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If you are interested in contributing or nominating Realtors for certain stories, please email us at [jason.acres@RealProducersMag.com](mailto:jason.acres@RealProducersMag.com)

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## MEET THE

# NORTH SHORE

## REAL PRODUCERS TEAM



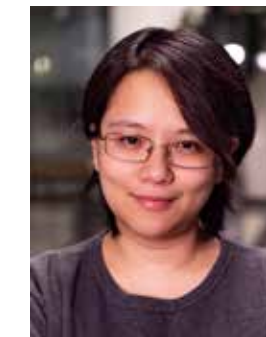
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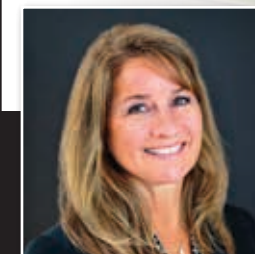
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# North Shore Real Producers Celebrates Top REALTORS®

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## Virtual Community

### ► publisher's note

Recently I ran across a few quotes that resonated with me.

"There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about."  
Margaret J. Wheatley

"The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate

actions of its members." Coretta Scott King

"Alone, we can do so little; together, we can do so much." Helen Keller

As I'm writing today, the Coronavirus, COVID-19, has become a worldwide pandemic without many resolutions in sight. The United States officials and leaders are doing all they can to keep the virus from spreading any further. Of course, safety is of

utmost concern for everyone at this time. A question I've been pondering is, "How this will affect us on a local level?"

Many places like restaurants, bars, schools and other businesses are closed or may close soon to keep the virus from spreading. But what about you, our celebrated REALTORS®? From those I hear, you are still showing and selling homes. People need to move or relocate and timing is critical. I'm encouraged by you and your sensitivity to those you serve. The tension you face with meeting the needs of your clients while doing your best to adhere to the local leadership recommendations is unprecedented and delightful to watch.

Many of you remember the real estate crash of 2008/'09. I owned a home in California that depreciated in value more than 50%. This was tragic for us, so many other families, REALTORS® and our economy at large. But as hard as that was, we moved through it. We figured out a way. Many buyers took advantage of the market and found a way to survive; some even thrived. It makes me proud to be a part of a country, a state, a community that never gives up.

As I've spoken to many of you, I've truly been strengthened by your encouragement, your resolve and the adaptivity of your realty business. Whether it's virtual showings of your homes, or video meetings or simply a phone call, you've adjusted. It's awesome and inspiring to see how we remain connected as humans even though we've been temporarily homebound. I want to encourage you to keep up the great work!

I'll leave you with this anonymous quote: "Sometimes we're tested not to show our weaknesses, but to show our strengths."



Jason Acres  
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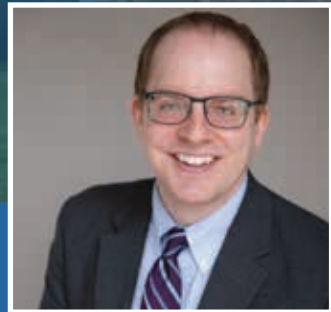
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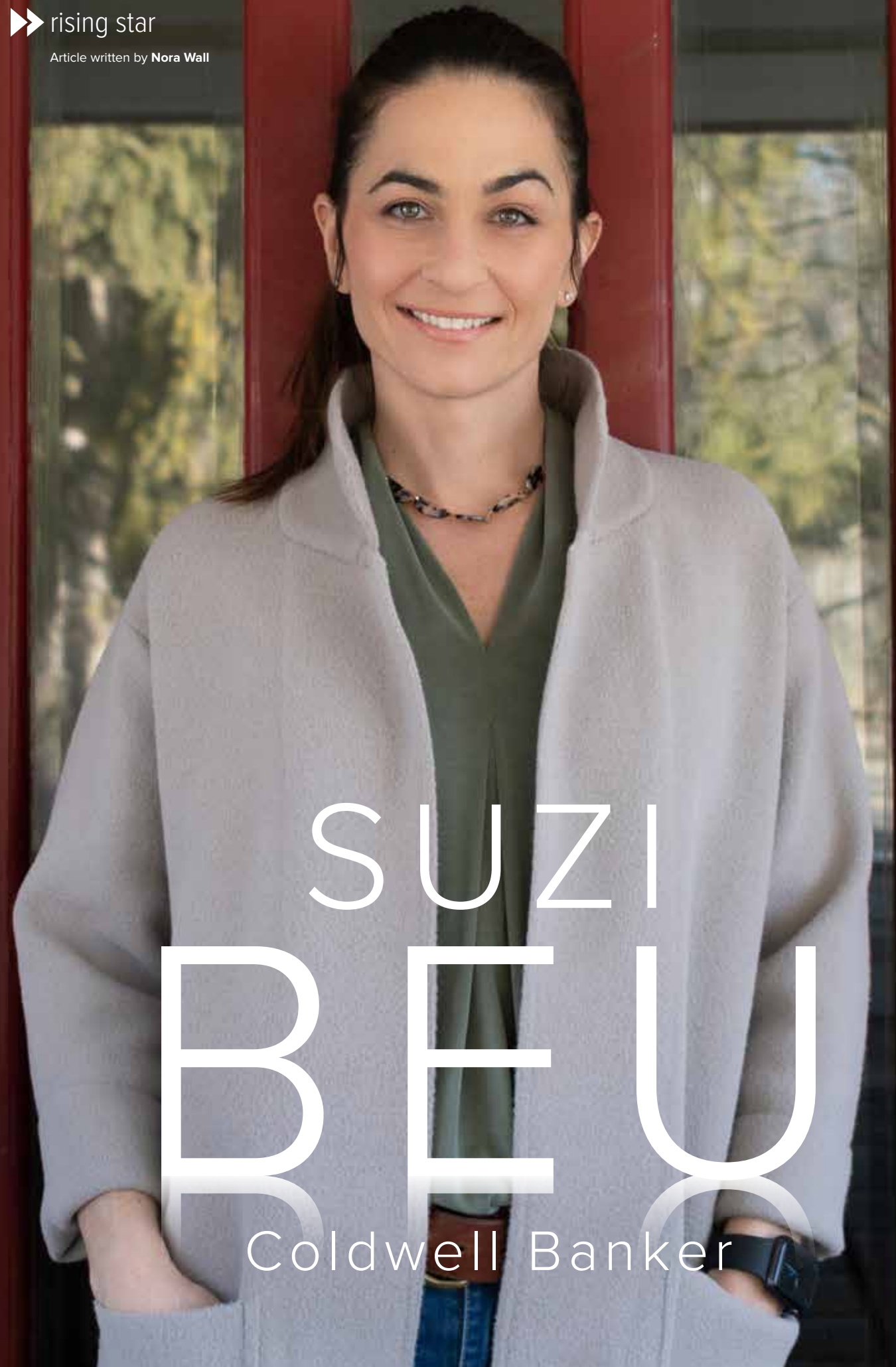
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# SUZI BEU

Coldwell Banker

## REINVENTION OPENS THE DOOR TO SUCCESS



Suzi Beu is a master at reinvention and collaboration. It's her ability to adapt and flow with change that has allowed her to master several professions. As a real estate professional, her forthright nature enables her to quickly win the trust of her clients and develop relationships.

After the dotcom bubble burst in 2001, Suzi Beu was caught off guard when Buzz Co. laid her off. Following in the footsteps of the family business, her Dad owned restaurants in the Chicago area his entire career, she switched careers from advertising to the culinary arts. After graduating from culinary school, she went on to work for some of the top eateries in Chicago, such as 312 Chicago, Paramount Room, and Volo Restaurant and Wine Bar. After over a decade as a pastry chef, she realized cooking was not a profession she could

sustain forever. No stranger to reinvention, Suzi began to scope out new career options.

Suzi's introduction to real estate was through a four-unit building she managed with her husband, Nathan. In 2011, they purchased a three-unit building in Lincoln Square that they sold in 2017. They also purchased, renovated and sold a home in the Logan Square area. On the lookout for a new career, these three experiences piqued Suzi's interest in residential real estate.

Suzi started her real estate career while she was still at Volo. She says,

"While I loved the creative freedom of cooking, I knew it wasn't a job I could do to the end of my career." She started looking for another career. She says, "There are many similarities in being a chef and in real estate. I love the full circle transaction, and seeing something from the start through to the finish is extremely satisfying to me. For example, there are 12-steps to bread making, and the steps to closing a deal feel the same to me."

In 2014, she started at Coldwell Banker, and six years later, she continues to work as an independent agent. She loves the connections she makes and the relationships she

...





gets to build through real estate. She says, “Hands down, finding the right home for a client is the best experience. This job brings you close to people, and you get to know them in ways most people never get to see. The interpersonal relationships I have developed are invaluable.”

The relationship-driven nature of real estate satisfied her need for more interaction with people. It was something missing in her former career in the culinary arts. She builds trust by being honest and direct with people. She says, “I don’t think anyone benefits when you sugar coat something.” For Suzi, gaining the trust and respect of her clients requires transparency and honesty.

Suzi works hard to balance work, family, and her physical and emotional needs. She and her husband, Nathan, are busy with two children, Stella (12) and Jonah (11), their two adopted dogs, Hank and Rue, and lots of activities.

An avid tennis player, she’s also captain of her woman’s competitive tennis team through her Park District. She says, “We are an active family, and love winter sports such as skiing, cross country skiing, snowmobiling. Now that our kids are older, we have started to do more traveling. We also love to go up north to our place in Rhinelander, Wisconsin.” They also actively support foster-to-home rescue organizations that focus on high-risk dogs.

Throughout her life, Suzi has turned hardships into opportunities. It’s that ability that has lent itself to her success in real estate. Suzi’s advice to everyone just getting started: “Know your audience and always keep your client’s interest at the forefront.” Sage advice from a wise woman.



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## A COLLABORATIVE LEADER WHO FOSTERS BIG GROWTH IN AGENTS

Collaborative is Gina Collins self-defined leadership style. As Managing Broker of Coldwell Banker's thriving Glenview office, she has successfully shepherded the agents she manages to reach for bigger goals and achieve more through her leadership.

Gina entered real estate in 1989. After her divorce in 1997 with three children and a house she wanted to keep, she decided staying in real estate was her best option. She says, "I didn't want to uproot my three children. I wanted to make real estate work so I could still be part of being their room mom and taking them on field trips." She quickly carved out a name for herself in real estate. It took tenacity, persistence, and strategic thinking. It worked out. Today, those same skills still lead her to accomplish the goals she sets and successfully lead a team of agents.

Gina worked her way up to managing broker. She started as an admin in 1989 and then in 1992 she went to work as an agent at Koenig and Strey in Libertyville. She switched to Coldwell Banker in 2010. After 29 years in sales, Gina decided it was time to change roles. She says, "I have loved helping other agents and implementing programs, running client appreciation parties, and helping with training." The move to managing broker was a natural progression for her. In 2018, she became the managing broker of the Coldwell Banker Glenview office.

An active listener, Gina, is collaborative. She teaches agents how to take ownership of their business and create the business they want and the life they want to live. She says, "I love the collaborative aspect of being a manager. Working as a partner with the agents to help move their business to the next level and coaching/mentoring them on best practices and developing good habits to have an extraordinary life, not just a job as a REALTOR®."



Gina sets yearly goals and then breaks them down into action items. She says, "I break down goals into smaller pieces to make them more attainable. I do the daily tasks to help me move forward on a goal. It's a daily win. I then review my goals and tasks weekly." The process begins for her during the week between Christmas and New Year with big goals for the year, which she then breaks down into manageable goals every week of actionable items. She has a personal accountability system in place, which keeps her on target and moving forward. She says, "I am

GINA  
Collins  
COLDWELL BANKER



...

always putting my best foot forward and learning from my mistakes.”

Gina attributes much of her success to her self-confidence. She says, “I believe in what I am doing and the company I work for. My belief in who I am is due to my second husband and children. They believed in me and pushed me to grow.” She continues, “My top achievement is watching my children blossom in their careers and personal lives. They have taught me more about life and who I am and who I wanted to become more than any other source.”

Within the next five years, Gina wants to make the Coldwell Banker Glenview office, the place where goal-oriented, motivated agents find they can grow and expand their business in a diverse environment that is collaborative, supportive, and fun. She’s on her way.



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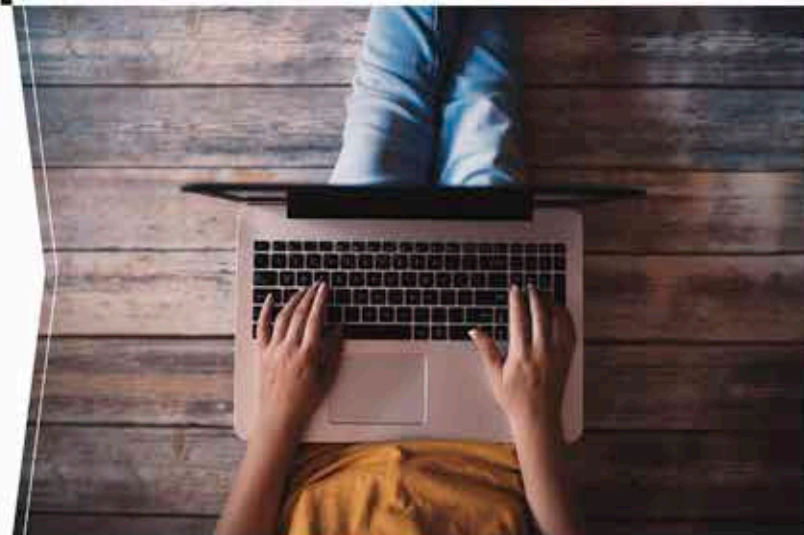


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# A SENSE OF ADVENTURE IS HIS ALLY

## ▶▶ top producer

Article written by **Nora Wall**

Photography by **Jennifer Schuman** // Horizon Photography

A sense of adventure drives Cory Albiani's success in real estate. A persistent self-starter, he loves that each transaction presents a new opportunity and challenge. It's his ability to adapt to changing circumstances that fuels his success. He's agile and can easily pivot when a circumstance demands it.

After college like many of his GenX peers, Cory ventured to Latin America for a year. It was a life-changing experience. When he returned to the states he went to work in various sales and marketing positions with Hershey. When his job moved him back to Chicago from Minneapolis, Cory was ready to re-root himself in his hometown. Shortly after returning to Chicago, he was set-up on a blind date with a lovely Italian girl, who would later become his wife, Simona, and partner in raising two children, Leonardo and Davide

His mother, Coral, a fixture in Chicago, encouraged him to get into real estate. Cory agreed. He says, "For me, real estate was an opportunity to essentially run your own business and control your own destiny." It matched his personality and his ambition. In 2012, he joined his mother, at Baird and Warner, and she mentored him.

In 2012, Cory and Coral moved to @ properties. Cory says, "Real estate is a profession in which you have



“ FOR ME, REAL ESTATE WAS AN OPPORTUNITY TO ESSENTIALLY RUN YOUR OWN BUSINESS AND CONTROL YOUR OWN DESTINY.



the opportunity to create and build upon your own destiny.” It’s also about building long term relationships with colleagues as well as clients. Through building trusted relationships, he has created a successful business with repeat clients and referrals.

Cory cares about his clients. He says, “I genuinely care about my clients. I go the extra mile to get the best results for my sellers and buyers. I try to effectively over-communicate all aspects of the transaction. I really listen to my clients. So many times much of what we do is to keep everyone’s emotions in check in order to move the process forward.” That’s the vital role of the real estate agent. It’s about managing relationships in what is for most people a very emotional experience. The REALTOR® manages relationships to complete a successful transaction.

Cory’s advice for new agents, “Try to find balance, have a team member or a partner that can back you up. It’s important to be able to take a vacation every once in a while. It’s essential to have someone you trust that can help you with the business while you are away.” He continues, “And always do your homework before meetings with your potential clients for the first time. Come in prepared to have a conversation about the home and the market.”

When Cory’s not busy working in an ever-changing market, he enjoys traveling with his family and spending time outside. His most memorable trips have been to Italy. He says, “Simona was born in Italy, North of Tuscany, and we have returned as a family three times since we’ve had kids. I always like to drive through the countryside, especially in the hills and smaller towns in Tuscany.” He also enjoys coaching and watching his youngest son play soccer.

Cory says, “Success at the end of the day is doing the best you can and knowing you did so. Knowing that you did your best, despite the result helps you gain a sense of peace and happiness.” He believes that “When I put myself out there, and you put yourself out there amazing things can happen.” It’s about adapting. His sense of adventure has been his best ally in cultivating a successful career.





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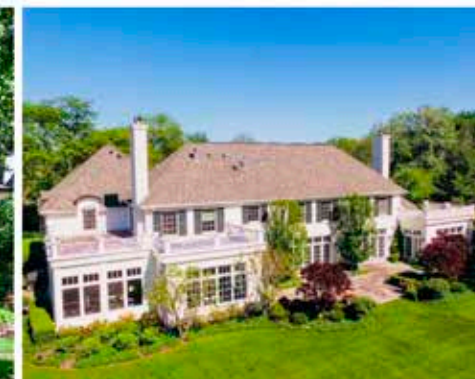
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# Brian Jessen

## Gaining the Trust of Your Clients through Hard Work and Being a Straight Shooter

### ▶▶ partner spotlight

Article written by **Nora Wall**  
Senior Vice President Guaranteed Rate

Brian Jessen is one of the North Shore's most preferred residential real estate lenders. As Senior Vice President with Guaranteed Rate, Inc., his number one priority is making sure all of his clients are one hundred percent satisfied. He says, "I take this work very seriously. I know REALTORS® are entrusting their clients, their incomes, and their reputations into my hands when they refer me to their clients. They need a lender who will be forthright and work hard for them and for their clientele."

Initially on track to go into investment banking in New York or Boston, Brian's path took a twist when his fiancé landed jobs in Arizona and California. He says, "So we decided we either figure it out, or we break up. We both compromised and moved back to Chicago, where our family members reside." He started in private banking, and his career evolved into residential lending. He says, "It was unplanned, which is why I tell my kids to be flexible, as you never know where life will take you!"







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