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

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» cover agent

JAVIER Mendez

LIVING A PASSION

Written by **Chris Menezes**
Photography by **Liliya and Albert**, Chernogorov Photography
Photographed at a listing in **Henderson**

After 28 years and over 1,500 homes sold, Javier Mendez is still as passionate about real estate as ever. His knowledge and experience has given him a newfound energy for the business that few can match. And why wouldn't it? As the leader of the Mendez Team, Javier has cemented his team as a centerpiece in Las Vegas real estate.

Yet, Javier will emphasize his passion is rooted in lifting everyone else around him, to help encourage others to live up to their truest potential, to set a standard for serving his community, and to create an example for others to follow, whether it be his colleagues, family, or community.

Javier's knowledge is based on a lifetime's worth of experience, not just from himself, but also from the real estate coaches and mentors he has had (and continues to have) throughout the years. Real estate is all Javier has ever really known. Having grown up in Las Vegas, Javier entered the real estate industry shortly after high school and worked at Citibank in customer service.

...

“

GOD HAS GIVEN ME **MY GREATEST OPPORTUNITIES** ON THE OTHER SIDE OF **MY GREATEST CHALLENGES**



“

MY TRUE PASSION IS TO HELP OTHERS
LEARN AND IMPLEMENT THEIR OWN
SUCCESSSES AND VISIONS.



... “We had a family friend that spoke only Spanish, and while I was just graduating high school, I observed him becoming very successful in real estate. I figured since I could speak two languages, I could be very successful as well,” Javier explains.

He was definitely right about that. However, Javier credits much of his success to all the coaching he’s received over the years, especially during crucial moments like the Great Recession. “During the housing crash, I had a coach and a plan. I stuck to my plan every day, even though I was mentally beat down and sometimes physically beat as well. I knew that this was part of a bigger plan for me, and I knew on the other side of my greatest struggles would be my greatest opportunities,” Javier admits.

Fueled by optimism and hard work, Javier has recited the words, “God has given me my greatest opportunities on the other side of my greatest challenges” as a mantra throughout the years. He has become

somewhat invulnerable to difficulty, refusing to be pulled down by the weight of circumstance. Part of that resistance is continually being fortified within him through constant education, an ever honing and enhancement of his negotiation skills, and always striving for the “win-win” in every transaction.

“I will never, ever, know too much,” Javier emphasizes. “And yet I am willing to share everything that I have accomplished. My true passion is to help others learn and implement their own successes and visions.”

Javier says his biggest success was starting The Mendez Team and “creating a vision so clear I was already living it.” Javier built his team to include more than just agents. The group includes general contractors, electricians, plumbers, home inspectors, stagers, interior designers, and more. He created a one-stop shop for his clients to always come back to him, and they continue to do so.

...



••• So, where does Javier go from here? His plans involve growing his team to the point where every team member is “achieving their truest potential,” and creating amazing moments for themselves. He has already expanded his client base to include those looking for prestigious, luxury homes as evidenced by his recent closing, in which he represented both buyer and seller, closing a \$7 million home. His long-term goals are a bit more personal, however, being to invest into as many homes as possible and leave them for his three children – Nathan, Dimitri, and Cienna.

When he is not working, he loves to travel, mountain bike, scuba dive, ride roller coasters, and

participate in mixed martial arts. He is an active participant in Red Day and Nevada’s Partnership for Homeless Youth (NPHY), having remodeled many NPHY homes over the years.

Javier doesn’t ever see himself stopping. He is so passionate about coaching other agents, helping his clients into the next phase of their lives, and serving his community, that he says he won’t stop until he’s dead. “My mission is to live life to the fullest, coaching people based on my many years of real estate and helping improve everyone around me through encouragement and service.”



MY MISSION IS TO LIVE LIFE TO THE FULLEST, COACHING PEOPLE BASED ON MY MANY YEARS OF REAL ESTATE AND HELPING IMPROVE EVERYONE AROUND ME **THROUGH ENCOURAGEMENT AND SERVICE.**



DURING THE HOUSING CRASH, I HAD A COACH AND A PLAN. I STUCK TO MY PLAN EVERY DAY, EVEN THOUGH I WAS MENTALLY BEAT DOWN AND SOMETIMES PHYSICALLY BEAT AS WELL. **I KNEW THAT THIS WAS PART OF A BIGGER PLAN FOR ME**, AND I KNEW ON THE OTHER SIDE OF **MY GREATEST STRUGGLES** WOULD BE **MY GREATEST OPPORTUNITIES**



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Galloping Toward an Endless Horizon

► REALTOR® on the rise

Written by **Chris Menezes**
Photography by **Liliya and Albert,**
Chernogorov Photography

John Diaz (JD) was following what he thought to be the “normal path” that everyone is supposed to take – graduate college, get hired by a company, grow with the business, and ride off into the sunset of retirement – until that path began to look more like a dead end.

At the time, JD was working as the Marketing Director for Shea Homes in Las Vegas. Having been born and raised in San Diego, CA, he had originally ventured to the area for college and attended University of Nevada Las Vegas. There, he earned a degree in Business Administration with an emphasis in Marketing in 2010.

While he admits it was a good job, and he was making a good salary, for him, it just wasn't enough. His salary was capped and there wasn't anything new on the horizon. “I was sitting there at my desk, and I said, ‘I need to do more. I need to make my own path.’ My GM at the time always insisted that I get into sales, that I had a gift, and my potential was high,” JD explains.

Shea Homes offered to pay for JD to get his real estate license. With nothing to lose, he passed his test in 2017, and on his first day as an agent, he sold two homes and never looked back. Although JD had a natural talent for sales, marketing, and working with people, and saw quick success in real estate, he says it wasn't easy in the beginning.

“Like any new agent, having people trust you with such a big decision, and their money, was always an uphill battle,” he says. “I was doing big business in my first year, and people always took a step back and said, ‘Only one year...’ But I was able to prove myself to everyone, and people took notice. With only barely five years in, I am still trying to make a name for myself.”

...

“It’s a true blessing that I found my passion – working with people. Whether it be my clients finding their dream home or working with my team and structuring the perfect deal, I love it all.”

John “JD” Diaz



Robert Kay



Martin Tuesta



Lara Nelson



...

The dedication that he put into his work was the backbone for him, knowing what kind of agent he wanted to be and the kind service he wanted to provide. His work ethic, and way of staying in front of his clients, is a means for JD to consistently add to his success. However, he knew the only way he could get to where he wanted was to start hiring the right people and form a team. For the longest time, he tried to do it all on his own, and he realized the only way to truly grow was to work smarter.

Since starting Diaz Lux Group with Keller Williams Southern Nevada – Luxury International in 2020, JD can confidently say he has finally reached the place he wants to be, a place with

an infinite horizon from which he can continue to grow and thrive.

“I can honestly say every day I wake up and look forward to going into the office. It’s a true blessing that I found my passion – working with people. Whether it be my clients finding their dream home or working with my team and structuring the perfect deal, I love it all,” he says.

One of the proudest moments for JD, however, was being able to have his wife, Rachel, stay home and raise their daughter, Teagan. Family time is JD’s ultimate pass time. They’ve had a Disneyland pass every year since Teagan was 1 year old, and (pre-Covid) would go every other month for at least two or three days. JD also

loves trying new foods and restaurants around the city with friends and family. And if there is an opportunity for him to do anything physical, he is always in, whether tennis, football, hockey, or cycling.

As JD looks to the future, he says his short-term goal is getting past, and riding, this current real estate wave. “What we are going through is very historic, so I have been preparing my team and clients on what to do to be successful during these times,” JD says. “Long term, I just want to be one of the best luxury real estate teams in all of Nevada. Not only will our numbers show it, but I want our business to be a referral machine. I have been lucky that a large portion of my business comes through

referrals from past clients. And that shows that we are doing something right.”

With a hardworking team behind him, and trusting clients that rely on him, JD is proud to be recognized as a Top 250 agent, annually. And with JD having already met his 2020 numbers goal, closed and in escrow, we’re excited to see what he will do with the remainder of this year.

“Long term, I just want to be one of the best luxury real estate teams in all of Nevada.

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Being of Ultimate Help

Written by **Chris Menezes**

Photography by **Liliya and Albert**, Chernogorov Photography

Nick Sakha is not just an insurance agent ... he's a YouTuber, podcaster, Allstate agency owner, and social media guru in insurance and fitness. Nick not only offers financial protection to his clients, but also education in marketing, health and fitness, and business development.

"Leaving people better off is my ultimate mission. Whether it's helping a team member earn enough income to buy a home, or helping clients with their insurance needs, I love adding value to people—inspiring them, protecting them, or even making them laugh.

Nick's passion for helping people comes from his obsession with self-development, which goes back to when he was 16 years old, sitting at his desk and writing down all his goals on a legal pad. While delivering pizzas around Las Vegas, he'd listen to success CDs on sales, leadership, and entrepreneurship, in his car. "I feel like this subconsciously prepared me for when I became a business owner and leader," he admits.

...





“My team and I pride ourselves on educating our clients on the importance of having enough liability coverages to protect them, their assets, their income, and their legacies.”

“Most insurance agents give people the state minimum coverages and don’t educate their clients on the risks associated with having state minimums. All it takes is one unfortunate event and someone can get sued for everything they own.”



...

Before Nick could become a business owner, however, he knew he had to get a college degree. But he refused to go into debt. So, he worked full time as a banker and earned his degree in Business Management at the University of Nevada, over a span of seven years. All just so he would be able to pay for it himself. As soon as he received his degree, he quit banking and pursued a business venture with a client of his. That venture only lasted three months, and, in the end, Nick was left with nothing to his name, only his 401k.

Then, a close friend of Nick’s told him he should cash out his 401k and start his own insurance agency. So, he did. “I always knew I wanted to be an entrepreneur, and this was my first opportunity at becoming one,” Nick says.

Since 2016, Nick has built his Allstate Insurance agency largely on social media and referrals. His team boasts quick and efficient quote times and going the extra step on educating their clients. “My team and I pride ourselves on educating our clients on the importance of having enough liability coverages to protect them, their assets, their income, and their legacies.”



Nick is all about education, and not just for his clients, but with his business partners as well. He points out that many REALTORS® do not properly utilize social media in their businesses, and being that his business has exploded from social media, he loves sharing the processes he has used to help them increase their own exposure and referral network.

Currently, Nick says he is most passionate about helping his team grow both personally and professionally. “I feel like their success is my responsibility,” Nick says. He is also passionate about growing his personal brand, his YouTube Channel, fitness brand, and his podcast, Barbells and Briefcases. He recently hired a mentor to ensure his own continual growth, so that he can continue to reach more people and add value to them.

“I think it’s important to always put people first—not money, not your desires, not your goals but the goals of your people,” Nick says. “If I can help enough people get what they want in life, I’m going to have no problem getting what I want.”

As Nick continues pursuing his entrepreneurial dreams, he will continue to help as many people as he can in every way he knows how.

2020

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JUSTIN Jahangiri

REALTOR® re-do

Written by **Chris Menezes**
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Photographed at **Wetlands**



STARTING AGAIN

While Justin Jahangiri spent a good portion of his childhood in Las Vegas, most of his adult life was spent in Minnesota, where he eventually built a successful real estate business before moving back to Vegas in 2019.

Having always considered Vegas a place that grounded him, the free spirit wasn't afraid to push boundaries. Despite his successful career in real estate, it seemed sales was in his blood as he demonstrated in his youth. Justin would sell decorative rocks that he found around his yard, as well as flowers he cut from neighboring houses.

During his college years, Justin worked on a farm driving a tractor between classes and played basketball to pass time. Although he wanted to go pro, he struggled going through the motions of school and paying for classes he didn't care to take. His dream would later be realized while playing in private money tournaments throughout the U.S.

While working for a travel company, Justin worked for a few months organizing events for MTV's *Spring Break* in Mexico, throwing huge parties and living it up. He ultimately decided to return to Minneapolis in 2004 to assist his father who was working at Coldwell Banker Burnet. "My father needed my help and someone watching his back. He had just won rookie of the year at Coldwell Banker, and his assistant at the time wasn't being honest with him."

There he operated as an assistant and helped manage 30 of his father's rental properties. "I actually didn't love it in the beginning," he admits. "I came in at a time when greed was at an all-time high, both in the industry and with consumers. A lot of people around me got in trouble within a couple years. Most of which was well deserved. I got thrown in the fire and learned things on the fly, sometimes in a very tough way."

Justin ultimately fell in love with real estate, but mostly because he could be himself and do business with people who liked him for who he was. And he could run his business the way he wanted to and not be tied down to a desk or subject to the whims of some corporate manager.

...

And that’s how Justin ultimately grew his business ... on his own terms, while pursuing other things that interested him. Justin’s myriad of endeavors (outside of real estate) included working with the NFL film crew during Viking football games, appearing in commercials and a couple movies as an extra, walking the runway as a high fashion model in numerous cities, and owning two very-well-known Hookah Lounges in Minneapolis and Saint Paul. He’s also coached youth basketball, youth soccer, been a bouncer, a barback, a bartender, and managed clubs.

In 2006, Justin opened his own brokerage with his father called MinnWest Realty. He represented former NFL greats, NBA players, and was one of the exclusive agents for the Major League Soccer team in Saint Paul. Later, in 2012, he would spend three years on the Stockwell Team of RE/MAX Results whose team was ranked 46th in the nation at the time.

So why would Justin leave everything he built in Minnesota to start over in Vegas? A lot of it has to do with a near-fatal car accident in 2017. After spending the better half of 2018 in physical and occupational therapy, while dealing with a brain injury and post-concussion syndrome, Justin decided he had to make some major changes in his life.

“I needed to be in a place I loved and felt safe, and I needed to reduce my circle of friends to only include those who were positive and uplifting, to remove all negativity, jealousy, or selfishness from around me.”

That’s when Justin decided to move “home” to Las Vegas, where he began dating his now fiancé, Angela, and joined Zar Zanganeh and Luxe Estates

...

“

I needed to be in a place I loved and felt safe, and I needed to reduce my circle of friends to only include those who were positive and uplifting, to remove all negativity, jealousy, or selfishness from around me.

”



and Lifestyles. “Zar Zanganeh is like no one I have ever been around, and is amazing to watch. I am now at a place where when I send a referral to a lender or title rep, I know they will get the same level of representation that I am giving them on the real estate side. I am in the business of making people feel cared for and happy. And I want them to know I am there for them for life.”

Justin says he’s living proof that second chances are possible, both in life and in business. He is excited to see what the future holds for his family and his two children. “It is never too late to surround yourself with the right people.”



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VANNOY

Written by **Chris Menezes**
Photography by **Liliya and Albert,**
Chernogorov Photography

THAWED OUT AND FIRED UP!

While there are many things Rochelle Vannoy loves about Las Vegas, having lived and raised her family here for the past 30 years, one of the major reasons she chose to call Vegas home was the weather.

Rochelle's taste for warm weather comes as a result of growing up in rural Pennsylvania where she harbored a deep aversion to cold temperatures from as far back as she can remember. After graduating from Kent State University with a degree in Elementary Education and Art Education, she decided to leave the punishing Pennsylvania winters for good by applying for teaching jobs in locations with more temperate climates.

She received job offers in five different locations, including Miami, Los Angeles, and San Antonio, but the one spot that caught her eye was sunny Las Vegas. Once here, she fell in love with the city's vibrant culture, great food, entertainment, and abundant economic opportunities.

Rochelle taught history at a private Las Vegas middle school before making a radical career shift to the gourmet food industry. She spent the next 12 years working in some of the city's finest restaurants including the Rosewood Grill, the Petrosian in the Bellagio, and Tableau at Wynn.

After marrying her husband, Greg, and having two children, Jonathan and Kate, Rochelle continued in the gourmet food industry until her kids reached school age. In an effort to spend more time with her family, Rochelle tried to make her schedule work by switching to days, but the money wasn't as good as it was with the swing shift.

Friends had been telling Rochelle for years that she should try real estate, saying she would be great at it. So, with nothing else to lose, she decided to give it a try. She obtained her license in

2006 and joined a team. And as we all know, it wasn't much later that the housing market crashed.

Like many people during this time, Rochelle was overextended when the market took a dive and she ended up losing investment homes. "It was painful because it felt like I could do nothing to prevent it from happening," she admits. Nevertheless, Rochelle worked through the tough market, and by the time she was on the other side, she decided to venture out on her own as an individual agent.

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Rochelle joined Prudential Americana in 2006 and stayed with the company when it transitioned to Berkshire Hathaway. She has been an individual broker and sales specialist ever since. Consistently selling over 40 homes per year, she has closed over \$104.6 million in volume on over 500 homes sold. “Hiring a coach was the first major step in taking my business to the next level,” Rochelle explains. “Being in Masterminds, having role-play partners, accountability partners, and hiring an assistant have all impacted my business in profoundly positive ways.”

Rochelle is also big on setting goals. And not just professional goals. Every year she sets goals for every area of her life—financial, business, family, health, and spirituality. Her goals for 2021 include helping at least 60 clients buy or sell a home, personally purchasing an investment property, spending quality time with family, maintaining a healthy lifestyle by eating well and working out consistently, reading a new book at least once a month, and continuing to focus on personal growth.

As you can see, balance is very important to Rochelle. When she is not working, she loves to cook, read, hike, garden, and do yoga. She also volunteers with the Clark County CASA program as a court-appointed Special Advocate for abused and neglected children and serves on the Las Vegas REALTORS® Association Grievance Committee. Rochelle supports the American Cancer Society, Project 150, and she volunteers at homeless shelters as well as The Burn Foundation.

Being of service, whether to her family, community, clients, or profession, is just part of who Rochelle is. And she plans to continue serving people for years to come. After all, it sure does beat the cold.

ADDITIONAL NOTES/DESIGNATIONS:

- Finished in the top five in her office for the past 11 years
- Finished in the top 20 in BHHS NV of over 1,100 agents for the past 11 years
- Awarded Top 25 Women REALTORS® in Las Vegas, 2021
- CASA Outstanding Newcomer, 2017
- Nationally recognized as BHHS Silver Circle Agent nine consecutive years (2011-2019)
- Nationally recognized as BHHS Gold Circle Agent, 2020
- Green Designation
- E-Pro
- Short Sale Specialist (SSS)
- Certified Residential Specialist (CRS)

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