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If you are interested in contributing or nominating Realtors for certain stories, please email us at jason.acres@RealProducersMag.com

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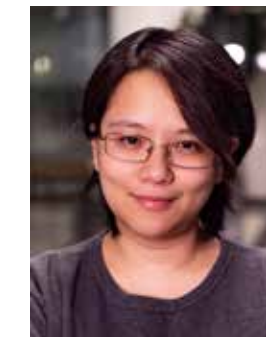
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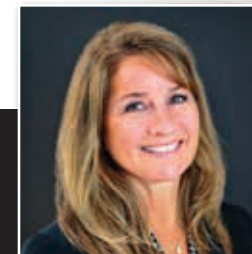
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► publisher's note

Making the Most of Life

As I write today during the latter weeks of February, I realize that it will be shared in this month's publication. The month of May is when we see a change in the weather. Spring is in the air, and the landscape around us begins to bloom. It's in times like these we thrive on the sunshine that warms our bodies and makes us feel alive, especially after a long season of cloudy skies.

The brighter days remind us that even in the most challenging times, the darker times of life, we can still make the most of the life we've been given. It was just a couple weeks ago that my older brother lost his life. Paul was 50 years old. Too young to leave us. Those were, and continue to be, some very dark days for me, and the cold, gray days of winter reflected my heart, mind and emotions.

But...

As I, my family and my close friends grieved the loss of my brother, we of course realized that in the midst of this tragedy, life continues all around us. I will miss my brother dearly, but I hold on to the hope that I will one day see him again in eternity. In the meantime, I've been reflecting on life. I want to make the most of it regardless of the

crises we face. The reality that life is short means I must embrace the life I've been given to make a difference. I want to help! I want to do more to bless others. I want to be kinder. I want to cherish every day as one more to share. I want the expression on my face and in my heart to scream, "Joy!"

My outlook on life has changed since I lost one of my best friends. There are so many things that simply aren't as important as they once were. It's not that there aren't pertinent issues that must be addressed, but where challenges arise, I've seen how worrying causes me to make them bigger than they really are. It's actually very liberating to view life through this new perspective.

Of course, spring is in the air, and meeting with wonderful agents like you is one of the highlights of my day. I hope and pray that you would embrace the life you've been given and view the highs and lows with a new lens. You really do make a difference in the lives of so many here on the North Shore.

Circumstances will always change, but your perspective and how you roll with those circumstances that come your way will define how you're going to make the most of the life you've been given.

I love the quote from George Armstrong Custer of the United States Army who was an officer and cavalry commander in the American Civil War. "It's not how many times you get knocked down that count, it's how many times you get back up."



Jason Acres

Owner/Publisher

North Shore Real Producers

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ERIK SCHWINGER

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AN EFFECTIVE LEADER SERVES THE INTERESTS OF HIS TEAM

Erik Schwinger leads through mentorship. As a non-competing managing broker, his main priority is helping the agents in his office build successful businesses. Erik credits his patience, creativity, openness to new ideas, and a willingness to consider many solutions to any given challenge as the qualities that have made him successful. He says, “Being flexible is an absolute necessity in residential real estate.” His ability to successfully navigate complex situations has helped him build a thriving real estate office.



...

When he and his wife, Ali, relocated to Chicago in 2012, Erik was working for a small nonprofit educational organization. While he loved the work, the relocation forced him to work from home. After a while, Erik needed to get back out in the world. Several people in his life enjoy successful real estate careers, and they encouraged him to switch careers. In early 2013 he did, and he hasn't looked back.

While getting started in real estate in a new city was difficult, Erik managed to create some great relationships with other agents in his office early on. He began under the mentorship of David Bailey at the Baird and Warner Lincoln Park office. He says, "David invited me to join his management team as an assistant manager in 2017, which put me on the path to the position I have now as managing broker of our Winnetka office. David is directly tied to much of my success in this business, and now I focus on helping others succeed."

Erik is proud of how much he has achieved in less than eight years in the industry. Making the transition to managing broker was a big step for him because he was able to focus on talent development and helping the agents in his office. He says, "As a non-selling, non-competing managing broker, I do not have my own transactions to worry about, so I can focus 100 percent of my energy on making sure my agents are supported and successful. Their success is my success." He derives a lot of personal satisfaction from being able to guide and help those he manages.

Erik is a firm believer in consistent daily routines and habits. Through small, consistent daily actions, big goals get achieved. Erik says, "A goal

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THE KEYS TO A SUCCESSFUL CAREER IN REAL ESTATE ARE PROFESSIONALISM, TRUSTWORTHINESS, POSITIVE ATTITUDE, AND AN OPEN MIND.

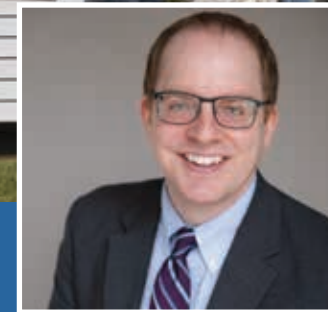
can seem very 'pie in the sky' unless you have the daily habits that will help you get there. Consistency is critical." Erik continues, "The keys to a successful career in real estate are professionalism, trustworthiness, positive attitude, and an open mind. Anyone can fumble their way through a real estate transaction. That's easy. The trick is to be someone who can make the experience a positive one for everyone involved. Then they not

only want to do business again with you, but they tell others about it too. That takes qualities that you don't always learn in a training room."

Erik values the incredible relationships he has developed throughout his life, both professional and personal. When asked about the future, he says, "I love my job. I would be perfectly happy having the same role in five to 10 years from now. My goals revolve mostly around growing the Winnetka office sustainably and in the right way with the right people. If I can do that, I will consider it a success."



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Article written by **Nora Wall**

Kira Spivack

Jameson Sotheby's

A Super-Connector Finds Her Calling in Real Estate

Kira thrives on making and growing her connections. It's her social nature that has laid the foundation for her to become a fast-rising star in the North Shore real estate scene.



A former teacher and event planner for educational nonprofits, Kira made the transition to real estate in 2016. She says, "I excelled and loved teaching children, but I missed interacting with adults in the business world." She also became extremely interested in the housing market from a numbers standpoint. She realized she could combine real estate with her love for interacting with and building relationships with people.

Kira started at Coldwell Banker in Evanston under the management of Chris Stephens. Soon after joining the Evanston office, she and her husband decided to move further north, and she switched to the Glencoe office. A little over a year ago, Chris reached out to her about joining him at Jameson Sothebys. She says, "I am thrilled to be a new affiliate with this company. I have ...

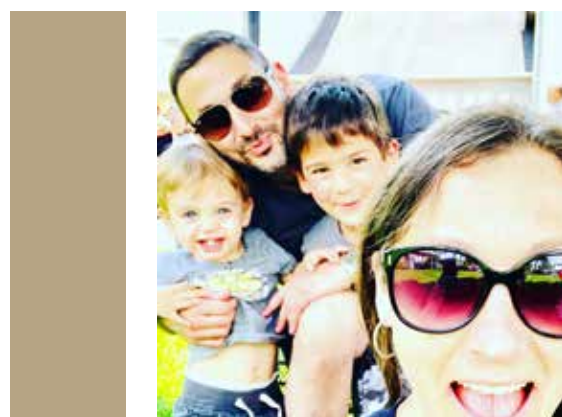
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never been a part of a team and have built my customer base organically through word of mouth and referrals.”

It's her commitment to customer service and building relationships that shines through. She says, "I had a recent deal going where my persistence started to annoy the other agent in the transaction. In an angry text message, the agent said to me, 'This must be your only thing going on right now.' At first, I was a little offended by the negative connotation of the text. Then, I thought about it again and decided this couldn't be a better compliment. I am incredibly passionate and treat each client with whom I am actively working like they are my only clients. I enjoy building relationships with families and their children, empty nesters, and young single professionals, just starting their adult lives."

Kira married her husband, Chad, nine years ago. He runs a commercial recycling company and is the fourth generation in the business. Kira and Chad are busy at home with two young boys: Parker (6) and Chase (2). She says, "When the two little guys and I are together, we do endless amounts of art projects and love to explore nature. We love to get out and be active together, whether it's playing baseball, biking, running, and going to the park or exploring a new nature preserve."

The opportunity to develop relationships motivates Kira. She says, "I am looking forward to and anticipating growing my business. My dreams and goals are just to make a mark in my community, and I love introducing people to each other and making connections. It's fun helping out of state residents find their new home." A super-connector, Kira makes selling real estate look effortless.



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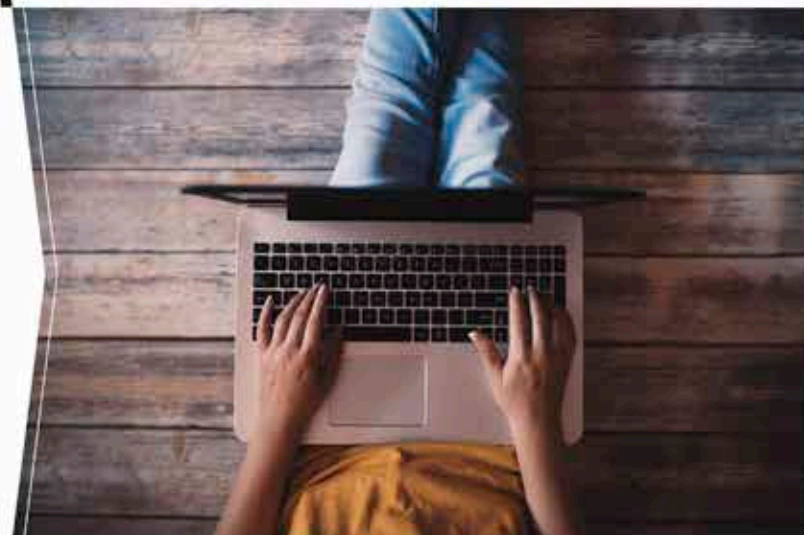


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Molly McDonagh

Chicago Title

Prioritizing Relationships: Friends, Family, & Work



A lifelong Glenview resident, Molly McDonagh was recruited by Chicago Title Insurance Company via LinkedIn. With two parents in real estate – her dad is a builder, and her mom is an interior designer – she is no stranger to the demands of the industry. So, when Chicago Title offered her position as an Associate Account Executive, it was easy for her to say “yes.” She is quick to point out the importance of relationships in her life as her number-one priority.

Growing up, Molly’s parents’ entrepreneurial nature inspired her to set high goals for herself. They are her role models and source of inspiration. She says, “When I look back at all my parents have accomplished both professionally and personally, there is not anyone that inspires me more. They created a loving home environment for myself and my five siblings, as well as built a business from the ground up. When I think about what I want my future to look like, they have created a real life version of it. It motivates me to be better.”

A former college basketball player at Miami University, Molly, considers it the most rewarding and challenging experience she has ever had. She says, “I learned and developed great time management and leadership skills while playing basketball and attending classes. It was difficult to do both, and the experience truly made me who I am today.” It taught her how to set goals and teach them. She practices SMART: specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-based.



“

When I think about what I want my future to look like, they have created a real life version of it. It motivates me to be better.





...

She says, "Goal-setting is a skill just like anything else. It takes time and practice." She assesses her progress regularly and makes the necessary adjustments to reach her goals.

Molly says, "I've realized that hard work is the key to being successful in all aspects of life. My parents instilled in us at a young age the value of a hard day's work." More than any other personal quality, Molly attributes her strong work ethic to her success. She believes kindness and self-reflection go a long way. She says, "I try to improve myself every day by learning from my successes and failures so that I can improve my productivity and efficiency."

When Molly joined Chicago Title in 2019, the company welcomed Molly with open arms. The friendly and collaborative culture of the company suits her. She says, "My role is to develop relationships with customers to become a trusted resource and to

help facilitate smooth and efficient closings." Social by nature, she enjoys interacting with a wide variety of people daily. She says, "Everyone at Chicago Title treats each other with respect and professionalism, and it is a great environment to get to be a part of it." She continues, "My most memorable customer experience has been signing up for my first attorney. It has been so fun developing our relationship and becoming a trusted advisor to him."

Molly prioritizes her relationships with family and friends. She says, "I have found in leaving college and entering the real world how important having those relationships with family and friends are. Working hard and finding value in my career is important, but what makes life truly rich is being surrounded by people you love and getting to experience the joys of life with them." It's also what allows Molly to better serve her clients. She treats them like friends.



“

I try to improve myself every day by learning from my successes and failures so that I can improve my productivity and efficiency.

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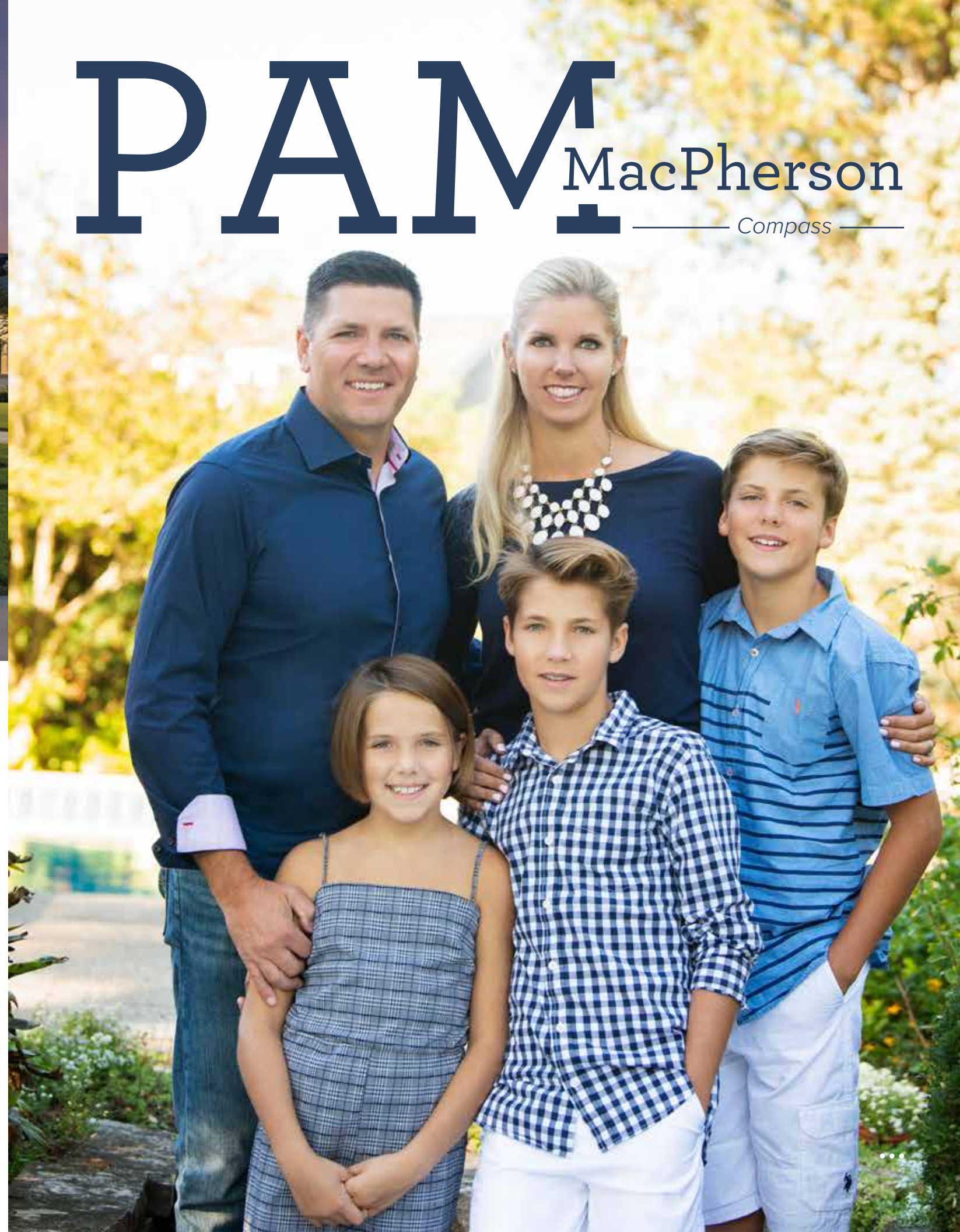
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PAM MacPherson
Compass



Soaring to New Heights

▶▶ top producer

Article written by **Nora Wall**
Photography by **Jennifer Schuman**
// Horizon Photography

Growing up in the North Shore, superstar REALTOR® Pam MacPherson watched her parents become giants in their respective professions. She took notes. She observed their hard work ethics and high standards, but, more importantly, it was their deep honesty and high level of integrity that firmly imprinted in Pam's consciousness.

Today, Pam lives by the golden rule: Treat others as you would like to be treated. She says, "If you treat people with respect, honesty, loyalty, and kindness, just as my parents taught me, it will guide you through every hard business decision and personal dilemma." It's that attitude that has earned Pam tremendous success but, perhaps more importantly, an unparalleled level of respect amongst her peers.

Her path to real estate began when she was a newlywed. Pam married her husband, Matt, in 2002, and they started flipping houses. She was working in sales with Frito Lays, and Matt was coaching. It was through the subsequent frequent moves early in her marriage that inspired Pam to get into residential real estate. Pam explains, "We moved four times in our first five years of marriage. We rehabbed or built on all the homes we bought and were able to sell them for a profit. I learned a great deal about the construction process and market conditions from that experience." Initially, she got her license to flip houses, but she soon realized she loved helping people find their dream home more.

With her real estate license, she started selling residential in 2015. She joined the O'Connor/Hebson team at Dream Town. She says, "They were fantastic leaders, and I loved learning from each of them as they had dramatically different styles." It was the perfect place to start. She continues, "I was devastated when they dissolved their partnership, but I had already made 10 million in sales on my own in my first year of real estate, so I realized I had a knack for it, and, more importantly, loved it and loved helping my clients."

Pam interviewed other teams at multiple brokerages but decided to break out on her own. She started the PGM team at @properties with Lori Hooten in 2016. After three months of commuting between the suburbs and the city, her client base in the burbs was getting busier and busier.

She noticed a lot of city sellers were working with one agent in the city and another one in the burbs for buying. There was a lack of fluid communication, and home sale contingent deals were falling through. The client became the middle man between two different agents. An efficient system wasn't in place for thousands of buyers that were trying to make the transition from urban to suburban life.





Juggling her city clients and her North Shore clients, Pam realized she needed a partner to help her with her business in the city so she could focus on her North Shore clients and create a streamlined client experience. Searching for a solution to her business predicament, she decided to streamline the process. She says, “I believed real estate needed a new type of team, not one leader in the pyramid but a true team that works together and a circular team with no one more important than the other.” She set out to find a teammate to build the city market, and she would focus on her roots in the North Shore and building a base.



An old grade school friend, Hayley Westhoff, had been an agent in the city for years. Pam reached out to her and pitched Hayley her idea of creating an urban-to-suburban concierge service. Hayley agreed and partnered with Pam. It was the perfect fit. Pam says, “We are fiercely competitive, and we’ll search or sell or negotiate relentlessly for our clients. I require all of our teammates to do this for each client while always maintaining a high moral ground. It is the key to our success.” Pam says, “Build trust with the people around you. No one can do this alone. Our team builds strong relationships, and

that includes with our vendors. She continues, “Having trusted vendor referrals helps make the process easier for buyers and sellers alike and keeps transactions moving smoothly.” It’s critical to have a well-vetted team, including vendors.



“
Build trust with
the people
around you.
No one can do
this alone

Four years later, with 10 rockstar teammates in place, they are on their way to reaching \$100 million in sales with Compass in 2020. They moved to Compass in 2019. She says, “We also had the amazing opportunity to open our very own MacPherson Westhoff Compass Office in the center of Glenview at 1800 Glenview

Rd. in conjunction with Mike Aiello and Aiello Architecture. This new office has not only allowed us to help revitalize downtown Glenview but also be able to showcase our properties in large picture windows in prime walking traffic and be as accessible as possible to our buyers.” It’s been a fantastic opportunity.

By identifying a real need in the market and then working to fill it, Pam has reached new heights as an agent. She’s fixed a problem that existed for thousands of people that make the rite of passage move from the city to the suburbs. She’s upped the level of

service. Following in the footsteps of her parents, Pam’s grown into a giant in her field, with no signs of slowing down anytime soon.



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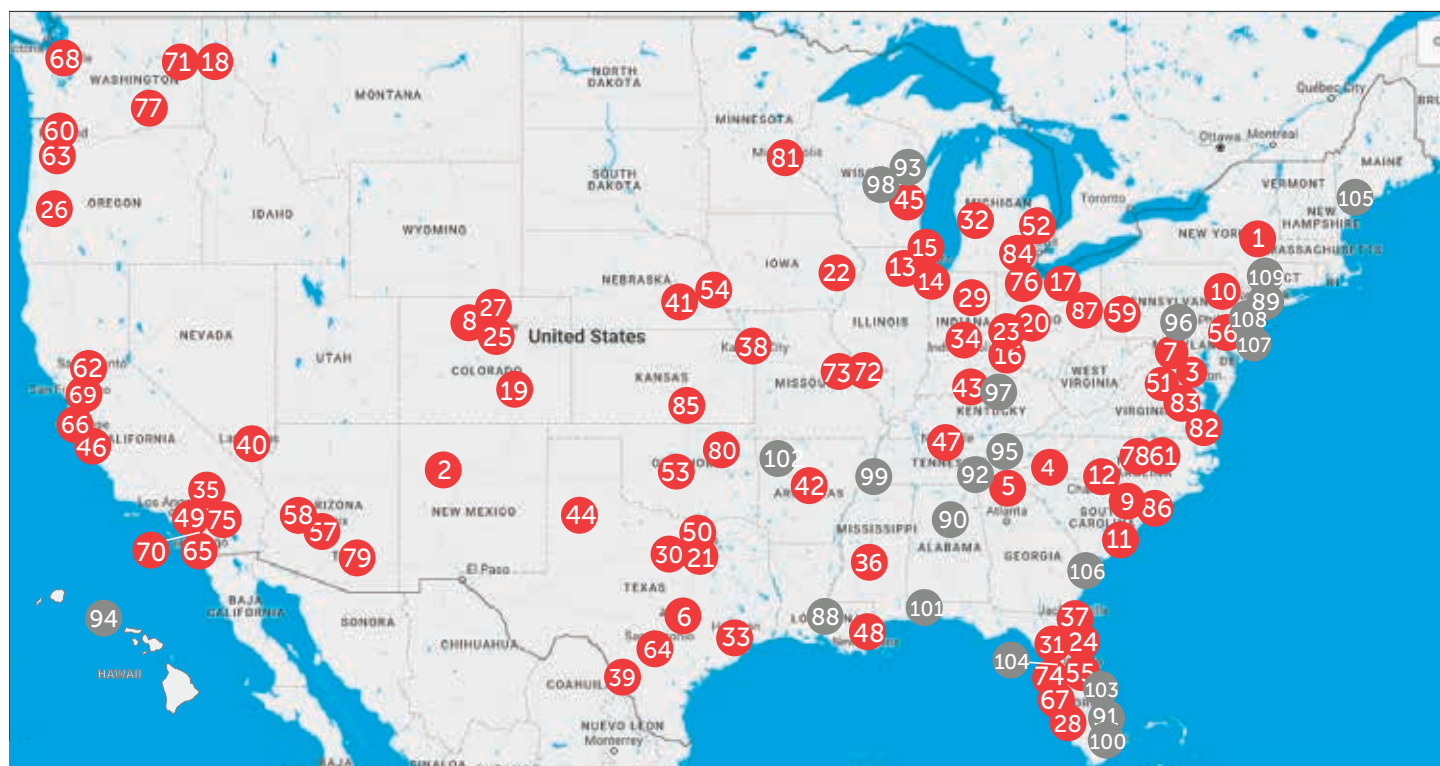
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