have a lower value if it is difficult to park. In multiple-level decks, spaces closest to the ground floor are generally best and get the highest rental price. I own a first-floor parking space in a twelve-story deck. My rent is consistently \$50-\$75/month higher because it is a convenient space for renters.

**2. Size of the space.** Is it suitable for an SUV or just a Smart car? Bigger is better. However, you can also purchase motorcycle parking spaces at a low price that often rent well. Tandem spaces are great, but double-check the monthly assessments and taxes on those to make sure you will recoup enough in rent. Finally, ADA accessible parking spaces rarely come up for sale, but they could be a good buy.

**3. Are there drainpipes, pillars, or other obstructions in the space?** These spaces are much less desirable and could be a liability if a tenant damages the building/property feature with their automobile. Also, drips from above could cause damage to the tenant's vehicle. I'd steer clear of any space with a tarp draped over it because the tenants will too.

**4. Is the parking space equipped with a charging station or is there an electrical panel in close proximity?** If so, you will have Tesla owners ready to rent today! Is it feasible to retro-fit a charging station if needed in the future? I recently received a quote of \$4,300 to run electricity to a parking space and that didn't even include the charger. ChargePoint and EverCharge are the biggest suppliers of chargers to multi-unit buildings. Their technology has the ability to use common area electrical supply and then bill the owners directly for the portion they use.

**5. Self-driving cars will be next on the auto market.**

Check the cellular signal in the garage. I'm speculating that self-driving cars will need to communicate, so if the concrete or steel structure blocks out your cell signal, it could be an issue in the future.

Good luck and happy parking!

**About the Author:**

Licensed since 2005, Chuck Gullett is the managing broker at Best Chicago Properties in Chicago's West Loop. He is consistently recognized as a Top Producer and has a true passion for real estate. Chuck is also the owner of ThreeSixtyChicago specializing in real estate photography.

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# CHRIS *Stockwell*

—AND—

# CHRIS *Laubach*

▶ influential couples

By Chris Menezes

Photos by Heather Allison Love Photography



## A Perfect Match

A match made in heaven if there ever was one—Chris Stockwell and Chris Laubach share a multitude of similarities. Before they met each other, they pretty much lived parallel lives without knowing it. Aside from having the same first name, they attended and graduated from the same college, Bucknell University; both majored in English, and both worked in advertising in New York in the early 1980s (she was in account management and he was in the creative department). They even both took shares in a beach house on the Jersey Shore (with about thirty mutual friends and alums from Bucknell) which is where the stars finally aligned for them.

“It was pretty much love at first sight,” says Chris L. Within six months of dating, Chris L. told Chris S. that she was “the one.” He also said that he knew the way to get what he wanted was to not pressure her. So, unless he told her otherwise, she could assume he wanted to get married. He waited for her to ask him. It took her about a year and a half, but then she surprised him by proposing while on vacation in London.

•••

...

They married on July 13, 1985, in Chris S.'s mother's garden in Evanston. They moved back to Chicago in 1989 to be near her mother, who was quite ill. Chris L. had landed a job in the creative department at Leo Burnett and Chris S. got a job in the development department at the University of Chicago. Soon after, they had their two sons, Sam and Harley.

Chris S. became "the stay-at-home mom who was never at home," as she was actively involved with their kids' schools, a monthly investment club, and a book club. In 2008, when their boys were in high school, she chose to enter real estate as her next career.

By the time Chris L. began to lose interest in his "Mad Men" ad agency life, Chris S. was getting so busy at work that she was considering hiring an assistant. Chris L. wanted the job, but she insisted that he get his license so he could do all the things she needed him to do. He did. But while he started in 2015 as her assistant, after just six months, he had sold homes to people that she had never even met. So, he was promoted to partner.

Her experience and expertise in real estate combined with his in marketing enabled their business to take off. That is, after a few adjustments. She had years of experience, was used to doing things her way, and tends to be a little more serious and pragmatic. He was fresh out of all the licensing classes and seminars, is someone who prides himself on being a creative thinker, and so he often suggested new ways to do things.

"It took us a while to find the balance in how to support each other without offending one another. We both had to open our minds to a blend of expertise and enthu-



ty might be a better fit for a particular client. And of course, we always have each other's back."

“It was pretty much love at first sight,” says Chris L.

Maintaining that balance and support takes work. “Make sure to give each other enough space. Don’t always work at home or go in to the office together. Make separate friends there and elsewhere. Respect and actively listen to each other, and always try to consider the other’s point of view. And above all, keep a sense of humor. Do the job seriously but don’t take it all too seriously.”

Outside of work, she plays tennis and he runs marathons. But these soul mates continue to like many of the same things. They both do a lot of yoga, love to travel, and even drive matching cars. “We just try not to park next to each other!” says Chris S.

siasm,” says Chris S. Combining their strengths and finding that balance, though, made all the difference.

The similarities they share shine through in their work. “We both really enjoy seeing buyers’ eyes light up when they find a new home that really excites them, and then getting them a great deal. We both like finding creative ways to market our listings and getting the most money we can for our sellers. We both find it satisfying to put deals together, hold our clients’ hands all through the process, and actually make good friends along the way (with our clients and the other agents). What’s nice is that we can both gauge whose personali-

They both feel very grateful to have found a profession that has given them flexibility in life, coupled with the ability to help people, often in profound ways. “It’s a pleasure to go to work each day, and to be able to do it together,” they both say.



Team Chris Kayak.



A match book from their wedding in 1985. Chris S. and Chris L. are a perfect match.

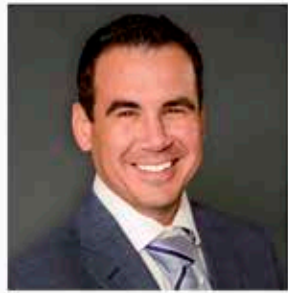


Chris L. and Chris S. with sons, Sam and Harley Laubach. Yes, Cubs fans!

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# TOP 200 STANDINGS

Teams and individuals from January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019

#	First Name	Last Name	List #	List \$	Sell #	Sell \$	Total #	Total \$
1	Jeffrey	Lowe	164	\$167,222,136	84	\$93,506,136	248	\$260,728,272
2	Matt	Laricy	188	\$79,706,245	202	\$99,512,185	390	\$179,218,430
3	Emily	Sachs Wong	84	\$99,680,500	48	\$69,588,999	132	\$169,269,499
4	Timothy	Sheahan	100	\$134,771,648	23	\$23,786,000	123	\$158,557,648
5	Mario	Greco	181	\$102,664,868	56	\$38,755,601	237	\$141,420,469
6	Elizabeth	Brooks	67	\$132,278,008	2	\$1,954,900	69	\$134,232,908
7	Leigh	Marcus	141	\$89,328,660	29	\$20,906,900	170	\$110,235,560
8	Erin	Ward	18	\$66,212,500	9	\$38,175,000	27	\$104,387,500
9	Scott	Newman	85	\$34,170,150	122	\$66,020,302	207	\$100,190,452
10	Melanie	Giglio	70	\$44,828,572	72	\$39,519,247	142	\$84,347,819
11	Jennifer	Ames	42	\$52,482,885	17	\$20,372,035	59	\$72,854,920
12	Sophia	Klopas	63	\$44,979,875	48	\$26,301,470	111	\$71,281,345
13	Karen	Biazar	104	\$54,953,258	26	\$14,242,388	130	\$69,195,646
14	Brad	Lippitz	58	\$41,154,585	37	\$26,896,400	95	\$68,050,985
15	Sam	Shaffer	31	\$17,853,400	71	\$47,871,988	102	\$65,725,388
16	Millie	Rosenbloom	34	\$35,946,250	29	\$29,427,455	63	\$65,373,705
17	Carrie	McCormick	46	\$34,051,600	42	\$28,878,000	88	\$62,929,600
18	Chezi	Rafaelli	27	\$36,199,000	15	\$25,976,325	42	\$62,175,325
19	Nancy	Tassone	20	\$56,992,023	3	\$1,411,000	23	\$58,403,023
20	Joshua	Weinberg	50	\$22,283,536	57	\$31,728,400	107	\$54,011,936
21	Eugene	Fu	32	\$46,217,500	6	\$6,865,500	38	\$53,083,000
22	Philip	Skowron	21	\$38,721,500	5	\$13,596,000	26	\$52,317,500
23	Colin	Hebson	41	\$36,618,196	23	\$15,044,697	64	\$51,662,893
24	Jennifer	Mills	52	\$33,149,032	26	\$17,746,900	78	\$50,895,932
25	Bari	Levine	53	\$24,936,750	42	\$23,021,250	95	\$47,958,000
26	Natasha	Motev	16	\$30,919,444	5	\$16,849,395	21	\$47,768,839
27	Ryan	Preuett	16	\$25,218,205	14	\$21,993,098	30	\$47,211,303
28	Kathleen	Malone	28	\$24,223,850	23	\$22,916,000	51	\$47,139,850
29	Konrad	Dabrowski	45	\$28,672,500	28	\$17,965,217	73	\$46,637,717
30	Jill	Silverstein	18	\$10,731,500	51	\$35,553,450	69	\$46,284,950
31	Jason	O'Beirne	59	\$33,597,323	28	\$9,326,448	87	\$42,923,771
32	Matthew	Liss	63	\$34,010,792	20	\$8,733,050	83	\$42,743,842
33	Julie	Busby	34	\$24,769,050	22	\$17,326,611	56	\$42,095,661
34	Katharine	Waddell	30	\$16,776,000	41	\$24,997,372	71	\$41,773,372

#	First Name	Last Name	List #	List \$	Sell #	Sell \$	Total #	Total \$
35	Layching	Quek	2	\$1,180,000	63	\$40,355,634	65	\$41,535,634
36	Barbara	O'Connor	60	\$28,597,482	22	\$12,696,400	82	\$41,293,882
37	P Corwin	Robertson	29	\$40,599,612	0	\$0	29	\$40,599,612
38	Debra	Dobbs	20	\$20,759,500	22	\$18,982,500	42	\$39,742,000
39	Timothy	Salm	22	\$27,781,500	7	\$11,579,013	29	\$39,360,513
40	Joanne	Nemerovski	24	\$30,356,000	10	\$8,671,000	34	\$39,027,000
41	Emily	Phair	25	\$8,398,900	51	\$28,632,901	76	\$37,031,801
42	Weston	Harding	29	\$17,771,948	34	\$18,718,215	63	\$36,490,163
43	Gwen	Farinella	7	\$23,600,000	3	\$12,275,000	10	\$35,875,000
44	Lauren M.	Wood	37	\$14,104,250	40	\$21,382,450	77	\$35,486,700
45	Katherine	Malkin	8	\$15,330,000	8	\$19,965,000	16	\$35,295,000
46	Hayley	Westhoff	32	\$17,613,412	21	\$17,474,500	53	\$35,087,912
47	Amanda	McMillan	40	\$16,806,467	37	\$18,193,960	77	\$35,000,427
48	Edward	Skae	12	\$16,629,150	7	\$16,791,159	19	\$33,420,309
49	Danielle	Dowell	40	\$17,280,350	25	\$15,784,430	65	\$33,064,780
50	Daniel	Close	12	\$5,695,000	40	\$26,272,421	52	\$31,967,421

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# TOP 200 STANDINGS

Teams and individuals from January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019

#	First Name	Last Name	List #	List \$	Sell #	Sell \$	Total #	Total \$
51	Erin	Mandel	23	\$25,156,750	11	\$6,500,300	34	\$31,657,050
52	Margaret	Baczkowski	14	\$12,245,500	13	\$19,141,500	27	\$31,387,000
53	Aaron	Sklar	12	\$9,954,000	13	\$21,256,500	25	\$31,210,500
54	Phil	Byers	25	\$12,962,600	24	\$17,857,538	49	\$30,820,138
55	Frank	Montro	128	\$24,715,390	42	\$6,060,401	170	\$30,775,791
56	Lucas	Blahnik	27	\$11,574,000	30	\$19,081,900	57	\$30,655,900
57	Nicholaos	Voutsinas	4	\$1,910,900	57	\$28,368,200	61	\$30,279,100
58	Joe	Zimmerman	37	\$16,944,800	24	\$13,130,800	61	\$30,075,600
59	Elizabeth	Ballis	15	\$13,004,000	19	\$16,791,871	34	\$29,795,871
60	Pamela	Rueve	13	\$9,043,500	17	\$20,699,400	30	\$29,742,900
61	Scott	Curcio	40	\$16,634,603	34	\$13,013,400	74	\$29,648,003
62	Richard	Kasper	24	\$23,586,500	10	\$6,056,299	34	\$29,642,799
63	Melissa	Govedarica	31	\$22,105,400	9	\$6,930,300	40	\$29,035,700
64	Mark	Icuss	10	\$10,369,000	11	\$18,592,455	21	\$28,961,455
65	Sharon Kay	Rizzo	5	\$1,267,500	95	\$27,643,585	100	\$28,911,085
66	Ivona	Kutermankiewicz	26	\$20,762,550	8	\$7,638,315	34	\$28,400,865
67	Joel	Holland	27	\$10,775,400	37	\$17,087,650	64	\$27,863,050
68	Michael	Hall	40	\$21,859,550	12	\$5,901,000	52	\$27,760,550
69	Melissa	Siegal	30	\$12,048,500	25	\$15,654,400	55	\$27,702,900
70	Keith	Brand	2	\$823,000	55	\$26,605,400	57	\$27,428,400
71	Michael	Battista	19	\$23,993,554	3	\$3,210,000	22	\$27,203,554
72	Robert	Picciariello	68	\$25,408,757	2	\$1,640,000	70	\$27,048,757
73	Gary	Lucido	30	\$13,024,675	18	\$13,795,188	48	\$26,819,863
74	Santiago	Valdez	38	\$12,880,700	38	\$13,589,757	76	\$26,470,457
75	Sara	McCarthy	31	\$16,093,700	20	\$10,099,000	51	\$26,192,700
76	Dennis	Huyck	23	\$11,418,500	24	\$14,699,000	47	\$26,117,500
77	Owen	Duffy	40	\$20,679,393	9	\$5,350,000	49	\$26,029,393
78	Daniel	Glick	21	\$14,727,152	13	\$11,237,052	34	\$25,964,204
79	Nicholas	Colagiovanni	19	\$13,563,426	16	\$12,234,926	35	\$25,798,352
80	Nadine	Ferrata	23	\$16,294,000	12	\$9,422,000	35	\$25,716,000
81	Amy	Duong	19	\$11,577,000	26	\$14,121,400	45	\$25,698,400
82	Nathan	Wilks	27	\$9,349,550	52	\$16,304,403	79	\$25,653,953
83	Alishja	Ballard	24	\$11,378,025	29	\$14,131,400	53	\$25,509,425
84	Megan	Tirpak	10	\$9,070,000	9	\$16,055,555	19	\$25,125,555

#	First Name	Last Name	List #	List \$	Sell #	Sell \$	Total #	Total \$
85	Lance	Kirshner	36	\$15,423,738	20	\$9,266,400	56	\$24,690,138
86	Michael	Maier	28	\$13,754,650	11	\$10,889,961	39	\$24,644,611
87	Eudice	Fogel	16	\$12,135,000	11	\$12,485,787	27	\$24,620,787
88	Nancy	Hotchkiss	39	\$15,204,480	22	\$9,401,810	61	\$24,606,290
89	Steve	Meyer	50	\$22,974,000	3	\$1,527,428	53	\$24,501,428
90	Kelly	Angelopoulos	16	\$16,828,374	14	\$7,486,279	30	\$24,314,653
91	Ian	Schwartz	20	\$15,729,500	10	\$8,118,900	30	\$23,848,400
92	Nancy	Huetteman	55	\$22,810,000	1	\$825,000	56	\$23,635,000
93	Camille	Canales	17	\$7,671,000	31	\$15,850,800	48	\$23,521,800
94	Michael	Shenfeld	23	\$13,000,900	20	\$10,507,000	43	\$23,507,900
95	Ryan	McKane	57	\$22,184,150	2	\$1,310,000	59	\$23,494,150
96	Melanie	Everett	14	\$4,404,800	53	\$19,035,200	67	\$23,440,000
97	Deborah	Hess	26	\$12,837,100	22	\$10,562,399	48	\$23,399,499
98	Steven	Jurgens	15	\$14,912,000	7	\$8,400,500	22	\$23,312,500
99	Michael	Rosenblum	25	\$14,066,394	10	\$9,094,500	35	\$23,160,894
100	Landon	Harper	27	\$21,264,140	3	\$1,815,000	30	\$23,079,140

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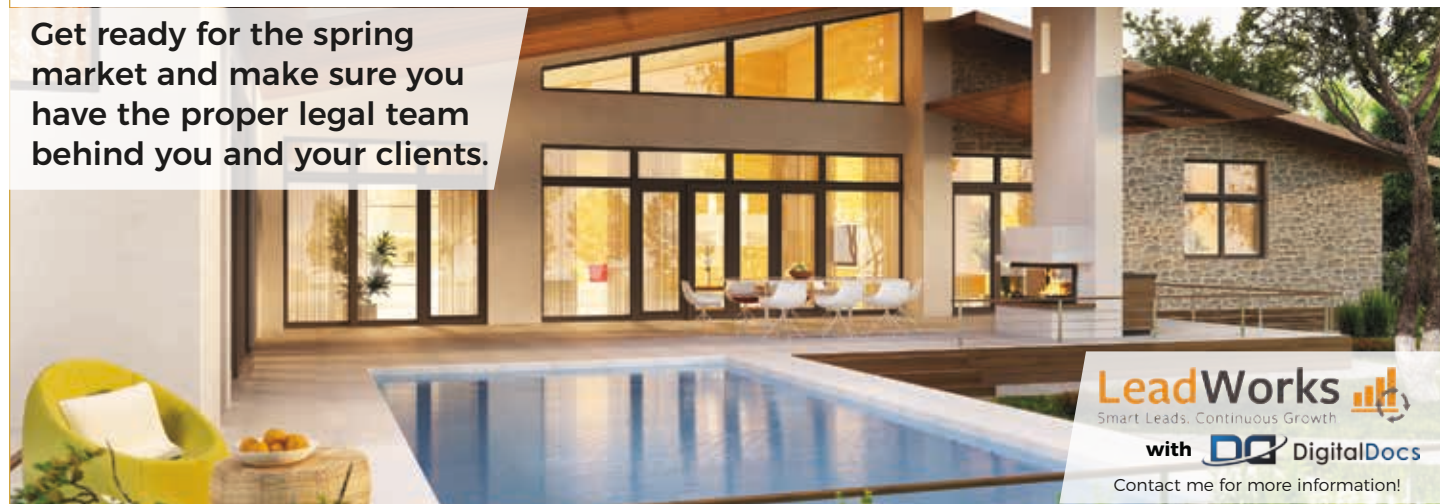
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# TOP 200 STANDINGS

Teams and individuals from January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019

#	First Name	Last Name	List #	List \$	Sell #	Sell \$	Total #	Total \$
101	Noah	Birk	9	\$17,273,500	7	\$5,498,500	16	\$22,772,000
102	Cindy	Weinreb	8	\$4,475,000	41	\$17,901,700	49	\$22,376,700
103	Ryan	Smith	144	\$22,240,299	0	\$0	144	\$22,240,299
104	Bruce	Glazer	15	\$7,458,900	17	\$14,702,062	32	\$22,160,962
105	Kieran	Conlon	18	\$12,975,250	11	\$8,775,400	29	\$21,750,650
106	Qiankun	Chen	26	\$7,538,250	43	\$14,098,380	69	\$21,636,630
107	Sarah	Ziehr	45	\$20,675,000	1	\$916,000	46	\$21,591,000
108	Karen	Schwartz	29	\$11,824,855	19	\$9,762,999	48	\$21,587,854
109	Dawn	McKenna	9	\$10,841,500	5	\$10,681,856	14	\$21,523,356
110	Douglas	Smith	9	\$5,715,000	9	\$15,673,500	18	\$21,388,500
111	Danny	Lewis	14	\$8,022,400	22	\$13,358,011	36	\$21,380,411
112	Rubina	Bokhari	20	\$13,417,895	11	\$7,941,250	31	\$21,359,145
113	Eric	Hublar	3	\$1,770,000	43	\$19,370,798	46	\$21,140,798
114	Vincent	Anzalone	14	\$11,996,000	16	\$9,009,000	30	\$21,005,000
115	Brooke	Vanderbok	24	\$12,976,850	13	\$8,011,500	37	\$20,988,350
116	Benyamin	Lalez	5	\$1,707,900	38	\$19,276,650	43	\$20,984,550
117	Joseph	Kotoch	14	\$8,043,500	22	\$12,892,000	36	\$20,935,500
118	Cynthia	Sodolski	12	\$8,105,500	17	\$12,719,750	29	\$20,825,250
119	Stefanie	Lavelle	32	\$14,321,400	14	\$6,179,000	46	\$20,500,400
120	Marci	Trick	0	\$0	39	\$20,310,236	39	\$20,310,236
121	Ryan	Huyler	13	\$9,203,500	13	\$10,825,100	26	\$20,028,600
122	Laura	Meier	16	\$5,837,500	28	\$14,081,350	44	\$19,918,850
123	D	Waveland Kendt	26	\$14,369,287	10	\$5,501,500	36	\$19,870,787
124	Barbara	Proctor	11	\$16,162,500	3	\$3,640,000	14	\$19,802,500
125	Nick	Rendleman	25	\$6,807,500	45	\$12,985,158	70	\$19,792,658
126	Philip	Schwartz	26	\$10,784,500	22	\$8,957,900	48	\$19,742,400
127	Kevin	Wood	4	\$17,103,294	3	\$2,547,000	7	\$19,650,294
128	Sam	Jenkins	13	\$7,509,500	20	\$11,940,750	33	\$19,450,250
129	Stephanie	Cutter	26	\$9,571,100	20	\$9,754,500	46	\$19,325,600
130	Jennifer	Liu	41	\$17,691,400	5	\$1,619,929	46	\$19,311,329
131	Samantha	Porter	20	\$14,668,000	2	\$4,625,000	22	\$19,293,000
132	Clare	Spartz	15	\$12,055,624	5	\$7,089,000	20	\$19,144,624
133	Darrell	Scott	12	\$5,483,000	23	\$13,575,500	35	\$19,058,500
134	Steve	Otwell	0	\$0	35	\$18,828,050	35	\$18,828,050

#	First Name	Last Name	List #	List \$	Sell #	Sell \$	Total #	Total \$
135	Robin	Phelps	21	\$11,890,900	10	\$6,898,000	31	\$18,788,900
136	Hasani	Steele	45	\$13,875,207	13	\$4,814,015	58	\$18,689,222
137	Todd	Szwajkowski	22	\$8,036,900	19	\$10,645,400	41	\$18,682,300
138	Lisa	Huber	16	\$6,510,340	26	\$12,119,775	42	\$18,630,115
139	Helaine	Cohen	8	\$7,290,000	9	\$11,245,400	17	\$18,535,400
140	Stephanie	LoVerde	18	\$8,486,800	16	\$9,949,000	34	\$18,435,800
141	Haley	Levine	16	\$4,775,851	36	\$13,564,370	52	\$18,340,221
142	Jacqueline	Colando	43	\$17,585,350	2	\$707,500	45	\$18,292,850
143	James	D'Astice	8	\$3,420,500	24	\$14,858,518	32	\$18,279,018
144	Ashley	Carter	20	\$8,386,000	18	\$9,735,390	38	\$18,121,390
145	Tanni	Wong	16	\$10,574,000	10	\$7,517,000	26	\$18,091,000
146	Dominic	Irpino	20	\$6,183,978	30	\$11,809,369	50	\$17,993,347
147	Meredith	Manni	6	\$10,539,000	7	\$7,385,000	13	\$17,924,000
148	Nathan	Binkley	12	\$5,426,000	20	\$12,462,616	32	\$17,888,616
149	Greg	Vollan	16	\$13,093,500	8	\$4,584,500	24	\$17,678,000
150	James	Athanasopoulos	50	\$17,453,005	1	\$137,200	51	\$17,590,205

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# TOP 200 STANDINGS

Teams and individuals from January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019

#	First Name	Last Name	List #	List \$	Sell #	Sell \$	Total #	Total \$
151	Keith	Tarasiewicz	1	\$239,500	35	\$17,113,100	36	\$17,352,600
152	Juliana	Yeager	24	\$9,208,500	15	\$8,088,500	39	\$17,297,000
153	Shay	Hata	21	\$9,376,400	15	\$7,801,203	36	\$17,177,603
154	Janelle	Dennis	24	\$10,993,950	14	\$6,177,900	38	\$17,171,850
155	Kristi	Gunther	12	\$13,773,500	5	\$3,386,250	17	\$17,159,750
156	Michael	Linden	37	\$15,166,000	5	\$1,972,121	42	\$17,138,121
157	David	Heck	2	\$1,166,000	31	\$15,948,801	33	\$17,114,801
158	Christie	Ascione	14	\$7,467,750	15	\$9,630,000	29	\$17,097,750
159	George	Selas	28	\$11,627,898	10	\$5,405,900	38	\$17,033,798
160	Mark	Keppy	29	\$10,213,500	17	\$6,770,050	46	\$16,983,550
161	Lisa	Sanders	28	\$11,629,250	12	\$5,344,000	40	\$16,973,250
162	Stacey	Dombar	38	\$15,676,125	3	\$1,296,000	41	\$16,972,125
163	Lisa	Kalous	7	\$5,930,000	11	\$11,014,600	18	\$16,944,600
164	Elizabeth	Lothamer	14	\$7,894,575	21	\$8,995,344	35	\$16,889,919
165	Terri	McAuley	10	\$11,941,120	6	\$4,721,500	16	\$16,662,620
166	Laura	Topp	26	\$10,294,000	10	\$6,337,500	36	\$16,631,500
167	Lawrence	Dunning	11	\$6,759,000	18	\$9,862,400	29	\$16,621,400
168	Xiaojing	Frost	14	\$5,365,000	30	\$11,186,200	44	\$16,551,200
169	Juana	Honeycutt	11	\$6,460,000	13	\$10,081,100	24	\$16,541,100
170	Christopher	Mundy	12	\$7,540,000	11	\$8,978,900	23	\$16,518,900
171	Christina	Delgreco	23	\$10,934,500	7	\$5,390,000	30	\$16,324,500
172	Alexandre	Stoykov	9	\$3,502,000	29	\$12,805,152	38	\$16,307,152
173	Amir	Fouad	19	\$9,541,000	9	\$6,735,735	28	\$16,276,735
174	Matthew	Engle	9	\$3,102,500	32	\$13,167,650	41	\$16,270,150
175	Peter	Moore	14	\$6,407,700	19	\$9,833,709	33	\$16,241,409
176	Gail	Spreen	30	\$10,376,400	10	\$5,806,000	40	\$16,182,400
177	Emily	Smart Lemire	12	\$9,143,050	9	\$7,021,750	21	\$16,164,800
178	Beth	Gomez	16	\$11,458,425	9	\$4,684,250	25	\$16,142,675
179	Paul	Mancini	18	\$7,060,500	20	\$9,078,250	38	\$16,138,750
180	Danielle	Inendino	0	\$0	38	\$16,037,850	38	\$16,037,850
181	John	O'Neill	12	\$9,834,875	5	\$6,202,152	17	\$16,037,027
182	Beata	Gaska	21	\$16,018,000	0	\$0	21	\$16,018,000
183	Stephen	Hnatow	17	\$7,425,000	16	\$8,445,900	33	\$15,870,900
184	Suzanne	Gignilliat	7	\$6,705,000	7	\$9,041,000	14	\$15,746,000

#	First Name	Last Name	List #	List \$	Sell #	Sell \$	Total #	Total \$
185	Salvador	Gonzalez	36	\$7,895,600	31	\$7,817,900	67	\$15,713,500
186	Keith	Wilkey	8	\$10,553,500	5	\$5,144,000	13	\$15,697,500
187	Mary	Haight Himes	19	\$10,821,900	10	\$4,844,150	29	\$15,666,050
188	Brent	Hall	21	\$13,419,912	3	\$2,231,000	24	\$15,650,912
189	Harold	Blum	16	\$11,469,750	6	\$4,156,000	22	\$15,625,750
190	Ken	Jungwirth	19	\$10,612,000	11	\$4,936,000	30	\$15,548,000
191	Karen	Ranquist	16	\$13,235,800	5	\$2,311,000	21	\$15,546,800
192	Mario	Barrios	14	\$5,707,400	24	\$9,818,253	38	\$15,525,653
193	Morgan	Sage	19	\$8,840,000	14	\$6,680,500	33	\$15,520,500
194	Rizwan	Gilani	21	\$8,751,200	13	\$6,696,999	34	\$15,448,199
195	Ryan	Gossett	17	\$7,759,700	13	\$7,662,000	30	\$15,421,700
196	Joanna	Olszynska	22	\$13,783,500	3	\$1,599,000	25	\$15,382,500
197	Caroline	Druker	8	\$7,702,000	9	\$7,532,500	17	\$15,234,500
198	Jason	Hortin	0	\$0	34	\$15,214,950	34	\$15,214,950
199	Tiffany	Meyers	0	\$0	42	\$15,144,050	42	\$15,144,050
200	Cory	Tanzer	28	\$9,276,438	16	\$5,863,500	44	\$15,139,938

**Disclaimer:** Information is pulled directly from the MLS. New construction or numbers not reported to the MLS within the date range listed are not included. The MLS is not responsible for submitting this data. Some teams may report each agent individually, while others may take credit for the entire team. *Chicago Real Producers* does not alter or compile this data nor claim responsibility for the stats reported to/by the MLS. Data is based on Chicago proper only and may not match the agent's exact year-to-date volume.

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