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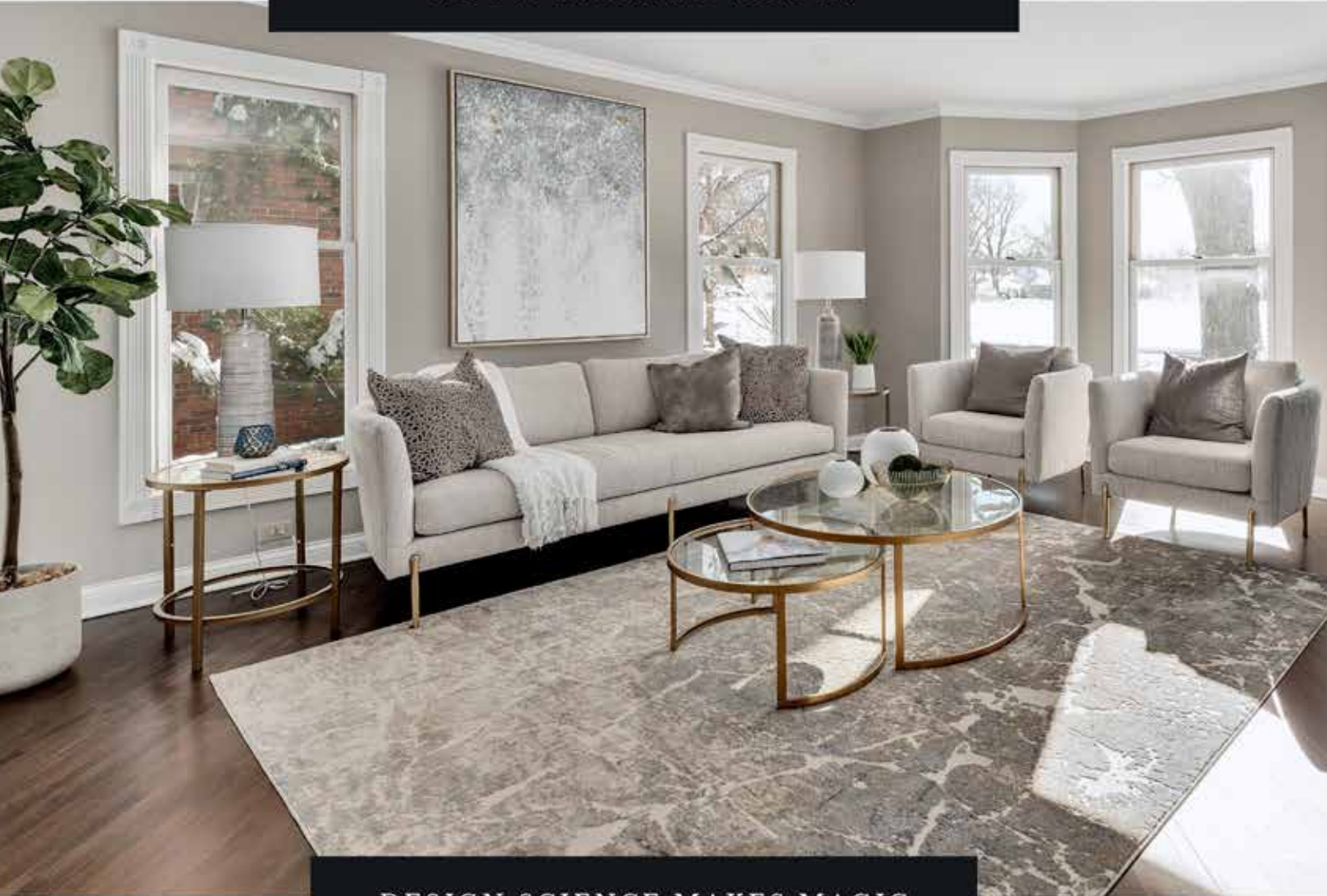
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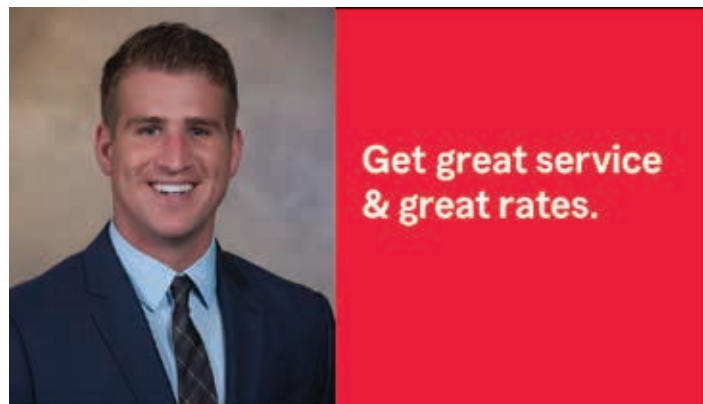
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# NOTE



As I scrolled through the photos of our fall event, a giant smile instantaneously spread across my face. It was fulfilling to see our *DuPage Real Producers* community lay down the minutia of transactions in the pipeline, connect socially, and simply just share life outside of real estate with one another. One common piece of feedback from those of you who attended the event was that you couldn't believe what a great turnout we had in general, but the fact that it rained the entire time didn't affect the attendance in the slightest.



Andy Burton  
Publisher, *DuPage Real Producers*  
andy.burton@RealProducersMag.com

People were genuinely there to connect and hang out without pushing an agenda. As we dive into 2022, our team is excited to plan more experiences such as these on a consistent

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# Lisa Koonce

## MOTHER KNOWS BEST

At six years old, Lisa Koonce was already practicing being a real estate agent, although it wasn't what she thought she would do.

"My mother was a successful REALTOR® and I would join her at home showings and open houses," she says. "I also updated listing books and entertained the other children during meetings."

Now a REALTOR® herself with RE/MAX of Naperville, Lisa looks back on those early experiences, and all the other times when she assisted her mom, as foundational for her future career.

Lisa grew up in Decatur, Illinois, and later attended Illinois State University to earn a degree in communications. While she was attending ISU, she worked in the corporate mailroom at State Farm Insurance in Bloomington. Upon graduation, she worked in claims, and then worked in agency, training agent staff, and eventually was licensed in all lines of insurance.

Lisa thought that she would someday have her own State Farm office, but shortly after celebrating her thirteenth year at State Farm, she began to consider a change. Remembering how much she enjoyed real estate, she asked her mother if she could use some help with home tours or administrative work.

"At the time, she was very busy and was employing other agents to lighten her load," says Lisa. "But I now needed to be licensed in order to do most things that could help her in the field. I couldn't do the things I had done growing up because license law had evolved over the years."

After six months of supporting her mother with light work on the side, Lisa took a three-month leave of absence from State Farm to see if full-time real estate was a legitimate option. Upon earning her real estate license, Lisa officially joined her mother's office. ...



▶▶ REALTOR®  
feature

By Lauren Young  
Photos by Katherin Frankovic

...

“I was very comfortable and secure at State Farm,” she says. “I took a big risk leaving a salaried job to take a chance on myself and my real estate career. It was hard work, but worth it.”

“I initially just worked with my mother’s clients until I started bringing in my own,” she adds. “I earned my own reputation in the business by working hard and through my dedication to my clients.”

**I EARNED MY OWN REPUTATION IN THE BUSINESS BY WORKING HARD AND THROUGH MY DEDICATION TO MY CLIENTS.**

Mother and daughter worked side-by-side for several years before becoming equal partners in the business. When her mother relocated to Naples, Florida, Lisa bought out her portion of the firm.

Now with nearly twenty-one years in the industry, Lisa has a career sales volume of \$94 million, and achieved over \$11 million in 2020 alone. She’s been recognized in the RE/MAX Platinum Club (2019 and 2020) and 100% Club in previous years, and she is a past president of the RE/MAX Sales Advisory Council for the Northern Illinois Region.

When Lisa is not managing her real estate business, she focuses her extra time on giving back to her community. One of her



Lisa volunteering with the Salvation Army over the holiday season.

favorite charities is the Children’s Miracle Network, a partner organization of RE/MAX and the Salvation Army. Each year, she donates a portion of her profits to this renowned group of children’s hospitals.

When she does get free time, Lisa enjoys traveling with family and friends. You may find her lying in the sun at the pool or on a beach, or visiting with her sister’s family and taking on the role of “best aunt”.

“I always say it’s important to reward yourself with a getaway,” says Lisa. “You have to work hard in order to play hard.”

Amidst all the long days, weekends, and evenings, Lisa highlights her client relationships as the motivation to keep her going.

“I am very lucky to have become friends with my clients over the years,” says Lisa. “They trust me and know I have their best interests in mind. Many call me even when they have moved away for advice when buying or selling.”

“This is a hard business with lots of ups and downs,” she adds, “So you can only do it if it makes you happy and you give more than 100 percent to your clients. I’m lucky to be able to say I still love it.”

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▶ making a difference  
By Susan A. Sinderson

# Community Adult Day Center: Care and Companionship for the Challenged Elderly

“Is adult day care a possibility in our community”? With those simple words—the headline on an invitation sent to churches in Downers Grove Township in 1985—the seeds for Community Adult Day Center were planted. Following a year of hard work by representatives from thirteen churches, Community Adult Day Center (CADC) opened on the garden-level floor of the Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in 1986. Our initial mission statement was to “offer a supervised program of care and companionship for the elderly.” Those words drive everything CADC provides, and they continue to serve as a guide for all we do and offer.

We’ve specified our mission since then: We now focus on serving older adults with cognitive and/or physical challenges and provide therapeutic activities and experiences that enhance the quality of life for both the individuals and their families. CADC provides hope and assistance to loved ones dealing with Alzheimer’s disease or one of the other dementia-related illnesses, and/or a physically challenging disease or condition such as Parkinson’s. (We not only provide the necessary caregiving for each of our members, but we also give their caregivers the chance to attend to their own needs for a few hours each day.)

No matter where a person is on their life journey—no matter their diagnosis, health status, age, sensory needs, interests, or abilities—CADC is here to offer support, hope, and unique experiences that meet each member’s needs, and as such, members have a special place to come to and make choices on how they wish to spend their day.

CADC’s professionally trained staff have backgrounds in: caring for older adults, nursing, social work, and activity therapy. They also have training in and have a passion for person-centered care.



The “Community Adult Day Center difference” is our ongoing commitment to learning how to make sure each member has an effective way to communicate with us and is given the chance to make choices. Our staff takes the time to understand both the nonverbal and verbal ways each member communicates. While learning each member’s background is important, the staff is charged with learning who that person is today and to value them for who they are. This choice assists us in planning activities for and with this special group of people, and it fosters a sense of belonging.

We offer therapeutic activities throughout the day that stimulate the mind, wake up the physical body, refresh the spirit, and create a place where laughter is always welcome. Our programs include chair yoga, meditation, our “Ageless Grace” exercise programs, and gardening; group crossword-puzzle solving, music and art projects; and non-denominational spiritual moments that serve our diverse population. We also partner with other organizations to



Our current dream is to raise \$10,000 to purchase a Tovertafel Magic Table, a specialized game system specifically designed for persons with dementia-related illnesses.

The families of members consistently tell us “[CADC] genuinely cares for the whole family,” and members tell us that the best thing about being at CADC is that we make them feel special and “it feels like home.”



provide additional services like pet therapy, music, and brain health programs. By offering a variety of programs and ways to participate, our members can find something that interests them every day.

CADC recently celebrated its thirty-fifth anniversary and received recognition from DuPage County and the Village of Downers Grove for “Offering a caring environment for people to thrive, contributing significantly to the quality of life for all people, and making a real and positive difference in the lives of people and the community as a whole.”

We accept those who qualify regardless of their financial status. We are part of the State of Illinois Community Care Program and also accept veterans administration payment and private payment.

The past year and a half has been challenging due to the state-mandated closures and continued requirement to operate at half-capacity on account of the ongoing pandemic. But CADC is fortunate. Our loyal supporters and volunteers and some grant opportunities have helped us through these difficult times. However, the challenge to meet the needs of our members continues.

Donations are always welcome and are used to continue the needed programming for the very vulnerable population we serve. We welcome volunteers who have a passion for offering the best in service to work with us at CADC or on our Board. In particular, we welcome young volunteers who are considering a career path in working with older adults.



### About the Author:

Susan A. Sinderson is the executive director for Community Adult Day Center in Downers Grove, IL. Susan has over forty years of experience in the field of older adult services leadership. She has played a vital role in creating innovative services for older adults and those who serve them as well as leading advocacy and policymaking efforts in aging services on a local and national level. She is passionate about offering an adult services day center environment that welcomes all and assists people in finding their own unique way to live a hope-filled life.

For more information, or to find out how to volunteer or make a donation, please visit CADC’s website [www.Communityaduldaycenter.org](http://www.Communityaduldaycenter.org), or call Susan Sinderson, Executive Director, at (630) 968-1060.



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▶ events

# FALL EVENT

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Photos by **Katherin Frankovic** and **AbiV Photography**



**IT WAS A DELIGHT TO KICK OFF IN-PERSON EVENTS WITH THE DUPAGE REAL PRODUCERS COMMUNITY!**

Solemn Oath Brewery was a fantastic neighborhood beer garden backdrop that allowed everyone to connect while enjoying the freshest beers and seltzers in the county. In-between mingling, we hope you enjoyed some delicious food from the Big Star taco truck. A huge shout out to Camden Law Office, LLC for helping to make this all happen.

Another special thank you to the staff at Solemn Oath Brewery for providing an incredible space to connect. We are grateful to everyone who joined us, provided raffle prizes, and helped make it an unforgettable event. We look forward to seeing you again in 2022 for our winter event. Enjoy the photos!







Jodee Baker won a 43 inch Smart TV from Bill Pendley with Caliber Home Loans.



Alexa Mimi Wagner won a wine experience gift basket with a charcuterie board from Paul Garver with Hawbecker & Garver.



Julie Mara won an Apple Watch from Scott A. Brower with Law Office of Scott A. Brower.

# FALL EVENT

# RAFFLE *winners*

We are extremely grateful to our Preferred Partners who never disappoint with great raffle prizes at all the events! Check out the winners from our fall event at Solemn Oath Brewery



Beata Kolpek won a Skylight Digital Photo Frame from Blair Piell and Linda Crown with Blair Crown Design Inc/Paper to Party.



Sean O'Brien won a pair of AirPods Pro from Kevin Camden with Camden Law Office, LLC.



# KATHERIN FRANKOVIC

WITH KDE Photography Inc.

▶ partner spotlight | **Picture Perfect: Visual Storyteller Brings Craft to Real Estate**

By Lauren Young  
Photos by Katherin Frankovic

“I tell my clients that I love selling homes too; I just don’t like paperwork,” jokes Katherin Frankovic, real estate photographer and owner of KDE Photography Inc. “Quality imaging is so crucial these days, and hiring the right specialist can dramatically affect the sale of a home.”

Katherin was born in Crown Point, Indiana, and raised in St. Louis, Missouri. Growing up, her family raised, rode, and rescued horses, and many of her childhood activities revolved around this passion. In addition to horses, Katherin developed an early love of photography, often getting in trouble for using up the film in her mother’s camera with her hobby.

In 1997, Katherin moved to Chicago to attend Columbia College Chicago for photography. While there, she focused on photojournalism with Pulitzer Prize winning photojournalist John H. White.

“John was a huge influence on my past and current photography career,” says Katherin. “He is one of the main reasons that I feel a great sense of responsibility to tell a story in the images I create and to never settle with just ‘good’ work.”

After graduation, she worked for Suburban Life Newspapers in Glenview until she accepted a position as track photographer for Hawthorne Race Course—marrying her love of horses with her career aspirations. She ran operations there for seven years and then spent one year at Arlington Park.

“My hard work and perseverance earned my company the contract with Arlington Park,” says Katherin. “But, after that first year, I started to get tired of the job and decided that it was time to try going out on my own.”

Katherin noticed a need for photography at the equestrian competitions where she had competed and freelance photographed for the media over the years. She began contacting organizers and covering local events. Within two years, her business, EQUIPIX, became the photographers for most of the local area competitions, as Katherin continued to cover national and world championships for equestrian industry publications.

“It was a lot of fun, but in late 2010 my husband and I decided to start a family,” says Katherin. “It became clear that working the long hours and weekends involved in the shows would not work with a newborn in tow.”

A few years prior, Katherin had started working as the marketing coordinator for RE/MAX Professionals Select and running her business on the weekends. It was then that she decided to focus exclusively on real estate for work-life flexibility.

“Once a few agents learned that I was a photographer, too, they started asking me to shoot their listings,” says Katherin. “I spent the next years steadily improving my real estate photography craft and gaining more clients through referrals.”

•••



“

I've always been big on helping my clients set themselves apart from the crowd...

When they come to me with a new idea, we work together to develop and incorporate it into their marketing.”



...

Over the years, Katherin has stayed on top of the ever-changing technology that real estate photography requires. From 3D renderings, virtual staging, aerial photography, visual walkthrough, and other immersive tech, blending in these new techniques have made her images stand out.

“I've always been big on helping my clients set themselves apart from the crowd,” says Katherin. “When they come to me with a new idea, we work together to develop and incorporate it into their marketing.”

“A good visual storyteller is so important, whether you're telling the story of an event or a home,” she adds. “It can often make the difference between a quick sale or a prolonged listing.”

When Katherin is not managing her business, she and her husband, Michael, enjoy spending time with their children, Evan and Avery. They love to travel, hike, explore nature, and garden together. Riding horses remains a passion for Katherin to this day. Two years ago, she and her family adopted an American Mustang named Takoda from the Hooved Animal Humane Society in Woodstock, IL. Training and riding to continue to be a great stress reliever for her, so does the pursuit of the perfect photo.

“I genuinely care about what I do and take pride in delivering the best possible product to my clients and their customers,” says Katherin. “I take their success personally and will do whatever I can to help elevate them and the craft of photography in this industry.”

For additional information on how to schedule a shoot with Katherin and KDE Photography, call **630-244-9959**, email **kdephotographyinc@gmail.com** or visit her website at **<http://www.kdephotography.com>**.



Katherin at Arlington Park.



Katherin with her family.



Katherin and her husband hiking on Vatnajökull glacier in Iceland.



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# Eva Burns

▶ REALTOR® feature  
By Lauren Young  
Photos by Katherin Frankovic

## LEARNING FROM THOSE WHO CAME BEFORE HER

Eva Burns was working on the floor of the Chicago Board of Trade during the October 1987 market crash known as Black Monday. She witnessed traders sitting on the steps of the pits crying in shock and disbelief, having lost everything over one long weekend. It's an experience she was able to draw on nearly two decades later as a REALTOR® when the housing market collapsed.

"Once again, I found myself surrounded by families and professionals devastated by the reality of losing everything," recalls Eva. "Some were short on the sale of their home, some were out of work. [Many] Clients were in tears, and some were angry," she adds. "It was difficult for all of us in our industry. It was emotional and devastating for everyone."

By the time she had faced both these crises, though, Eva knew her own strength. She and her sister, Vicki, were raised in Evergreen Park by their mother, a successful hairstylist/beauty shop owner who transitioned into a real estate career when Eva was



a teenager. Often left on their own, Eva and Vicki were given many housekeeping responsibilities including cooking, cleaning, and doing laundry, all while making sure they also completed their schoolwork.

"It's because of our upbringing that my sister and I became independent, self-reliant women," says Eva. "Vicki graduated from the University of Illinois at the top of her class. I chose a different path, getting married and starting my family soon after graduating high school."

While raising her three daughters, Eva worked various full- and part-time jobs (including time with a private trading company) and volunteered regularly at their schools. After twelve years, when her youngest daughter entered middle school, Eva was ready to re-enter the workforce full-time but she needed something with flexibility so she could always be there for her family and build a business her own way.

Weighing her options, she immediately thought of her mother's profession. Real estate was a natural fit to achieve her life and career goals.

"I saw my mom go from styling hair in our basement to opening her own beauty shop to becoming a successful REALTOR®," says Eva. "I was aware of the hefty demands a career in real estate would require [in order] to do it well, but I also felt it would give me the challenge I was looking for."

Consider the challenge met. Nearly twenty years later, Eva has a career sales volume of \$134 million. She brought in \$12 million in 2020 alone. Eva was named in *Chicago Magazine's* "Best of the Best" in 2019 and 2021. From the RE/MAX organization, she has earned the Hall of Fame award, the Platinum Club award, and



numerous 100% Club awards. She served on the regional sales advisory committee (SAC) for nine of her 10+ years with the franchise. She also received various in-house awards, regional awards, and recognition for top production in volume during her nine years with Keller Williams, where, for five years, she also served as a member of the Agent Leadership Council. And during the early 2000s, she wrote monthly real estate articles that were syndicated through HIBU publications.

When Eva is not busy assisting her clients, she enjoys spending time with her once high school sweetheart now long-time significant other, Tom McGivern. With their combined five adult children and five grandchildren, they love to plan group outings as often as possible. When at home, the family competes in intense rounds of table games—Trouble®, Old Maid, and Uno™ are favorite choices. They even have a family trophy that travels from house to house and an award ceremony after each tournament evening.

"My family is my joy," says Eva. "They are my 'Big Why.' I am so grateful to be able to enjoy all of our many adventures, as well as our nights at home, and cherish the time we get to have with them."



When not with their children, Tom and Eva relax at their waterfront cottage in Michigan. They take time to rejuvenate by boating, kayaking, and visiting various coastal towns. She never powers down. Rather, she takes her work with her and appreciates a career that allows for the freedom to keep a close eye on her business when she travels.

“Real estate has provided for a lifestyle on my terms,” says Eva. “I am grateful for the many mentors and friendships I have formed over the years and for the ones to come. I have learned from those who came before me. ‘Once a REALTOR®, always a REALTOR®.’ It’s just who you are, whether you are actively selling or not. I believe this to be true!”



**“I AM GRATEFUL FOR THE MANY MENTORS AND FRIENDSHIPS I HAVE FORMED OVER THE YEARS AND FOR THE ONES TO COME.”**

“Being a REALTOR® can impact your life in so many ways,” she adds. “Helping others reach their life goals will also challenge you with never-ending variables and fluctuations, and give you the satisfaction of contributing to others and to your community. My career has been all of the above, and I can’t imagine doing anything else. As I enter my twentieth year in real estate, I am so thankful and blessed for the many experiences I’ve had, and I look forward to the new chapters ahead.”



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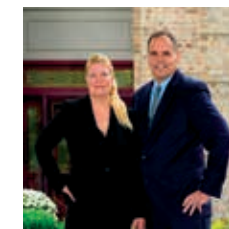
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# Virtual JAM SESSIONS



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**Jam Session #8** **f LIVE**  
An organic conversation about DuPage real estate



DuPage Real Producers invites you to tune in via Facebook Live  
\*The feed will stream live from Andy Burton's Facebook page (technology permitting).  
**Tuesday July 13th 9:15 am CST**

\*HOSTED BY  
ANDY BURTON  
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## events

*Top REALTORS® and Preferred Partners Engaging Virtually*

As an organization, we are fully aware of the need to creatively connect, inspire, elevate, and add value to both our REALTORS® and Preferred Partners. As a response, we have continued hosting virtual jam sessions with the *DuPage Real Producers* community.

Jam sessions are small group Zoom calls designed to get a handful of experts on a call (both REALTORS® and Preferred Partners) to discuss what they are seeing in their industry and to help add value to the individuals who are able to tune in. This is a great way to meet people on a more personal level and to get to know what's happening in different industries in the real estate community.

Jam sessions have been filled with creative ways to encourage our *DuPage Real Producers* community to continue to engage and serve as a way to build relationships. Plus, it has been great seeing even more engagement as we have been hosting sessions on Facebook Live!

A huge thank you to all our amazing REALTORS® and Preferred Partners for your willingness to join together as a community and maintain our human connection!



DUPAGE  
**RP REAL PRODUCERS.**

**Jam Session #9** **f LIVE**  
An organic conversation about DuPage real estate



DuPage Real Producers invites you to tune in via Facebook Live  
\*The feed will stream live from Andy Burton's Facebook page (technology permitting).  
**Tuesday August 3rd 9:15 am CST**

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**Jam Session #10** **f LIVE**  
An organic conversation about DuPage real estate



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\*The feed will stream live from Andy Burton's Facebook page (technology permitting).  
**Tuesday September 28th 9:15AM CST**  
\*HOSTED BY ANDY BURTON



We have received great feedback about these events! Want to join one? Let us know by emailing us at [andy.burton@realproducersmag.com](mailto:andy.burton@realproducersmag.com).

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# NATALIE WEBER



» cover story  
By Lauren Young  
Photos by AbiV Photography

## Building a Career One Step at a Time

**In 2008, Natalie Weber and her husband, Luke, had successful careers as top wholesale mortgage account executives for a Fortune 500 company. Then the bottom fell out: the housing market crashed and they both lost their jobs without warning. Instead of hanging their heads, they rolled up their sleeves and began again. It's sheer determination, grit, and gratitude that has carried Natalie from tough times to the top.**

Born in Macedonia, Natalie moved to the western suburbs of Chicago at five years old where she lived with her mom, sister, and grandparents. Throughout Natalie's childhood, her mother worked in Chicago's financial sector. While her mom was working, Natalie spent many summers helping her grandfather, a home builder in Hinsdale, on job sites.

"I have always looked up to my grandparents and mom for coming to America as entrepreneurs and striving to make their dreams a reality," says Natalie. "Their strength and perseverance continue to be an inspiration for me."

After earning a degree in psychology from the University of Illinois Chicago, Natalie contemplated graduate school, but she learned about an outstanding opportunity to work as a loan officer for a Fortune 500 company.

"I excelled at working with numbers, so I applied and quickly became a top-producing loan officer," she says. "I was soon promoted to an account executive position where I was trained across the country on appraisals, credit reports, reading titles, marketing, and business-to-business

sales. I was in my twenties working alongside seasoned industry males in a male-dominated industry. It was fast-paced and competitive, and I thrived in that environment."

For the next seven years, Natalie was a high-level wholesale mortgage account executive. During that time, she met and married Luke, and they bought their first house in Downers Grove. And if that wasn't enough, she also pursued her real estate license.

"My grandfather was a builder, and he always told me I should get my real estate license, as it would be useful in life and for personal investments," says Natalie. "He was one of the main reasons I attained my license in 2007."

The market collapse came shortly thereafter. Still in their twenties, the couple dove into real estate investments, house flipping, and development. Using their combined experience on the financial side of real estate, they chose specific opportunities to best capitalize on their investments.

"It was a really stressful time, and we were completely on our own," she reflects. "We had to adjust our game plan and use our reserves to start over as entrepreneurs. The money we had saved had to be invested wisely, and we had to calculate our return with incredible detail."

...



...

They found land opportunities, and over the next eight years, they focused on new construction as their primary investing strategy. During this time, Natalie's REALTOR® career started to take off. Her attention to detail, expertise in pricing, hands-on approach, and marketing strategy began to drive her growth. In 2018, she decided to focus solely on serving her real estate clients full-time and on growing her business.

“That is when I realized that my passion is selling real estate and helping clients navigate the transaction,” says Natalie. “Results are the driving force that yield happy clients. My clients trust that I have the expertise to help them with all aspects of the transaction—from contract through close and beyond. With my mortgage industry and home-building background, focusing on becoming a high-producing REALTOR® was a natural step for me,” she adds. “It took all of my work experiences over the last eighteen years to help me reach this point, and be able to deliver the best results for my clients.”

Natalie's sales volume was over \$19 million in 2020, and year-to-date in 2021, she has already closed over \$21 million with a total of \$27 million in projected closings. Her accomplishments include being named a Top 1% Producer in 2020 by the Mainstreet Association of REALTORS®, and ranked as a top agent in 2020 by *Chicago Magazine*. She is currently ranked among the top three agents in Downers Grove by YTD volume (Jan-Oct '21), and she has been awarded as a top producer from 2019-2021 in the KW Experience office.

Natalie is a member of the Downers Grove Junior Women's Club, and she supports many local organizations throughout the year. Natalie also donates a portion of every closing to a local charity.

“ That is when I realized that my passion is selling real estate and helping clients navigate the transaction... ”



Natalie with her family. Photo credit: Carolina Menapace



example of a strong work ethic—just as my mother and grandparents were for me—and prioritize our family time.”

As Natalie reflects on her career in real estate—as a mortgage account executive, a home builder, and as a top producing REALTOR®—she continuously reminds herself of the responsibility she carries for each client

“My clientele spans from forty-year, seasoned real estate developers to first-time home buyers,” she says. “My clients put their trust in me for one of the biggest financial decisions of their lives. I understand and appreciate the magnitude of this every single day, and I strive to exceed my clients' expectations.”

“Giving back to the community and my clients is the most rewarding part of my business,” she says. “I sponsor and contribute to many fundraisers for schools, several local sports teams, food pantries, local charities, national charities, and more. I also give back to my clients generously because I am so grateful for every single opportunity that they have provided me in serving them.”

Natalie and Luke are also kept busy with all the activities of their three children: Brooke (eleven), Mikayla (ten), and Blake (six). Together, they often attend sporting events and are active in seasonal activities throughout town.

“My career as a REALTOR® is very demanding, but it has also allowed me to work full-time while having the flexibility to raise my kids,” Natalie says. “Our kids see how hard we work every day, [including] nights and weekends. I want to be a good





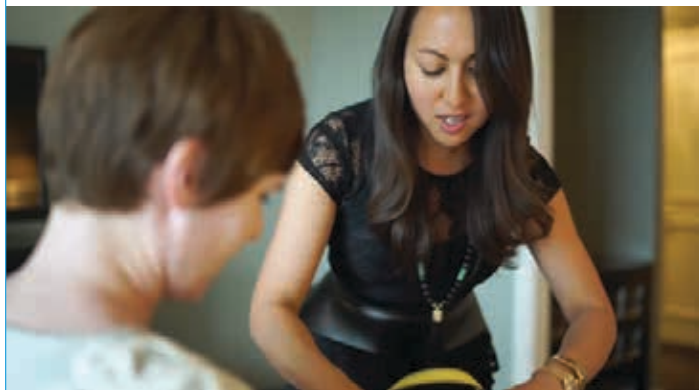
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