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TABLE OF CONTENTS



11

Publisher's Note:
Michele Kader



12

Rising Stars:
Roy Schenkenberger and Tim Schenkenberger



16

STEEZY. Digital: Empowering REALTORS® with Technology



20

Business Spotlight:
Straw and Clover



24

Agent Spotlight:
CaLee McManus



30

Top Producer:
Cesi Pagano

RP

If you are interested in contributing or nominating Realtors for certain stories, please email us at michele.kader@realproducersmag.com.

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FAQ

About the Magazine

We realize that *Real Producers* is a new concept here in South Orange County, and some of you may be wondering what it's all about. That is why we have created a "FAQs About This Magazine" page. Here we will answer the most commonly asked questions around the country regarding our program. My door is always open to discuss anything regarding this community – this publication is 100 percent designed to be your voice!

Q: WHO RECEIVES THIS MAGAZINE?

A: The top 500 agents in South Orange County. We pulled the MLS numbers (by volume) from August 1, 2018–August 1, 2019, in the South OC area. We cut the list off at #500, and the distribution was born. For this year's list, the minimum production level for our group is on pace for over \$7 million in 2019. The list will reset in August 2020 for next year and continue to update annually.

Q: WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR BEING FEATURED IN THIS MAGAZINE?

A: It's really simple – every feature you see has first been nominated. You can nominate other REALTORS®, affiliates, brokers, owners, or even yourself! Office leaders can also nominate REALTORS®. We will consider anyone brought to our attention because we don't know everyone's story, so we need your help to learn about them. A nomination currently looks like this: you email us at michele.kader@realproducersmag.com with the subject line, "Nomination: (Name of Nominee)," and explain why you are nominating them to be featured. It could be they have an amazing story that needs to be told – perhaps they overcame extreme obstacles, they are an exceptional leader, have the best customer service, or they give back to the community in a big way. The next step is an interview with us to ensure it's a good fit. If it all works out, then we put the wheels in motion for our writer to conduct an interview and for our photographers to schedule a photoshoot.

Q: WHAT DOES IT COST A REALTOR®/TEAM TO BE FEATURED?

A: Zero, zilch, zippo, nada, nil. It costs nothing, my friends, so nominate away! We are not a pay-to-play model. We share real stories of real producers.

Q: WHO ARE THE PREFERRED PARTNERS?

A: Anyone listed as a "preferred partner" in the front of the magazine is a part of this community. They will have an ad in every issue of the magazine, attend our quarterly events, and be a part of our online community. We don't just find these businesses off the street, nor do we work with all businesses that approach us. One or many of you have recommended every single preferred partner you see in this publication. We won't even meet with a business that has not been vetted by one of you and "stamped for approval," in a sense. Our goal is to create a powerhouse network, not only for the best agents in the area but the best affiliates, as well, so we can grow stronger together.

Q: HOW CAN I RECOMMEND A PREFERRED PARTNER?

A: If you have a recommendation for a local business that works with top REALTORS®, please let us know! Send an email to michele.kader@realproducersmag.com.

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

As I sit and write this note I can't help but think about what we have started to build here at Real Producers. If you do not already know, I have been a realtor since 2004 selling homes along the coast and in South Orange County. Needless to say, I understand the life of a realtor. When the opportunity came around one year ago to bring Real Producers to South OC, I pretty much jumped at it without any hesitation. I love to celebrate people and to foster a positive community. The thing that I am the most proud of with our South OC Real Producers community is YOU! The realtors who are supporting us are not just incredible professionals but good people with big hearts who value building strong relationships within the industry. How can you support us as a realtor? Have fun with us! We won't take your money, but we can take your nominations for editorial, we love seeing you on social media, and of course we look forward to getting together 4 times this year for a fun and social exclusive networking event. Our launch party is January 22, 2020 4-7pm. By the time you read this you may have already attended! If not, make sure to attend!

In addition to the incredible realtor support, we are partnered with truly the best local businesses in our area. I hope you know that all of our preferred partners have been vetted and are working with the best of you already. Should you need a new business on your vendor list, I hope you consider looking to our preferred partners first. They are why we exist as a community. We are thankful for you!



As we begin 2020 I look forward to amazing events and loads of new editorial content. We enjoy being creative and sharing stories about realtors in a way that shows off their personality.

We look forward to a successful year for everybody and if there is one thing we can guarantee it is that our platform will create space for you to network with the best in 2020.

Happy New Year from my family to yours.



Michele Kader

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ROY

&

SCHENKENBERGER

TIM

SCHENKENBERGER

FIRST TEAM REAL ESTATE

rising star

By Zach Cohen

Photos by Andrew Bramasco





...

REAL ESTATE ROOTS

“When Roy turned 16 years old (I was 12 at the time), our parents bought him a used 1986 red Toyota pick-up truck,” Tim Schenkenberger begins. “My dad said, ‘Boys, I want you to learn how to work for yourselves with this truck. Why make someone else a living if you can make your own?’”

Roy, Tim, and their brother, Steve, printed out flyers for their new business and promptly got to door-knocking the neighborhood. They put an ad in the Pennysaver and a calendar next to their home telephone.

“Whoever answered the phone got the job,” Tim laughs. “It’s fun reflecting back to being a 12-year-old speaking to adults over the phone giving quotes and scheduling jobs. Many times it was the customer who walked me through the process.”

Roy and Tim still laugh at the often ridiculous situations they found themselves in. They remember the joys of filling their home garage to the brim with brand-new, in-the-box, laser-pointed golf putters (their

mom and dad were conveniently out of town) — as well as all the hard lessons of finishing jobs despite losing money.

“

To me, success comes in the form of the best possible version of whatever that thing or endeavor is. If I can write a song, leave a conversation, or close a deal knowing it was the best possible version of it, then to me, it was a success.

”

It was during this time that Roy and Tim got their first taste of entrepreneurship. They learned the work ethic and skills that it takes to be a business owner and salesperson. But they discovered something else along the way, too: compassion.

“One clear lesson I learned from the countless jobs of crawling into attic spaces, muscling couches down stairwells, protecting the customer’s walls and paint, was this: Sometimes people are desperate for help and there is simply nobody there for them. We were three kids helping adults through challenging moments. Work gloves on, Roy, Steve, and I would be there with someone letting go of a spouse, or an uprooting home. We all learned compassion and patience.”

Real Estate Roots

“I’ve got early childhood memories of previewing properties from the front passenger seat of my dad’s blue Cadillac,” Roy recalls heartfully. “He was in land development, so

my brothers and I got to grow up in and around the table-talk of real estate.”

Roy and Tim’s grandfather was also in real estate, and he earned himself a reputation for thinking outside the box and crafting creative deals in California. “He once sold an entire town and got the seller to come up with the down payment. There was a picture that sat on his desk of him shaking governor Ronald Regan’s hand because of it,” Roy says.

Roy wishes that he’d paid closer attention back then to the wisdom and creativity that underpinned those stories. It wasn’t until he and his wife started looking for their home over a decade ago that he took an interest.

“I knew just enough to know an obvious deal when my wife found one. After that, I had the opportunity to join my brothers on a couple of flip projects, but in regards to the retail end of things, I’m just getting started,” Roy explains.

Shaped by Family

Roy and Tim have now been working together in real estate for just over a year. They continue to draw on their childhood experiences to inform their work, carrying the work of their grandfather, their dad, and now, their brother, Steve, along with them.

Tragically, Steve was hit by a drunk driver three years ago in February.

“It is impossible to convey the depth of pain and sadness that lay in the wake of that event, and that is ongoing. But in tragedy, there is perspective, and for me the realization of how short and how precious life is,” Roy explains.

Roy always had wanted to work with his brothers, but the timing never synced up. Tim had owned a junk removal business and



worked in real estate alongside Steve, and Roy was steeped in his music and his ministry work.

“Being at this crossroad of sorts, I began the conversation with Tim asking the ‘what if’ and ‘what do you think’ questions. I placed a great deal of confidence in his answers,” Roy reflects.

Steve was a legend at First Team Real Estate. He re-lit the torch for the Schenkenberger name and carried it a long, long way. “In some personal way, Tim and I are picking that torch back up and heading on,” Roy continues.

On Passion and Success

Through all of their experiences — joy and hardship, success and failure — Roy and Tim remain optimistic and passionate about the work they do. Relationships, the pursuit of truth, doing right by others — these are the values that stand tallest. In the context of real estate, helping people make a significant decision with integrity is their primary objective.

“To me, success comes in the form of the best possible version of whatever that thing or endeavor is. If I can write a song, leave a conversation, or close a deal knowing it was the best possible version of it, then to me, it was a success,” Roy says. “Success for me is synonymous with significance. I want whatever I invest this life into to bear significance.”

“When we were kids, my dad would beat the drum of how lucky we were to grow up where we did. He’d explain how only a fraction of a percent of the people in the world got to live in a place like Orange County. He did an amazing job of giving us perspective, but it wasn’t until I was older that I was able to grasp the significance of how blessed we were.”



JEFFREY BROGGER: STEEZY.Digital

Empowering REALTORS® with Technology

By Jeffrey Brogger



What is the Lifetime Value of a New Transaction?

99% of REALTORS® don't know what the lifetime value (LTV) of a new customer is for their business. When most REALTORS® think about marketing, they think "I have \$X amount in the budget to go knock doors, send postcards, run a radio ad, boost some Facebook ads, etc."

But as a South Orange County Real Producer, you are NOT the 99% of REALTOR®. You are the top 1% of one of the finest real estate markets on the planet. So let me ask you this: prior to running a new marketing campaign, do you consider what the LTV of a new client is before launching that new campaign? If not, then you are leaving money on the table.

What I mean is this: it's not just the first commission of the first sale that is the total value of a new customer. Lifetime value considers the probability of repeat business from this same client, average client age, average life expectancy, average years in the home, and how many referrals this new person gives you once you close them.

Want to know the lifetime value of a new real estate client in Orange County? If we use this formula, the lifetime value of a client in Orange County is \$99,535.50 of income to you. With Orange County's average price point around \$737,000, you can see that is NOT equal to the commission from the first sale. Round up and that means every single transaction is worth \$100,000 to you over the life of the client relationship.

Plus, if you have a younger demographic, luxury demographic, your repeat business game is really strong, or you can increase one of those factors by even 10%, then the lifetime value will be even higher.

This is how sophisticated marketers look at advertising.

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Lisa Loyd
Pacific Sotheby's International Realty
Stanfield Real Estate

Working with Chris at Versal Escrow is a blessing. Chris has that magic touch from the moment he sends the first email of introduction to clients. He makes the escrow transaction seamless and takes all steps necessary to ensure all tasks required to close on time are met. Chris provides a daily update - keeping you informed every step of the way. Clients love meeting with Chris at his office to sign loan documents or escrow documents as he is very detail oriented and walks clients through all paperwork needed to close timely. Chris and his staff go above and beyond the call of duty. I recommend Chris at Versal Escrow Officer and expert in the business.

Doris Barrios
Pacific Sotheby's International Realty
Laguna Beach

My name is Tyson Lundquist with Pacific Sotheby's Realty International and I use Christopher Keabey with Versal Escrow Services Inc. for all my listing transactions. When our brokerage made a transition, I asked the managing brokering if I could use another company. My manager told me I was free to use who ever I wanted, but I should at least give Christopher a shot because "He is one of the best escrow officers I have used in the business". I agreed and sent Chris an email to open escrow. From the start I was impressed with Christopher's professionalism, enthusiasm and his overall demeanor. If I need anything from Christopher, I get a response within a very short time frame and if he is not available, one of his team members is right there to assist with my needs. My clients and colleagues have told me on numerous occasions how impressed their service is/was during their transaction and that Christopher is very knowledgeable. In real estate, the vendors I choose to work with have to earn my business, Christopher has far exceeded my expectations. Christopher and his team are 5 Star and I will refer them to anyone in need of a great team. If you need to get the job done, Christopher Keabey is your guy!

Tyson Lundquist
Tarek El Moussa & Associates
Pacific Sotheby's International Realty

Chris and his team are nothing but first class all the way! I've worked with Chris for over 6 years and have only experienced the best service for my clients and I. I know that my clients will get the same service I provide to them when they are working with Chris and the team; he's an amazing extension of our team and we are so fortunate to have them as our escrow partner! The most ethical, honest, responsive and hard working escrow officer I've ever come across. I highly recommend Chris for any of your escrow needs!

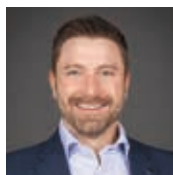
Ariana Gaffoglio
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Versal Escrow, in my opinion, is by far the very best escrow company in the business. Versal is always keeping you and your clients updated throughout the escrow. They always head off any and all possible problems before your clients need to worry. Chris and his staff are friendly and keep the clients best interest at all times from the start to finish of any transaction. I would highly recommend any agent looking for a smooth and efficient escrow company to use Versal Escrow.

Dean Quinn
Pacific Sotheby's International Realty
Stanfield Real Estate

In my 20 years plus in the real estate industry, I have used Chris Keabey with Versal Escrow Services countless times and he never disappoints. He is my "go to" escrow officer. He is so knowledgeable, patient and extremely helpful. When other real estate agents ask who I recommend for escrow, Chris is my answer. He is simply the best! He goes beyond the call of duty and his calm demeanor and "can do" attitude make our clients feel at ease when making one of the largest purchases of their life.

Nicole Loux
Pacific Sotheby's International Realty



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NEWPORT BEACH

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Andrea Dean and Heather Rome started their property styling and staging company, Straw and Clover, to capture the spirit of Hygge, “a feeling of coziness and comfortable conviviality that creates a feeling of contentment or well being,” for the places and people they work with.

“Most staged homes can feel like a formula,” says Andrea. “Our homes are far from ‘staged’ because there is beauty in imperfection. We like to bring in our personalized style, while working with a variety of designs, and incorporating homeowners’ items and exiting furniture when possible, to create a cohesive, fresh look,” says Andrea.

“Customers are sentimental and emotional when prepping for a move. We want them to feel comfortable in their home while in the process of selling because we know how stressful a move can be,” says Heather.

Having both grown up in the area, Andrea and Heather have a vast knowledge of Orange County neighborhoods, floor plans, and an understanding of the target audience of purchasers in any given neighborhood. They met each other 30 years ago in art class at Trabuco Hills High School and have been best friends ever since.

Heather received her certification in fashion marketing and merchandising after high school and went on to wardrobe and prop styling for look books, magazines, and commercials, while



ANDREA DEAN & HEATHER ROME STRAW AND CLOVER

► business
spotlight

By Chris Menezes
Photos by Andrew Bramasco



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Andrea went into high-end design and worked on several design projects in Newport Beach and Corona Del Mar. Always wanting to start a business together, they were excited to combine both of their talents to create a business they always dreamed of. They came up with the name Straw and Clover to reflect both their origins and mission.

“As a female-owned styling and staging business that started from nothing, we related to the idea of birds making nests from straw; bees collecting pollen from clover for the hive to create something unique and beautiful out of nothing,” says Heather.

While working with vacant homes gives Andrea and Heather the ability to create their own unique look using their inventory, their specialty is creating cohesive looks in an occupied home that may be challenging to others, working with homeowners’ existing items to elevate their home in order to get the most money, the most offers, and being able to close in the least amount of time.

To help clients who may not have a budget for a complete stage, they offer accessory packages that aid in refreshing the look of a home. They also offer a

number of ancillary services, including vignettes for parties and weddings; office styling for REALTORS® to feel more at home while at work; and styling for REALTOR® headshots and/or photos with various wardrobe and prop selections.

As true artists, Andrea and Heather constantly find inspiration for what they do, even outside of work. They both have kids who are artistic and musically inclined. Together, they enjoy going to museums, concerts, and taking road trips to discover new places, where they often find inspiration and one-of-a-kind items that they can use in their business.

“We believe true success is enjoying the people you work with, establishing meaningful connections and relationships through work and loving what you do,” says Andrea. “It is beyond gratifying to see a client excited about what we have created, to become friends through the process and see how they design their new homes after they move, as they keep us updated.”

For more information on Straw and Clover, visit www.strawandclover.com, follow @strawandclover on Instagram, or contact them at strawandclover@gmail.com.



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» agent spotlight

By Zach Cohen
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CaLee McManus: LADERA REALTY



Rolling up her Sleeves to Get the Job Done Right

“I roll up my sleeves and really get hands-on with my clients. That makes all the difference.”

Since getting started in real estate back in 2006, CaLee McManus has continued to separate herself from her peers through her willingness to go the extra mile for her clients; it’s her care that drives her business.

In her decade-plus in the business, CaLee has solidified her status as a consistent top 1% agent nationwide. She’s been recognized as one of Amer-

ica’s Top 100 Agents by America’s Top 100 Real Estate Agents, a market leader by *Forbes* magazine, and is a Power Player on the *American Dream* TV show. But the statistics don’t tell half of the story. Informed by her corporate background and competitive drive, CaLee is focused on adding value for her clients every single day.

Rewind: Corporate Beginnings

“Corporate finance: that was my first big adult job,” CaLee smiles. “I managed 150 people and \$3 billion in a receivable portfolio. Being in the high-tech

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industry during the boom was both exciting and exhausting. You couldn't hire people fast enough."

"You couldn't hire people fast enough to keep up with the volume at that time," CaLee recalls. "When I started with them, I was employee number 300. Now, it's over 14,000. At the time, it was this bustling industry. Computers were just on the edge of being invented. The company grew so fast."

While she was working in the corporate world, CaLee got married and started a family. She and her husband made the decision for her to stay home and raise the kids while they were little.

"My husband's job — also in the high tech industry — had us move quite a bit. We had moved six times within three or four years. I had two little babies, which was really hard. When your husband gets relocated, the mom is stuck at home doing all the work — packing, moving, dealing with showings, juggling the kids, and all the logistics."

It was during this time that CaLee began to delve into real estate firsthand. She became accustomed to dealing with real estate agents, loan officers, moving companies, inspectors, and contractors. "I learned a lot about real estate through my personal experience," she reflects.

By the time CaLee and her family landed in Southern California, they made the decision: they were not going to relocate again. It was time to put down roots.



"Once both my kids were in kindergarten, I really wanted to go back to work. But I didn't want to be away from my kids," CaLee explains. "Then, I just decided: I was going to do real estate."

A Value Add

When CaLee decided to get into real estate, she was well aware of the challenges she was taking on. From day one, she approached her new career as a hard-working entrepreneur.

"I think people misunderstand what being a real estate agent is. You can be a buyer's agent who works for another agent. But if you are truly a real estate agent, you are running your own business," CaLee says.

She landed with Ladera Realty, part of the Homesmart Evergreen family. With their cutting edge technologies and unwavering support, paired with the ability to work as a virtual office, it was the perfect place for CaLee.

"In order to be successful in a competitive world, you have to have a value add. You have to have something that makes people want to buy from you versus the other guy," CaLee explains. "Other agents use pricing schemes. I feel that devalues and demotivates the agent, often leaving the seller with a negative experience. I understood what it meant to be the seller, giving up a big chunk of equity to pay the real estate fees. I didn't mind, but I wanted my agent to pull out the red carpet for my house and invest in the sale of my home with me. So, I truly do partner with my clients, investing in their home and I begin with getting the house ready."

CaLee walks the house with her clients, step by step, inch by inch. She feels it's her job to help present the house in it's best light. "I roll up my sleeves and really get hands-on with my clients. That makes all the difference."

"I truly am so grateful for the support of my clients, business partners, and friends in the community. Every year I throw an 'Annual Gratitude Party' to spoil them with a little something special. This year my gratitude party was featured on *The American Dream* TV show. I recognize that all of these people contribute to the success of my business and I couldn't do it without them," CaLee smiles.

Built on Gratitude

CaLee and her husband, Matt, have now been married for 27 years. Their two children, Brendan and Cailen, are 22 and 19, respectively. "When you run your own business, you don't have time for a whole lot," CaLee admits. "But I love Pilates, reading, and I'm very social."

"I'm most grateful for my kids," CaLee gushes. "They were each such a blessing, and they still are. That's the one thing that makes my life whole." Whether she's at home with family or in the office, the through-line for CaLee is her genuine care. She's out to help others live the life that they dream.

"I'm genuinely passionate about my clients and helping them fulfill their dreams. Every client is different, some are looking to buy a bigger house, or downsize as empty nesters. Some just moved here, and some people are going through difficult times with a divorce or a death in the family. But at the end of the day, it's someone's goal, someone's dream they have asked me to help them with."

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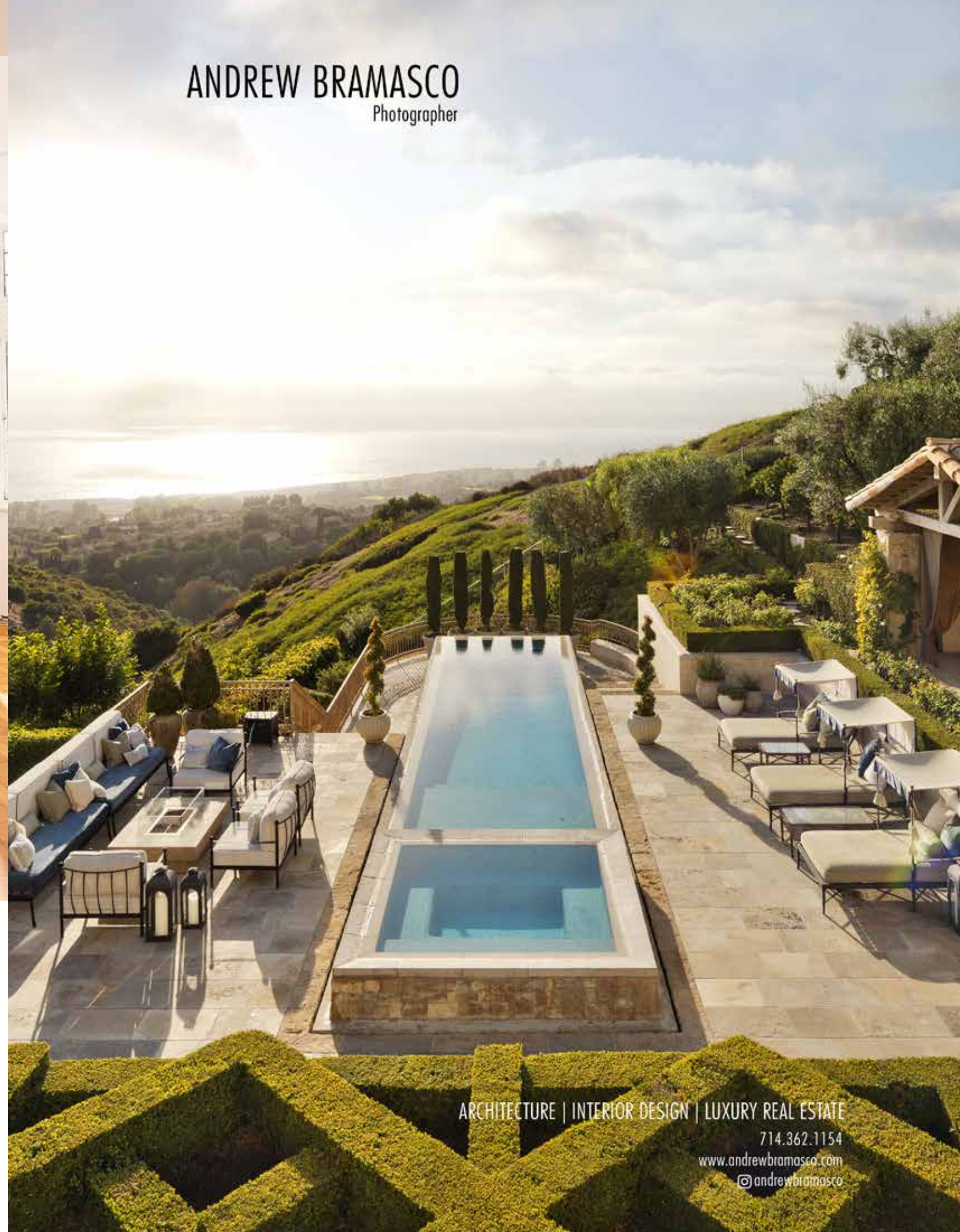
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By **Chris Menezes**
Photos by **Andrew Bramasco**

MADE FOR REAL ESTATE

Architecture, homebuilding, and real estate has been a fixture in Cesi Pagano's life ever since she was a child. Born in an Italian family, Cesi grew up speaking Italian. Then, learned Spanish in South America before moving to Chicago at 7 years old from South America. Her father and grandfather were both architectural engineers and homebuilders who built several residential homes, apartments, and commercial buildings. Cesi often followed them around on job sites, fascinated by the design and construction of these massive buildings. "I was that little kid with a hardhat on walking around with the grown ups," she says.

Cesi moved to California to attend Cal Poly, Pomona. After earning her degree in Architecture, with a minor in Interior Design, she interned at an architectural firm. However, she soon found that being cooped up in an office, having to constantly return to the drawing board was not how she wanted to spend her life. She was much too social and energetic for that.

During her search for her career path, she took a job with Mercury Savings and Loans, where she did everything from finance, escrow, underwriting, appraisals, and lending. Eventually, she was recruited to the Real Estate Development Department where the Joint Venture partnerships with Homebuilders were managed. Having to oversee and approve construction loans for home builders, her career path started to become clear.

Soon after, a predominant homebuilder recruited Cesi. Working with the builder taught her all aspects of the home building process, marketing, and operations. The Vice President soon realized her talent and offered Cesi a Sales Counselor position in one of their communities.

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selves as business people and REALTORS®. The way I see it, my team is more like partners. I attribute my success to our team effort, not an individual accomplishment.”

The professionals who make Cesi Pagano and Associates run as seamless as it does are Katie Gould, Director of Operations; Tony Pagano, Leasing Manager and Listing Support; Gordana Cucuk, Open House & Showing Coordinator; Melinda Del Conte, Listing Manager; and Julia Alty, Director of Marketing. The sales team includes Nelson A. Strickler, Brittany Stewart, Jackie Homrighausen, Margaret Shepherd, Pam Pearson, Brandon Gorman, and Sky Pelham.

Cesi and her husband, Daniel Ysseldyke, have a blended family of five grown children: Anthony Pagano, Leasing Manager and REALTOR® working with Cesi; Andrew Pagano, a successful business owner of a film/production company (Livelihood Co); Lauren Ysseldyke, a Director of Social Media Marketing for a large corporation; Jennifer Ysseldyke, an entrepreneur running a business in Bermuda; and Giuliana Pagano, a student at Moorhead University and Captain of their world-champion cheerleading team. Dan and Cesi enjoy traveling abroad, hiking, biking, camping, and enjoying everything California has to offer.

“I love this business and the folks we get to help achieve their dream of homeownership,” says Cesi. “My passion is real estate and there’s nothing else I’d rather do. It has been, and will always be, a part of who I am.”

“As passionate as I am about the growth of my business, my true calling is to help people achieve their goals and dreams. I enjoy watching my team grow, watching them develop themselves as business people and REALTORS®.”

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Cesi’s first response, however, was, “No. I’m not a salesperson.” They insisted, paying for her Real Estate school and for her to obtain her license. She was promoted to Senior Sales Consultant within just a few months. Cesi spent the next 15 years selling for a few of the top home builders in Southern California.

She flourished as a sales consultant and was consistently being recruited by other companies. After hitting a ceiling, however, Cesi decided to enter the resale market in 2001 (two weeks after 9/11). Having the flexibility to assist homebuyers and sell-

ers with fewer limitations, she knew this would be her ultimate passion. Many Real Estate companies offered her opportunities. She chose Keller Williams for their agent-centric culture and exceptional business-minded leadership.

“I’ve been fortunate to be with a company that guides their agents to run their business like a business, a company that allows the agents to promote their brand above the company, a true entrepreneurial company led by an amazing leader, Gary Keller, who is fully and personally invested in his company and his agents. He’s an incredible visionary who is always finding ways to stay ahead of the market and competitors.”

Since starting her business and forming her own team, Cesi Pagano & Associates, Cesi has maintained a steady progression of growth each year, never sliding backward, not even during the Great Recession. Being within the top echelon of Keller William’s highest producing agents, Cesi gets to meet and mastermind with top groups throughout the nation, and in turn, mentor and build up each person on her team.

“Our team is continually educated and updated on the latest market updates, statistics, technology, marketing trends, data analysis, and educational tools,” says Cesi. “As passionate as I am about the growth of my business, my true calling is to help people achieve their goals and dreams. I enjoy watching my team grow, watching them develop them-

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