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Mya Lopez

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FAQ

ABOUT THIS MAGAZINE

By Michele Kader



If you just made the 2021 Top 500 producers in South OC list and are new to our publication, you may be wondering what it's

all about. "FAQs About This Magazine" answers the most commonly asked questions around the country regarding the *Real Producers* platform. My door is always open to discuss anything regarding this community — this publication is 100 percent designed to be your voice and to connect, elevate the industry, and inspire!

Q: WHO RECEIVES THIS MAGAZINE?

A: The top 500 agents in South OC. We pulled the MLS numbers (by volume) from January 1, 2020, to December 31, 2020, in South OC, cut the list off at number 500, and our new 2021 Top 500 distribution list was born. This magazine is free exclusively to the top 500 agents in the area each year. This year, the minimum production level for our group was \$12.9 million in 2020, based on data reported to MLS.

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, we put the wheels in motion for our writer to conduct an interview and for our photographer 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 REALTORS® 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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Are You a Real Estate



A-Lister?

Are you the agent people recognize because they've seen you on TV or in the local paper? And this doesn't mean in an advertisement. You didn't pay to be seen. You were asked to provide your expertise about the local real estate market. That makes you an A-lister. People love to work with the "famous" real estate agent!

How Do You Become an A-Lister?

You want to pitch newsworthy stories that are valuable to an audience. What's your expertise in real estate and how can you create a story that will be appealing to an audience? During COVID, agents were landing in the media for safety protocols for open houses, how financing changed, the increased value of outdoor spaces, and the exodus from city to suburbs.

Ask, what's trending now? Then, follow the number-one rule for pitching the media: what value can you provide their audience? Use what's trending and come up with a story idea that people will want to learn about. Remember, landing in the media has nothing to do with you, per se. It's what you know and what information you can provide. Then, you get to reap the benefits of being in the media because you are seen as "famous," as an industry A-lister, and you get to share it with the world.

Take the media you land and share it everywhere. Send it out in your newsletter. Add it to your website, including the media logo. Pin it on Facebook and/or Twitter. Share it on Instagram and LinkedIn. Post it on Pinterest. Wherever you are online, that's where your media should be. Write a personal note or email and send it to potential sellers or buyers. SHOW them you are a real estate A-lister because you're the one featured in the media!



Christina Daves, PR for Anyone®

Christina Daves is the founder of PR For Anyone®. She has trained thousands of real estate agents in gaining visibility by using traditional and social media together for maximum effectiveness. Agents she has worked with have appeared in national magazines, newspapers, radio, television, and blogs. Book your free business strategy session with Christina at www.ChatWithChristina.com, and learn more about her at www.ChristinaDaves.com.

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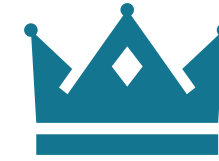
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BRYAN GERLACH

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“
I love sharing this
area with others
and to be able to be
a spokesperson and
resource for people.
”

A native of the Laguna Beach and Dana Point area, Bryan Gerlach sells seven to 10 Laguna Beach properties, on average, a year.

When you see someone who has a true passion for their work, it comes through unmistakably. That's the feeling you get when you talk with Bryan Gerlach. As a REALTOR® with Pacific Sotheby's International Realty, it's clear Bryan knows he has found his calling.

“Working in real estate has been life-changing for me,” Bryan says with a smile.

AN EARLY INTEREST

Bryan has long had an interest in real estate. “I remember even when I was growing up that I was always drawn to real estate ... from nice homes to high-rise buildings and large development,” he says. “I loved looking at floor plans in books. Growing up, I thought I wanted to be an architect or a builder.”

As he came of age, Bryan initially followed a different path in life. He attended San Diego State, where he earned a double degree in business administration and marketing. “Around that time, I was working in downtown San Diego as a valet. There was so much happening in the city. They had just built Petco Park,” Bryan says. “Development was booming, with shops and restaurants opening left and right, and I had an up-close, street-level view of it. I wanted to be part of it and work with a developer, but I found out you need to have a master's degree or sometimes even more.”

TAKING STEPS AHEAD

Right out of college, Bryan entered the world of commercial property management. “I managed a portfolio of more than 20 properties in San Diego,

Orange County, and Los Angeles for about eight years,” Bryan recalls. “As part of that, I handled leasing, tenant relations, and budgeting. It was a really good experience. I worked on a couple sales for our company, but wasn't active as a sales agent.”

While he had gained good experience, Bryan wanted to have an opportunity to work in a setting where his income and opportunities weren't capped. “So I decided to make the jump to residential real estate,” he remembers. “Going from that background on the corporate side to residential sales gave me a leg up and I sold 10 homes my first year.”

Bryan made a smooth transition into the business in June 2016 when he joined Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices California in Laguna Niguel.



“I’m very grateful to be able to work where I was raised.”



COMING HOME

In 2017, he joined the team at Pacific Sotheby’s International Realty in Laguna Beach, where his success continued to build. Within a couple months, he had listed a \$7.5 million home. Today, he consistently sells seven to 10 Laguna Beach properties a year.

But that’s just the start. Bryan truly has a home-field advantage; in addition to loving what he does, he feels blessed to be able to do it in the area where he grew up. “I’m very grateful to be able to work where I was raised, in the Laguna Beach and Dana Point area. I remember growing up looking at and admiring the homes in this area,” Bryan says with a smile. “Now, being able to do 90 percent of my business in this area is fantastic. A lot of people are moving here, more than ever before. I love sharing this area with others and to be able to be a spokesperson and resource for people.”

SIGNS OF SUCCESS

Bryan has a rewarding reputation for results. In 2019, he recorded \$18.5 million in sales volume. That number ballooned to over \$62 million in 2020. And, remarkably, in just the first two months of 2021, his production already stood at over \$35 million. What’s even more astounding is the fact that Bryan does this as an individual agent with no assistants.

FULFILLING LIFE

Away from work, Bryan’s world revolves around his family, including his wife of five years, Elise, and children, 18-year-old Shea, 16-year-old Braydon, 13-year-old Riley, and 4-year-old Austin. “My family really drives me in everything that I do,” Bryan emphasizes.

In his free time, Bryan enjoys surfing, hanging out with family, and exploring local restaurants with Elise. He also has an ongoing passion for his childhood home. “Salt Creek Beach has been the center of my life since I first started surfing. It’s been great to see it change and become one of the focal points of luxury locations in Southern California,” Bryan says. “Dana Point Harbor is also a very special place to me. It was originally built in the late 1960s, and they’re starting a five-year plan to redo that. I’m proud of how the city has grown up to be a very vibrant coastal community and now is also a real destination for visitors.”

Those who have the opportunity to work with Bryan see his passion for the area and benefit from his expertise, relentless energy, and real love for what he does that he puts to work on behalf of others every day.



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GABBY MASTROBATTISTA

business partner spotlight ◀◀

By Dave Danielson

QUALITY ESCROW

Going the Distance

Each real estate transaction can take on a life of its own, with a seemingly endless stream of moving parts and potential hurdles. That's why it means a lot when you're able to team up with a partner like Quality Escrow.

Gabby Mastrobattista is an Account Executive with Quality Escrow who expresses the passion she and her team have for going the distance for those they serve.

There When It Matters Most

"We will bend over backwards and go out of our way as much as possible," she smiles.

"We're a phone call, text, or email away. We will do what we can to help REALTORS® and brokers in any way they need. We're always available. Our escrow officers and I are available on the weekends with our personal numbers. We do everything we can to be accessible. We know this is a 24-hour business, and we want to be available to them on weekends when it has traditionally been the biggest time when they're handling their business."

Individual Approach

Quality Escrow brings a truly individualized approach to business. "Every Realtor has different needs. We want to be an extension of their team," Gabby emphasizes. "With that in mind, we're available to explain things to their clients as well. We understand the escrow process is confusing to buyers and sellers, so we want to be available to help make the process as smooth as possible." ●●●



From left to right: Gabby Mastrobattista, Christine Koedel, Melanie Hauver. (Photo by Bodie Kuljian)



Gabby Mastrobattista is an avid distance runner and has run in the Boston Marathon several times. (Photo by Bodie Kuljian)

•••

Quality Escrow’s Mission Viejo office brings a boutique, personalized experience to the market. As Gabby says, “We put a lot of importance on having more of a hands-on feel with the way we do business. We always want to do what we can to provide more personalized service to build long-term relationships and have a real family feel.”

Gabby is quick to shine the spotlight on her team, including three escrow officers, and is dedicated to clients in the Mission Viejo area. “One thing we put a lot of emphasis on offering to Realtors is our concierge notary service, where we go and meet with clients,” she says.

“We have specific notaries who meet with our clients to execute their escrow documents as a personal touch. It’s an opportunity for us to be there to represent agents in a positive way. I meet with the sellers and help them execute their seller escrow documents.”

Active Life

Away from work, Gabby’s world is centered around her family, including her husband, Michael, who is a general contractor, her 21-year-old stepson, Myles, her 18-year-old daughter, Sofia, and her 15-year-old son, Jaxon.

Gabby also cherishes time spent with her parents, 94-year-old Richard and 88-year-old Josefina.

In her free time, Gabby has a passion for running, something she’s enjoyed for a long time, including becoming an ultra-marathon runner. She has even qualified for — and run in — the Boston Marathon several times. As the nation works through the pandemic, Gabby is hopeful that the event will take place again later this year. If it does, she will do whatever she can to be there for it.

A Heart for Helping

Gabby also has a heart for helping.

She enjoys supporting her church’s charitable efforts, as well as donating to Food for the Hungry, where she has sponsored children.

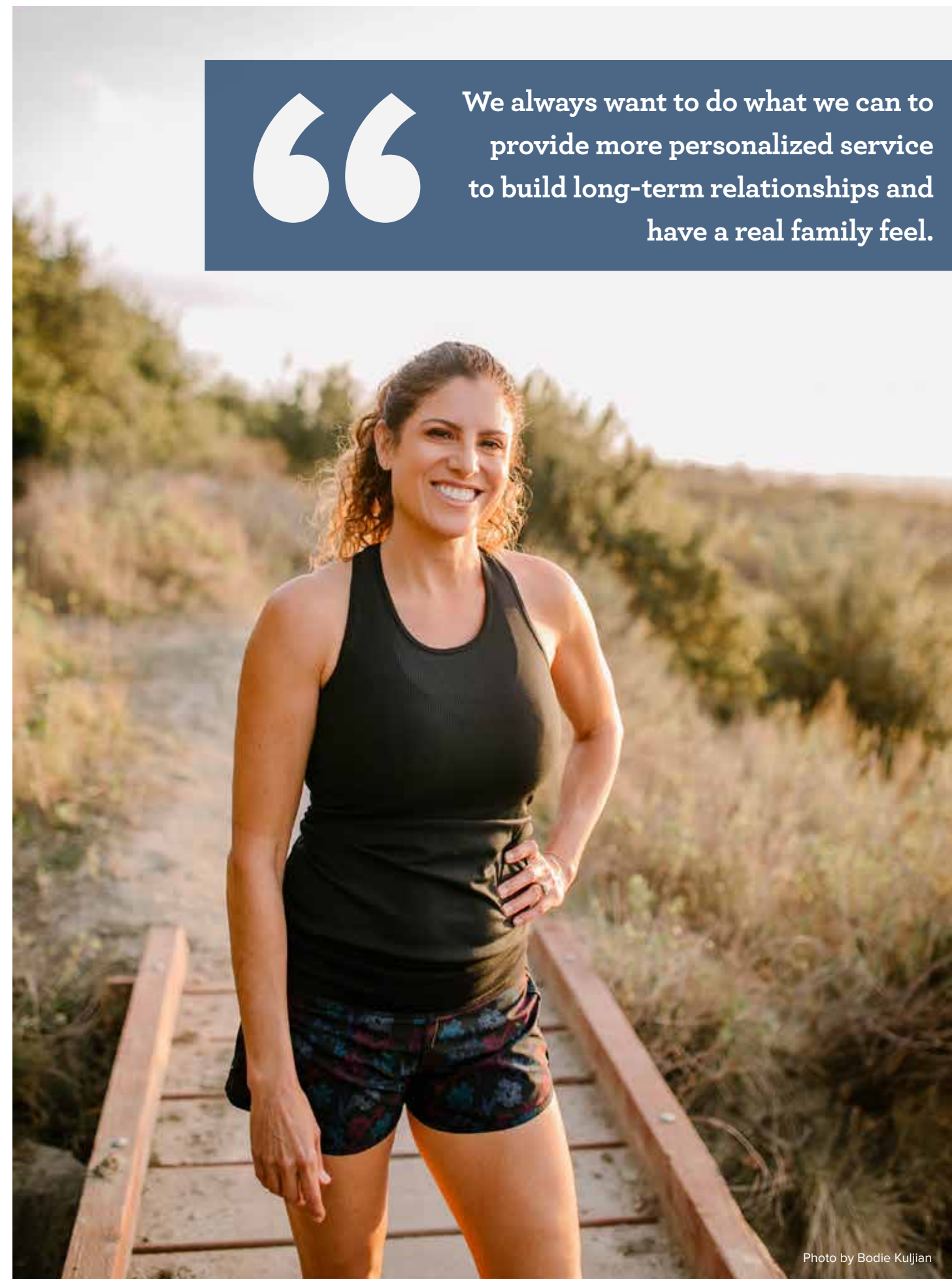
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CASEY KIRKLAND

▶ rising star

By Dave Danielson
Photos by Bodie Kuljian



All the Right Reasons

AS CLIENTS MAKE THEIR WAY THROUGH THE REAL ESTATE PROCESS, IT MEANS A LOT WHEN THEY HAVE GUIDANCE THROUGH WHAT CAN BE ONE OF THE MOST STRESSFUL TIMES IN THEIR LIVES ... GUIDANCE FROM SOMEONE WHO PUTS THEIR BEST INTENTIONS TO WORK ON THEIR BEHALF. CASEY KIRKLAND IS ONE WHO PERSONIFIES THAT QUALITY.

As a REALTOR® with Coldwell Banker, Casey puts his expertise to work for all the right reasons. “A good realtor isn’t driven by commissions, but by truly wanting to help people and represent them on one of the most important financial transactions in their lives,” Casey emphasizes. “I feel that responsibility to take care of them. I love being with people and helping people.”

MEANT TO BE

Casey earned his real estate license two and a half years ago. In some ways, it could be said that Casey was meant to be a Realtor. Growing up, he definitely had a head start in that direction. “My dad was a developer and Realtor. But that was just the start. My uncles, aunts, and grandma all worked in the business,” he remembers. “All I knew was real estate in southern California and Utah. I watched it from the sidelines my whole childhood, and it’s what I figured I would do all the way along.”

Casey graduated from college in 2008, during a time when there wasn’t a lot of development or construction. “The economy had really tanked at that time. So I ended up going into software sales, and I did that for over 10 years, selling enterprise software and different

solutions,” Casey says. “It was an unbelievable experience. I traveled a lot and sold to Fortune 500 companies.”

A CAREER SUPPORTING LIFE

There were definite trade-offs that came with Casey’s career success. So he earned his license. “I was traveling a lot, which was difficult with three sons,” he recalls. “I wanted to be able to spend more time with them and coach their teams. I remember my dad being able to do that for me. Plus, someone had told me that a rich man is someone who owns his own time. Real estate allows for that in my life.”

But making the move into real estate came with its own uncertainties. “I took a huge leap of faith leaving the corporate world, plus I had other companies that had recruited me,” he says. “But, after all those years, I



left and decided to do what my heart always wanted, which was real estate. I just did it. For me, it was about me saying that real estate would afford me the chance to be there for my wife and kids, and to be the husband and father I wanted to be.”

GRATITUDE AND ABUNDANCE

Casey feels a lot of gratitude for those who helped make his transition into the business a very successful one. “One of the huge factors that propelled me to early success was when I started working with CH Anderson Construction. They took a chance on me representing them on some amazing projects,” he says.

During Casey’s first year in the business, he recorded nearly \$20 million in sales volume. In 2020, that number mounted to over \$35 million.

LIVING A REWARDING LIFE

Away from work, Casey looks forward to time spent with his wife, Ashley, and their children, 8-year-old Chase, 6-year-old Jimmy, and 4-year-old Auggie.

As with his own upbringing, Casey likes to share his experiences in the business with his own children. “I love bringing them to potential listings or construction sites and having them ride along with me,” Casey says. “I really like having them on my team, for sure.”

In his free time, Casey is energized by his love for his community of San Clemente. “I’m hyper-focused on San Clemente. I’m not trying to sell people on a house, but I will try to sell them on the San Clemente dream,” Casey explains. “It’s a phenomenal place to raise kids or retire. It’s a very faith-based community with

similar morals and values. When you have young kids, it means a lot knowing you have a village behind you to help raise your children. It’s very comforting knowing we’re all in this together and on the same page.”

Casey enjoys surfing, time at the beach, mountain biking, playing golf, and hanging out with friends and family. He has a passion for coaching and helping to share his love of athletics with the children he coaches.

Casey is also very dedicated to his faith, as a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. “I enjoy helping youth and the community. There are so many great churches, schools, and organizations here. I feel like we’re in this together,” Casey says. “There’s a crazy amount of growth here, but you



Their three boys keep Casey and Ashley Kirkland very busy.



still have that small-town feel. It’s very unique, in that sense, to have that culture and togetherness.”

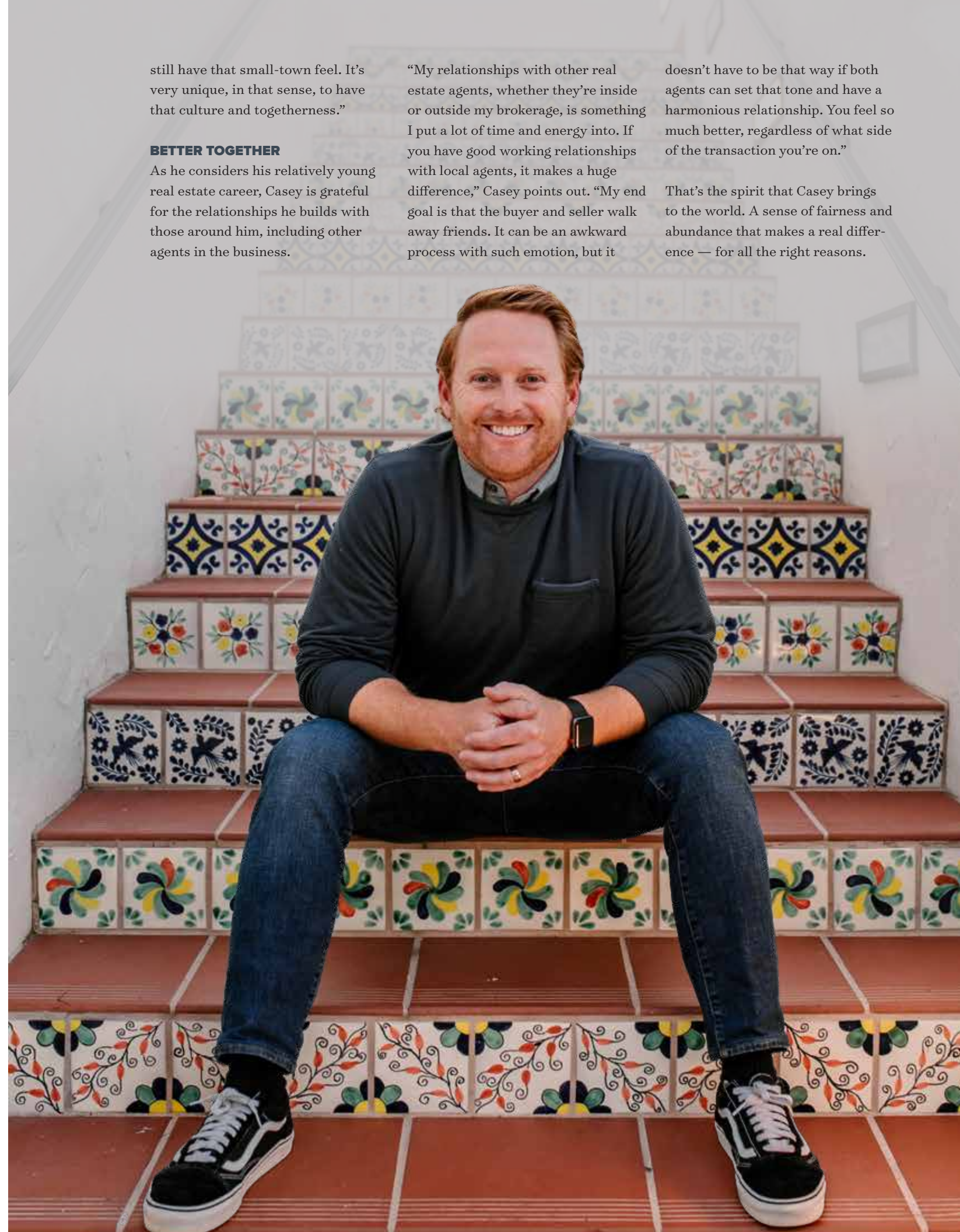
BETTER TOGETHER

As he considers his relatively young real estate career, Casey is grateful for the relationships he builds with those around him, including other agents in the business.

“My relationships with other real estate agents, whether they’re inside or outside my brokerage, is something I put a lot of time and energy into. If you have good working relationships with local agents, it makes a huge difference,” Casey points out. “My end goal is that the buyer and seller walk away friends. It can be an awkward process with such emotion, but it

doesn’t have to be that way if both agents can set that tone and have a harmonious relationship. You feel so much better, regardless of what side of the transaction you’re on.”

That’s the spirit that Casey brings to the world. A sense of fairness and abundance that makes a real difference — for all the right reasons.



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BROOKE CHIK



Brooke Chik with husband Owen, daughters Chloe (left) and Cassi (right), Great Dane brother and sister Bear (left) and Kali (right), and Shiba Inu/pitbull mix Capri (center).

THE ROAD TO GOLD: THE JOURNEY OF THAT BROOKE CHIK

Brooke Chik grew up in a small, one-stoplight Pennsylvania town, aptly named Littlestown — a town where everybody knew everybody. There came a time in her life when Brooke knew Littlestown no longer fit her big dreams. Seventeen years ago, she packed up her two-door Honda Civic and her betta fish and drove across the country to Sacramento, California, thus beginning her new life. She quickly made her way down to Orange County after a few detours, and the rest is history.

Brooke went to school in Pennsylvania to become a real estate broker. After graduating, she went to work for a REALTOR® for a while before making the move across the country. She dabbled in some very funny jobs before becoming a successful recruiter. Then, life happened, as it does. Brooke got married, had children, and became a stay-at-home mom. She obtained her California real estate license at the same time her marriage was having trouble, but it

wasn't until divorcing her ex-husband that she considered the career full-time. "For a hot second, I was sleeping on a friend's sofa and was cut off financially. I had to come up with something that I knew could make income for my family. I had two daughters that needed me," Brooke recalls. A friend of Brooke's introduced her to a broker who offered her a job as a licensed assistant in 2015. Midway through 2016, she took a leap of faith and went out on her own. It was a great move. Her very first year, she ranked in the top 500 REALTORS® in Orange County.

Now an agent with Pacific Sotheby's, Brooke's desire in her business is to be as genuine with her clients as possible. She's not a salesperson; she is someone who will walk alongside her clients, empathizing every step of the way. "That's what I focus on every day," Brooke says. "My clients are the most important thing, and they need to feel that. I love that each day has a new element to it, that I never get to really become an expert at it because

...



“WE ARE BIG BELIEVERS IN
RELATIONSHIPS OVER BUSINESS.”



it's always something new. I just get to keep learning every day, and that's phenomenal.”

Outside of real estate, Brooke remains focused on her two daughters, Chloe, 13, and Cassi, 10. Both girls are involved in water polo. Chloe also enjoys sewing and making things with her Cricut, while Cassi has a love of American Girl dolls. “They're the best of friends,” Brooke says. “I got super lucky there.”

Brooke is remarried to a wonderful man named Owen, who owns a gym, Xceed Fitness, in Lake Forest, and is a Nutritionist. The gym is actually where they first met. “I had answered a Facebook ad Owen had out, one of those ads that say, ‘Are you tired of not losing weight? Are you tired of doing all the work and not seeing results?’ I answered ‘yes’ to all of those,” Brooke remembers, laughing. They met, began dating, and later married in Cabo in April 2019. Now, the family of four shares their Laguna Niguel home with three dogs: two Great Danes, Kali and Bear, and a Shiba Inu-pitbull mix they lovingly call a “Sh-it,” Capri.

Nutrition and fitness are a big part of Brooke's family's lives. She enjoys working out, and the family lives

very holistically. “Very little products with chemicals; we eat organic and very little processed foods. It's our lifestyle,” Brooke says. On any given weekend night at their home in Laguna Niguel, the family can usually be found watching movies together or playing board games. They all take turns picking out which movie to watch or game to play. When it's just Brooke and Owen, you'll find them at their favorite local eateries, relaxing pool-side, golfing, hanging out with friends, walking the dogs at Dana Point Harbor, or enjoying a Sunday morning hike.

Brooke and her team have their sights set on making 2021 their best year yet. “We are big believers in relationships over business. We genuinely care about our fellow Orange County residents, regardless of where they are in the buying or selling of real estate. We want to be innovators and establish new friendships and connections,” Brooke says. “We want to create an experience.” Brooke is passionate about her community and her clients. She looks forward to continuing to make an impact in the world of real estate in Orange County and providing a positive experience for every client. Don't forget to follow her on social media @brookechik to see what she's up to next.





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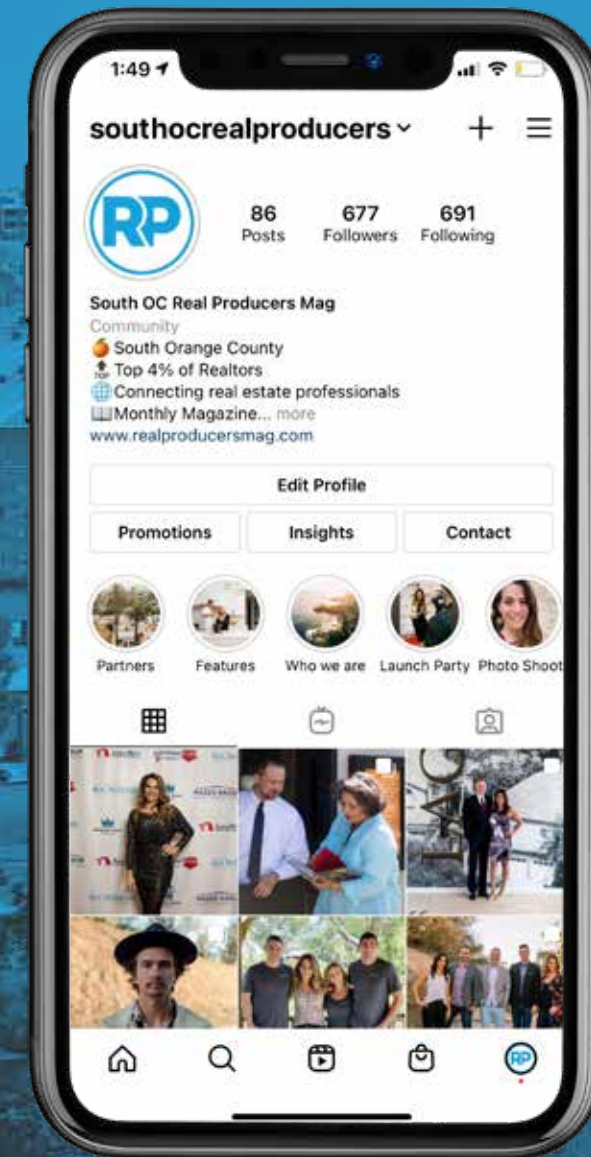
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