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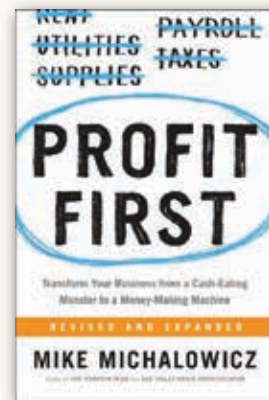


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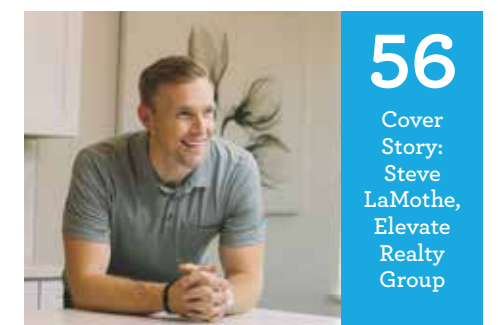
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▶ publisher's note

# winds <sup>OF</sup> change

Colder weather and shorter days are upon us! Writing this to you on a chilly morning snuggled by the fire, I am thrilled about this, but I will admit I am extremely grateful that the full scope of wind and rainy weather waited until AFTER October 13th to fully hit! We enjoyed a gorgeous outdoor evening in Folsom at our Fall event last month and it was just magical! But now that that event is behind us, selfishly I say BRING ON THE CHANGE!

Seasons are a beautiful thing. At the end of every single one I am excited and filled with anticipation for the shift. From bright hot sunshine-y days and green grass into crisp, cloudy skies and red leaves. And then even deeper into the gray haze and frosty mornings, dark thunderstorms and bare tree branches. Isn't it the very fact that everything is in a constant state of change that makes us appreciate the particular thing we have in front of us, or look with anticipation for what is just around the corner?

I think in life and business, the same analogy rings true. If you always stay the same, never encountering challenges, the successes would not be as blissful and sweet. We build confidence and pride through adversity and challenge. We develop and

own who we are becoming through consistent change because it requires us to put in the work.

I have a 16 year old daughter who, if she wanted to fully move into the new season of independence that comes with a driver's license, had to buy her own car. Some of her friends were given their brand new cars for their birthdays and I heard more than once how unfair that felt to her as she worked hard for years leading up to her 16th birthday. But I can tell you there was so much pride in her eyes when she went with her dad to buy that little Prius with her own, hard-earned money. When she drove it home and showed her siblings, it was different than if it had been handed to her. She was emotionally and financially invested.

Our successes, as well as "things" in this life that are just handed to us, are not nearly as impactful and fail to develop our character in necessary ways for proper growth and contentment when we do not work for them. Yes, change can be hard and extremely uncomfortable. It can bring with it numerous anxieties and challenges, but in the end it is the thing that transforms us, that moves us from who we were to who we are becoming.



*Your friend,*

**Katie MacDiarmid**

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In real estate, there are a few non-negotiable "rules of engagement" that exist: don't count on the commission check until the deal is closed and funded; you will get busier than ever right before a vacation; and change. Market changes, changes in the way we communicate, changes in social media approach, changes in brokerage. Lots and lots of change.

As we enter a new season full of change, don't let that hold you back! You may need to make a change. This could mean a change in the way you approach your business, family life, calendar, mental and physical health... you name it! As always, I am cheering you on and would like to remind you that YOU are helping to change this very community for good by the way you work with and alongside each other and all the homeowners moving in and out of our region.



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**Drew Bartlett**  
*One Nest Real Estate*  
"The lust for security in a temporary life is the real danger."

**Mike Paris**  
*BlackPine Communities*  
"The pandemic posed countless challenges, but if there's one thing we learned, it's there is opportunity in chaos."

**Darria Deatherage**  
*Closet Gallery*  
"We would define success solely on integrity. We are honest and open with our customers and care deeply about their project being done at the highest standard."

**Steve LaMothe**  
*Elevate Realty Group*  
"An amazing quote, 'You can have reasons or results, but you can't have both.' This business is notorious for having a huge fallout rate. Meaning within two years, 70% of people will be out of the business, within five years 90% or more will fail out. As real estate professionals, we are not 'sales' people, we are 'business owners,' and I believe the attrition is linked to that issue. We need to increase our 'business' skill-sets, not our 'sales skills,' honestly. It all goes back to execution again; if you are consistent and wake up every day with a goal to execute, you will have a huge life in whatever endeavor you choose."

**Analyn Miller**  
*Keller Williams Realty Elk Grove*  
"Be loving, humble and generous towards others, and take responsibility. Not just for shortcomings but also for things that ignite change and serve the world around you. We all have a place to serve, to give of our talents and to contribute towards another person's growth and well being."





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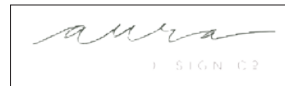
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▶ announcement

## COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT **Sacramento Real Producers**

*Real Producers is a national concept currently open in 125 markets across the country. With the 20th issue of Sacramento Real Producers, I wanted to take the time to answer some pretty common questions.*

### What is the purpose of Real Producers magazine?

The mission of *Sacramento Real Producers* is simple. We strive to inform and inspire the top-producing real estate agents in the Sacramento market and connect them socially. We do this by telling their personal stories. How they have succeeded and failed. What drives them to achieve year in and year out. Where do they spend their time when they are not working, and what are they passionate about other than real estate. We give local top-producing REALTORS® a platform to tell their story in a way they have not been able to do so before.

The secondary focus is to provide an avenue for our affiliate partners to create and continue relationships with these top performers, on a level that they might not be able to achieve on their own.

### Who receives this magazine?

This magazine is mailed to the top 500 producing agents in the greater Sacramento area, according to volume each year. This is based on the 2020 MLS; the ranking is annual and resets every year. This year, the minimum production level for our community was over \$11.5 million. Just to be included in this group is an accomplishment that testifies to your hard work, dedication and proficiency.

### What is the process for being featured in the magazine?

It's really simple – you can nominate other REALTORS® (or yourselves!). We will consider anyone brought to our attention; 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 [katie.macdiarmid@realproducersmag.com](mailto:katie.macdiarmid@realproducersmag.com) with the subject "Nomination: (Name of Nominee)." Please explain why you are nominating them to be featured. It could be that 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, then we put the wheels in motion for our writer to conduct an interview and write an article, and for our photographers to schedule a photoshoot.

### What does it cost to be featured?

Zero, zilch, zip, nada, nil. It costs absolutely nothing! We are not a pay-to-play model whatsoever. We write real stories about real producers, so nominate away, friends!

### Who are the preferred partners?

Anyone listed as a "preferred partner" in the front of the magazine is a part of this community and a top professional in their industry. They will have an ad in every issue of the magazine, attend our 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." 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.

### How can I refer a preferred partner?

If you know and want to recommend a local business that works with top REALTORS®, please email us to let us know at [katie.macdiarmid@realproducersmag.com](mailto:katie.macdiarmid@realproducersmag.com).

Still have questions? Don't hesitate to reach out!



**Katie MacDiarmid**

*Sacramento Real Producers*  
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# DREW BARTLETT

ONE NEST REAL ESTATE



▶▶ profile

By Chris Menezes  
Photos by Rachel Lesiw,  
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## SPINNING A NEST

Drew Bartlett is a numbers guy. He can't see a pile of tomatoes without counting them. Math has been an extra limb for him since childhood; after 17 years of working in high-tech finance and specializing in data analytics, it has carved out a good amount of real estate in his brain. So, when he entered real estate and started his own brokerage, you bet math, analytics, and data were driving forces.

"It's hardwired, and my brain never shuts off," Bartlett explains. "My listing presentations are equal parts real estate and statistical analysis, and my homeowners know that every step of the process for selling their home is optimized around data. I export all the historical backend data out of the MLS database and built my

own proprietary database. I can then spin that data to show every comparison/metric across the spectrum of MLS fields."

"Imagine knowing what PCAR agent has the lowest days on market or the highest sales price compared to original list price for single-story homes with a pool in West Lincoln during the second quarter of 2020 ... or being able to show an appraiser the exact premium buyers actually paid for homes with in-ground pools (vs. without) in Roseville's WestPark, today vs. three, six, nine, or 18 months ago – with comps to back up the trend, to ensure your appraisal has the best opportunity to land at offer price," Drew further explains.

Remarkable. Even more remarkable, however, is how numbers are not everything for Drew. He is keenly aware of the inherent emptiness of numbers, especially when it comes to counting coins. Generous, honest, and compassionate, Drew created his brokerage,







One Nest, to optimize client benefits and provide a “value-added alternative to the traditional brokerage model,” by combining two concepts that he was passionate about — flat-fee listings and full service.

“We provide the most comprehensive portfolio of end-to-end services for listings, such as deep cleaning, landscaping and staging, for one flat fee, on every home listed up to \$1,000,000. Full service. Flat fee. Every time,” Drew explains.

Voted Best Real Estate Company in Lincoln, CA, for the last five years, as well as Best Real Estate Agent in Lincoln from 2018-2020, Drew was definitely onto something. Although Drew developed his idea for One Nest at Stanford Graduate School of Business while completing the entrepreneur and innovation program, his compassion for people, and genuine sanctity for life, like math, goes back to childhood.

Drew was born in Phoenix, AZ, and moved to Roseville, CA, when he was 10 years old. When he was 5, however, he had a brief stay in the hospital, where he was treated for an autoimmune disease, believed to be Guillain-Barre Syndrome. He was paralyzed for a few days and stayed in a pediatric unit that cared for terminally ill children.

“I remember this very vividly,” Drew explains. “As I was walking out of the hospital, I looked back at those kids who were still there, and I realized that some of them would never leave. I didn’t

understand why I got to go home, and they did not. This had a huge impact on me as a child. I didn’t want to dismiss my opportunity; I knew that since some would stay there that I had to make the most of my life because not everyone gets that chance.”

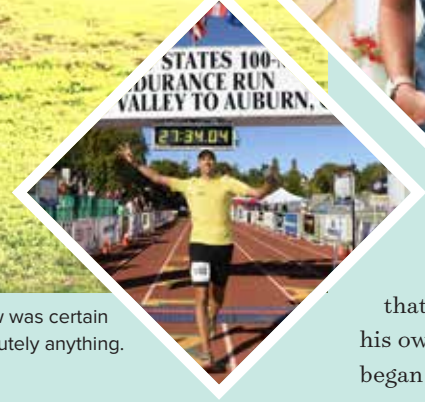
Recognizing the fleeting nature of life instilled an urgency in Drew to not waste it by being unhappy, which later influenced the paths he chose. One thing that made Drew happy as a kid was math — though in 3rd grade he felt it was more boring than anything. Of course, it was because it was too easy for him.

“I would finish my math work early before the other kids and draw on my work board, which upset my teacher,” Drew explains. “She’d ask if I had answers, and each time, I’d have all the right answers. Eventually, she caught on and started giving me extra work. I couldn’t get enough. Me and a friend of mine, who also excelled in math, would race to that class just to do all those extra problems.”

Always wanting to have fun, Drew admits he wanted to be a garbage man when



After completing this race, Drew was certain he could endure absolutely anything.



he was little because he wanted to ride on the back of the truck. When he got to high school, however, he wanted to be a professional golfer. The only problem was the odds of making it were slim, and he’d done the math. Then one day, he was talking with his uncle, who suggested Management Information Systems (MIS), a career that dealt with storing, searching and analyzing data. His uncle told him, “If you work in this field, you will never worry about money.”

“When I got into college, I decided to pursue MIS, but my first programming class was COBOL, which I hated! I knew that it didn’t matter how much money I would make, I hated staring at code all day,” he says.

Drew changed his major shortly thereafter. He was engaged to his wife (and high-school sweetheart), Nicole, at the time, and decided to pursue finance. He graduated from California State University Sacramento in 1998 with a degree in Finance and spent the next 17 years with Hewlett Packard as a corporate finance executive.

The long corporate grind of “making the numbers” and closing the books for his clients every three months eventually affected Drew’s health. He developed heart problems and even spent time in the ER for

stress-related health issues due to his job. He wasn’t happy, and he kept thinking about his dad — who worked hard at a job (auditor for Federal Government) for 38 years and dreaded the last several years — and Drew didn’t want to end up the same way.

“My dad didn’t work so hard just for me to end up dreading it, like he did,” Drew says. “I knew I had to do my own thing and create better balance in my life for the good of my health and for the good of my family.”

Luckily, Drew had earned his real estate license for his own personal investments in 2013 and began working as a part-time agent, while also attending Stanford Graduate School of Business and working full time. He enjoyed it so much that he made an agreement with his wife that if he could earn the same income as a REALTOR®

that he was making at Hewlett Packard, then he’d break out on his own. He also made it a goal to get his broker’s license, as he began developing the idea for One Nest in school.

The idea for One Nest also came out of his experience working with Century 21 those first two years. “It was a traditional model with no flexibility to customize commission schedules, like offering family/friend discounts,” he explains. “I knew I would be the odd man out for wanting to charge a flat fee for listing homes.”

Despite feeling a bit out of place in real estate, especially as an analytical introvert, Drew resolved to always be his genuine self after a friend told him, “People want someone they can trust, and they want someone to tell them the truth.” Well, numbers don’t lie, and neither does Drew. His clients loved that about him, and by August 2015, he not only earned his broker’s license, but he was able to leave both his corporate job and Century 21 to start One Nest and fully embrace how he wanted to do business.

While Drew has certainly achieved a lot these past eight years in real estate, he says his greatest achievement has been attending every school and sporting event for his daughters, Emma and Mya. Although he would like to build his business to a point where he could completely step away and it would run the same, he is intentionally not setting any goals for the time being.

“If I set a goal, I can’t not do it and will personally sacrifice to finish. So at this point in my life, I am not setting short-term professional goals. I reserve that time for my family and spending it with them,” he says. “After all, in the end, all we have is time.”



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▶ partner spotlight

By Ruth Gnirk  
Photos by Olha Melokhina Photography

# CLOSET GALLERY:

## DARRIA AND LYNDELL DEATHERAGE

*beautiful, functional, and local*

Closet Gallery, a locally owned and family-operated company, has been designing and installing custom

cabinetry in the Central Valley area for 14 years. You may have seen their craftsmanship in homes and

businesses in town, or at [aclosetgallery.com](http://aclosetgallery.com), but do you know the story behind their talent and passion?

Lyndell Deatherage grew up in Cameron Park and became a respected general contractor in the Sacramento area. His wife, Darria, grew up in San Jose, then eventually relocated to Sacramento for a career start with a software company. When they met, Lyndell owned a successful interior trim company.

Darria admired Lyndell's excellence in craftsmanship and his attention to detail. She found ways to automate

the billing and ordering processes, which freed Lyndell to focus on mentoring employees and growing the company. They would both agree that the key to their success would be their ability to use their gifts and talents, and together become a strong husband and wife team.

During the 2008 crash, developers were more mindful of cost, and there was a change in the construction market. At that time, Lyndell and his crew

installed windows, cabinets, doors, and trim. Several developers suggested that he start specializing in storage solutions himself, instead of simply installing the ordered products for the builders. Darria saw the change in the industry as well, and encouraged him to expand his services.

Darria took responsibility for sales and marketing, and Lyndell managed the installation crew. And that is how Closet Gallery grew from an idea into a





wonderful reality! Since the beginning, their small company has grown substantially. Closet Gallery is now a thriving business that the entire family has been able to be a part of.

Lyndell and Darria and their Closet Gallery team are driven by integrity and relationship. “We are honest and open with our customers,” said Darria. “We care deeply about their projects being done at the highest standard, and it shows with customer reviews and referrals.”

Closet Gallery is a team of teams. Office manager Hawlie keeps it all running smoothly behind the scenes. The design and sales team include lead designers Jamie and Mary. Install manager Jorge leads the installation team, which consists of installers Ezra, Coleton, Cesar, “Little Jorge,” Eddie, and Marvin. The Deatherages’ youngest sons, Brody and Jack, both interned this summer as part of the installation team as well.

Darria said she and Lyndell value and manage work-life balance fairly easily because they have such a strong team. “We have the ability to lean on each other when life happens. Whether it be good things, like vacation or scheduling of appointments, or difficult things like illness or hardship, we are all covered. We keep our team strong and versatile so it is easy for team members to fill in where needed. We couldn’t be more thankful for that.”

The Deatherages are an active family of six. Lyndell, Darria, and their boys love to golf together. They also enjoy boating on Folsom Lake.

The Deatherages are very hospitable and love to entertain. They also relish traveling as a family. The boys’ favorite summer vacation has been their annual fishing trip to Mexico.

Their oldest son, Kenny, graduated two years ago from California Polytechnic State University. He earned a degree in Aerospace Engineering. Now, Kenny is working for Northrop Grumman in Southern California.

Taylor, the second-born, graduated from Chico this year with a degree in Construction Management. He was hired as a project engineer for Bridgeway in Vacaville. While in college, Taylor met his wife, Jess, at a YoungLife camp. She easily fit into the Deatherage clan, and Darria and Lyndell were excited to welcome a daughter into the family.

An onlooker would never guess that one of the younger boys is a “transplant” into the family. When some family friends were going through a difficult time, Lyndell stepped in as a father figure, and soon the young man became the fourth brother. Brody, the youngest Deatherage son, and Jack are entering their senior year of high school. Both boys wrestle, play lacrosse, and have been training diligently to get to the wrestling state tournament this year.

The concept of family connection and teamwork carries over to the employees at Closet Gallery. A culture of integrity and open communication ensure that they continuously meet their goal of leaving clients’ homes and businesses more organized. Their biggest Covid/post-Covid



challenge has been managing supply issues, and balancing customer communication and satisfaction.

Recently a client was verbalizing his frustration about something that another subcontractor hadn’t completed to the client’s standards. The 17-year-old Closet Gallery employee, a son of the Deatherages, listened respectfully. Then, rather than criticizing another professional’s work, he offered to fix the problem. The customer said it was refreshing that the young man was so solution-oriented and that he cared enough to offer to fix the issue when it wasn’t even related to Closet Gallery’s responsibility. Darria was thrilled, and shared, “This is how we want to be represented in the construction industry:

solution-oriented and focused on customer satisfaction.”

Lyndell and Darria care about their customers and their community. They love the charm of Sacramento and the surrounding area. “In our region, we notice that people like to support local businesses,” said Darria. “We are so grateful for their support. Our connection is deep here because Lyndell grew up nearby, and we’ve raised our four boys in El Dorado Hills, which has certainly deepened our roots.”

The Deatherages and Closet Gallery give back to the community in several ways. They recently donated an office organization system, and its

installation, to their local church. A project from last year that they hold dear to their hearts is installing a closet system into the Koinonia Homes for Teens, a ministry to troubled teen girls in Loomis.

They also support the Twin Lakes Food Bank, Faithful Stewards in EDH and Powerhouse Ministries in Folsom. Another great organization the Deatherage family invests their time and other resources in is The Barnabas Group. The Barnabas Group is like *Shark Tank* but for nonprofit ministries that benefit the community.

The Deatherage family, and the Closet Gallery family, live and serve their community with integrity and excellence. Closet Gallery is more than a family-owned preferred partner who provides beautiful, functional, customized storage solutions for the community. They are a family, and a team, here to serve *you*.

For more information about Closet Gallery: Website: [www.aclosetgallery.com](http://www.aclosetgallery.com) Phone: (916) 826-7016





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» celebrating  
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# Analyn Miller

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 Analyn Miller is passionate about people. She wants to encourage, inspire, and empower others to set and reach their goals for homeownership *and* their goals in life. She is a wife, mother, author, speaker, and REALTOR®. Analyn's motivation for everything she does is three-fold: enriching families, impacting the world, and achieving her giving goals.







Analn fell into real estate almost 17 years ago. She was a wife, mother, and artist, and she owned her own business called Elegant Illusions, painting murals to bring beauty and joy to others. Friends told Analyn that she would make a great REALTOR® because she connected with clients and was committed to making their ideas become a reality. The idea intrigued her, and Analyn earned her license in 2005. She started as a transaction coordinator at Landmark Properties in Elk Grove and began her career as a REALTOR® within 12 months.



Analn helped start a BNI group known as the Elk Grove Rockstars made up of local business owners. Their motto is “givers gain.” The 2008 crash became a blessing in disguise, helping Analyn focus on growing referrals and word-of-mouth marketing. Analyn has been participating in the Rockstars’ weekly meetings for 14 years.



After working for Landmark Properties for seven years, Analyn became the owner of the brokerage company. However, she found that she liked the personal interaction with clients too much, and transitioned back into being a full-time REALTOR®.

Analn has been with Keller Williams Realty Elk Grove for over seven years and loves the KW culture and the company values of God, family, and then business. She started The Analyn Miller Group with team members Mariah Jones and Lisa Virassammy. Their tagline is: “Your Property, Our Passion.”

Analn has served on the Keller Williams Agent Leadership Council for three years, and has been awarded as an Outstanding Life Masters Club Member and a Five Star REALTOR®. Last year alone, her team closed on 52 units and their transaction volume was \$24,583,662.



I AM PASSIONATE ABOUT *leaving* people *better* THAN WHEN I FIRST MADE CONTACT.

“I want to make a positive impact. I am passionate about leaving people better than when I first made contact, whether or not I ever enter into a transaction with them,” Analyn says. “I want to keep a service-minded mentality. My favorite part of real estate is helping families reach *their* real estate goals.”

**Enriching Families**

Brandon and Analyn Miller were high-school sweethearts and have been married 28 years. They have seven children, ages 11 to 28. The four who still live at home were small miracles. The oldest three are married and have given the Millers six wonderful grandchildren. Analyn says grandchildren are one of the greatest gifts in life.

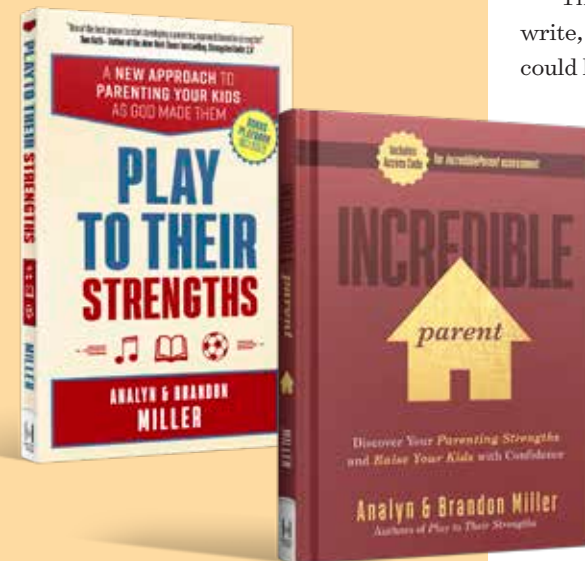
“Grandbabies are like getting to eat ice cream without the calories,” she shares with a chuckle.



Several years ago, Brandon and Analyn took time off from family activities and running their own companies to attend a retreat for Analyn’s birthday. They accepted the challenge to find a hobby they could do together that wasn’t related to their jobs or their children. They had both wanted to write a book. Before the retreat was over, they listed possible topics and chose their favorite. And thus their book journey began!

Their first book, *Play To Their Strengths*, took over a year to write, edit, and publish. Analyn said God opened doors they never could have opened themselves. She felt it was key that they acted in faith and kept taking steps forward in the process, because in those times, the couple gained more clarity, and opportunities were presented. Their book features standalone chapters, and each one is followed by a strategy that helps parents take steps to focus on training up each child to be all that God created them to be as uniquely talented individuals.

This past January, they released their second book, *Incredible Parent*, which teaches parents to take the next step to be all that God created *parents* to be, creating vulnerability in the home and supportive sphere.







“AS REALTORS®, WE NEED TO BE WILLING TO **stay teachable** AND ADOPT NEW THOUGHTS AND PROCESSES SO WE CAN BETTER SERVE OUR CLIENTS.

**When we're green, we're GROWING!**

...

It comes with an assessment to help parents find their “super six” parenting strengths so they can invest in the next generation.

“We’re not perfect parents; we’re just moving in the right direction,” smiles Analyn.

**Impacting the World**

Brandon and Analyn and two other partners co-founded a coaching company called Incredible Family, which has trained over 150 certified coaches all over the world. These coaches teach parents principles and help them gain a new perspective on parenting.

Incredible Family is also available in the corporate sector to support

working parents. For the past 18 months, Incredible Family has educated and encouraged leaders, directors, managers and employees. This includes a work parent-advocate program that trains leaders to provide support to individuals, communities, and organizations.

The Millers believe every child deserves to have someone wholeheartedly believe in them. Their lifetime goal is that their books and Incredible Family coaching will *change the world, one family at a time, by disrupting negativity and leading with hope.* For more information, visit their website: [incrediblefamily.com](http://incrediblefamily.com).

**Achieving Giving Goals**

“Last year my team sold over 50 homes,” shares Analyn. “We want to have financial freedom so we can *give more* and impact God’s Kingdom with what He’s given us.”

The Millers actively support XHope Missions, which focuses on at-risk children, primarily in foster care. XHope also facilitates Redeemer House Orphanage in Jinja, Uganda. During the time Analyn served on the XHope Missions board (2017-2020), a well was established at the Uganda site to supply clean water for the orphanage and surrounding village. The board also completed the building of a guest house and started building a school as well.

The Miller family attends and serves at Project Church in Old Sacramento, but

Brandon and Analyn would like to expand their reach. They want to team up with people, churches, and businesses to cover the cost of sending their books overseas to those who are requesting copies.

**Words of Wisdom**

Analyn is a firm believer in a *team* mentality. She wants to give clients the best service, with a personal touch, so they become clients for life. Because every situation is unique, she asks questions to learn about each family and their needs, expectations on timing, monetary goals, and investment strategies.

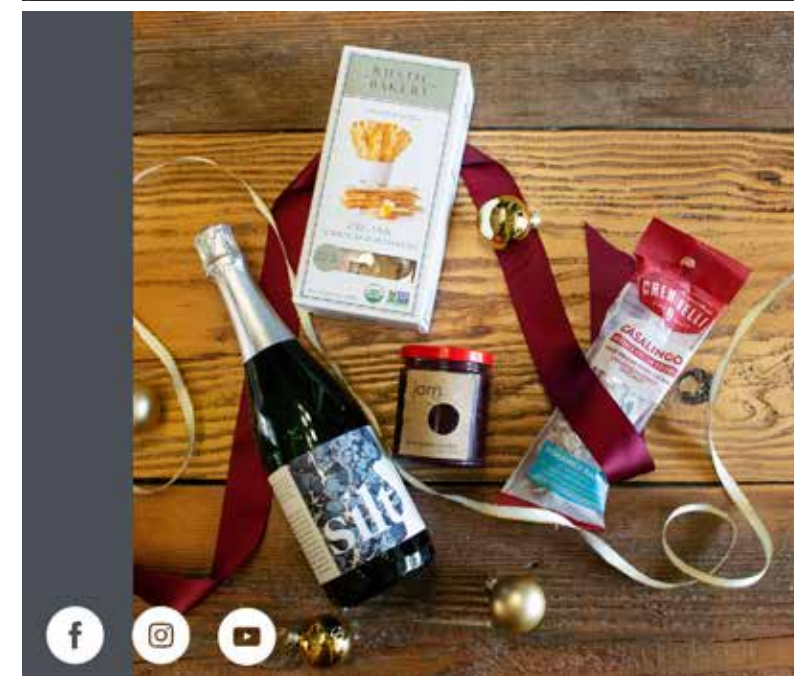
“We are our clients’ advocates,” observes Analyn. “As REALTORS®, we need to be willing to stay teachable and adopt new thoughts and processes so we can better serve our clients. When we’re green, we’re GROWING!” Coming from someone with Analyn’s experience, these are true words of wisdom.



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# Mike PARIS

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That's the spirit you see hard at work with BlackPine Communities.

As president, Mike Paris says, "I love our profession. What we have the opportunity to do is very tangible. We provide homes, not houses."

### ENJOYING THE JOURNEY

He sees the results of his team's work each day through the eyes of his clients.

"It's a great feeling seeing clients visiting our design studio here," Mike says.

"Whether they're a first-time homeowner or someone who is taking the next step in their story, you can see the joy and excitement on their faces. We take what we do very seriously. We know that we're building things that will be around longer than any of us."

### A TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE

BlackPine was formed about 11 years ago, and then really got off to a great start in 2012 (as the nation's housing market rebounded) with the Molly's Walk community in Roseville.

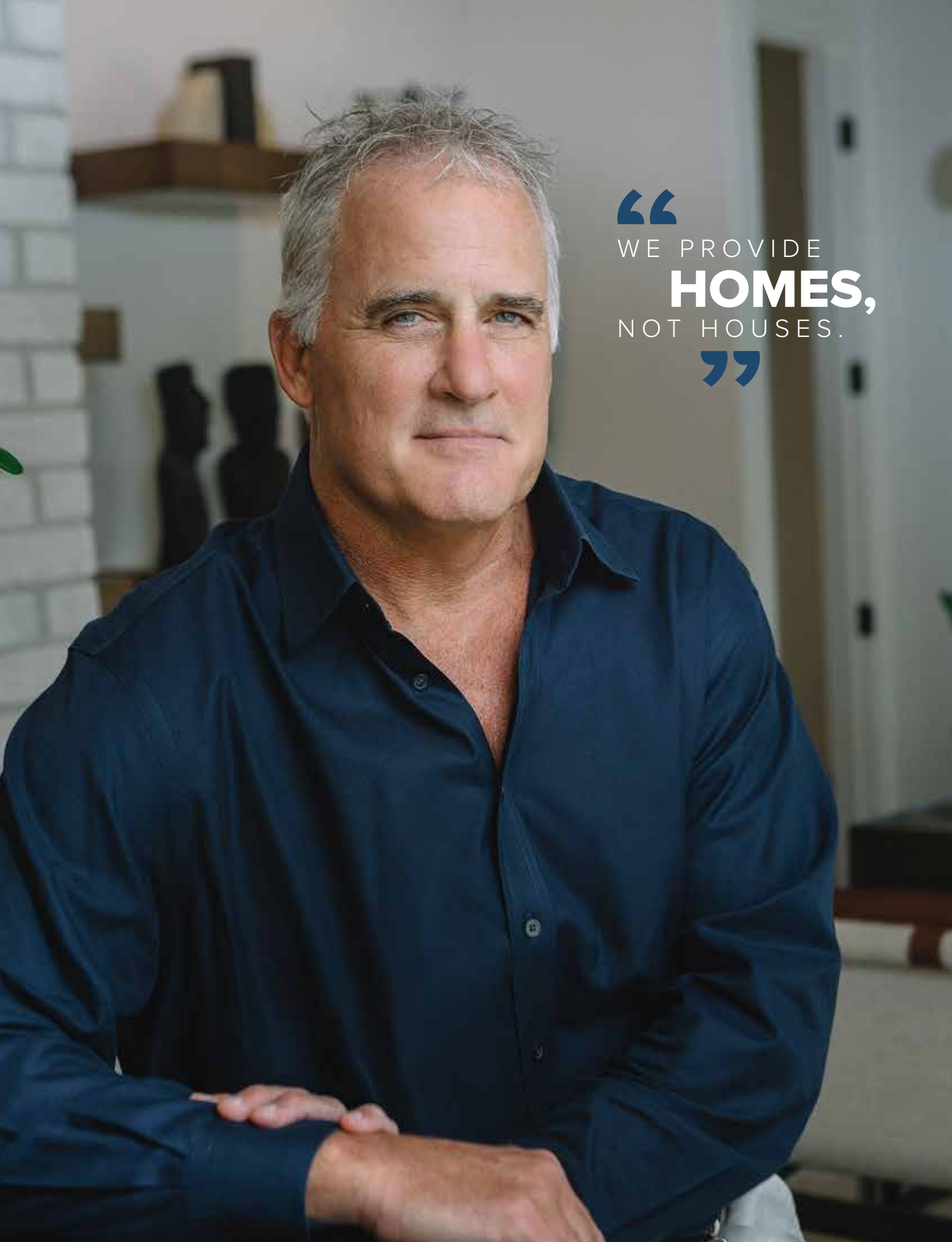
Since then, BlackPine Communities has helped many families through its mounting reputation for



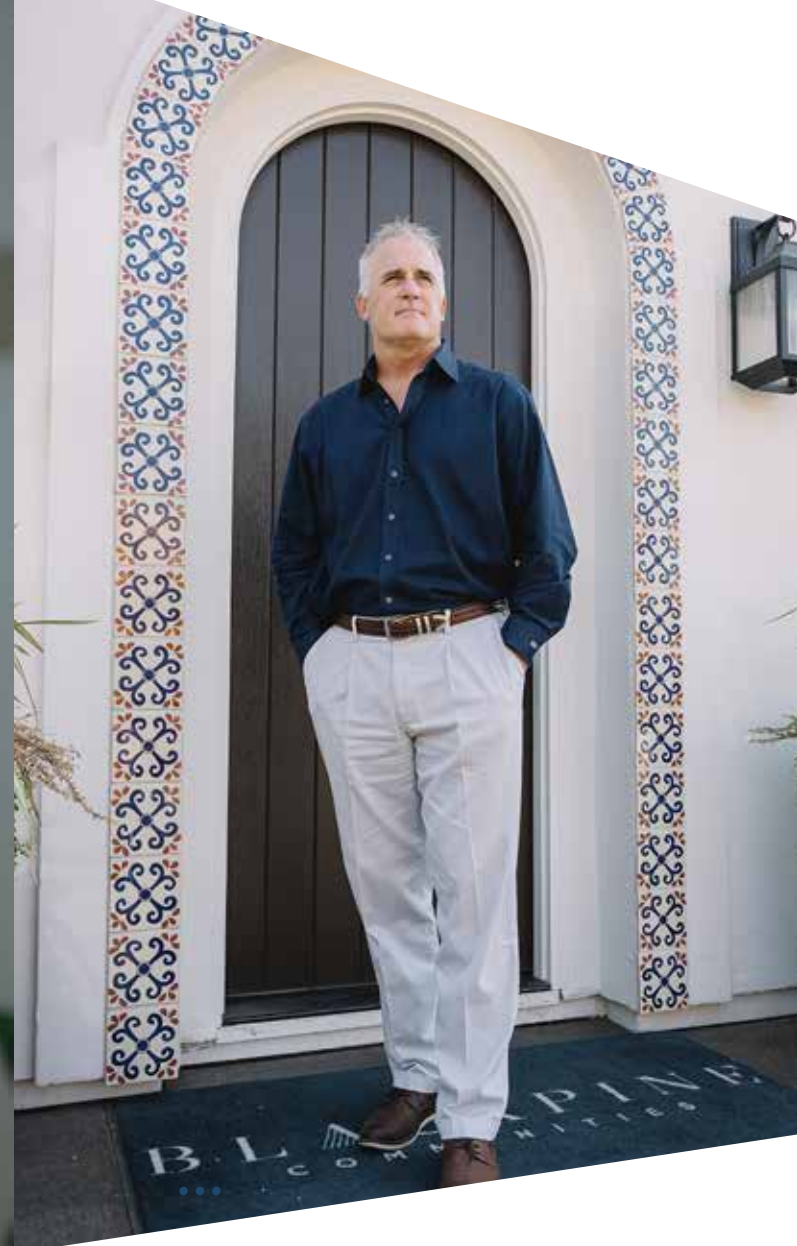
▶▶ industry expert

By Dave Danielson  
Photos by XSIGHT Creative Solutions





“ WE PROVIDE  
**HOMES,**  
 NOT HOUSES. ”



••• quality workmanship and timeless design. As a result, the company continues to craft communities one after another throughout the region.

**BUILDING STRONG BONDS**

Home by home and community by community, BlackPine moves forward by staying rooted in strong bonds.

“Several of our key team members and I have worked together over 20 years. When hurdles arise, we have a very experienced, well-seasoned team that works together to find solutions,” Mike says.

“We have been tried and tested, and we like to be uniquely different as a private home builder.”

**MADE TO LAST**

Strong homes are made to stand the test of time through seasons and varying conditions. The same can be said of the BlackPine success story.

“As we all know, the business is evolving. Part of what we like to do is to keep adapting and building great bonds with our real estate partners,” Mike points out.

**TEAM SPIRIT**

When you talk with Mike, it’s easy to see the rewarding feeling he gets from his team.

“I’m really proud of our team. We have a lot of men and women who have been with us for a long time,” he says. “I’m not a micromanager, and yet I expect a lot out of our people. They deliver with professionalism. We’ve done a good job of constructing our own path as a private homebuilder through time.”

**INDIVIDUAL EXCELLENCE**

In the end, the results speak for themselves — and, at the same time, they complement the lives of clients.

•••





“OUR COMMITMENT TO OUR CUSTOMERS BEGINS BEFORE THE POINT OF SALE IS MADE...AND THEN WELL BEYOND THE TIME WHEN HOME OWNERS RECEIVE THEIR NEW KEYS.”

“In today’s world, what I’ve tried to do is focus on building and selling a lifestyle,” Mike says. “We do that by moving away from a commodity mindset and really focusing on each individual and how we meet their lifestyle needs.”

**STRENGTH THROUGH TIME**

Through time, Mike appreciates the way those relationships have matured and evolved — and how they have remained strong.

“We want the customer experience to always be world-class. When you’re buying your home, there are often different points in your life when your interests and lifestyle change. We stay true to how we connect and what we provide to our customers at that point in time,” Mike explains.

“Some of our very first homeowners we worked with are coming back now and choosing us again.

That makes us feel good, because they liked how we treated them. We always try to do the right thing. I’m very committed to that part ... with the reality that our commitment to our customers begins before the point of sale is made ... and then well beyond the time when home owners receive their new keys.”

As Mike looks to the future, he’s excited with the prospects of continued growth and opportunity.

“We’re looking to continue to grow strategically,” Mike says with a smile. “The market will undoubtedly continue to be interesting. We’re looking forward to being part of creating places our customers can truly call home.”

**For more information about BlackPine Communities:**  
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# FOUNDATION TROUBLE

home matters

By Shauna Osborne and Megan Weatherly Lynn

For many, our home is the most expensive investment we'll ever make.

Since our entire home rests upon its foundation, homeowners should pay careful attention to warning signs it may be failing; if left unmitigated, foundation issues can lead to significant structural damage and costly repairs (the average cost of non-complex foundation repairs is over \$5,000). Here are four warning signs your foundation may need attention.

## EXTERIOR SIGNS

Perhaps the most obvious place to begin looking for foundation issues is in the foundation itself. Take a look at the entirety of your foundation. Are there bulges? Large cracks? Bowing walls above? These can indicate shifting in the soil beneath and surrounding your home, causing the house to "settle." As a foundation cures, hairline cracks can appear. These are usually nothing to worry about. If you notice larger or horizontal cracks or cracks in a zig-zag pattern, you'll want to call a professional right away. These types of cracks can indicate a need to re-seal and waterproof your foundation or, worst case, replace it.

## DOORS AND WINDOWS

A more subtle indication you may have foundation issues is the state of your doors and windows. Do you have windows that are difficult to open and close, as if they are stuck? Do you have doors that seem to be misaligned? Any gapping around exterior window frames or doors? Also, be sure to check vents and garage doors. If you find that any of these aren't fitting the way they should or even the way they used to, it may be time to call a pro.

## WALLS

Cracks in ceilings and walls are usually a clear sign your foundation has shifted. Be sure to look for any cracks or misplacement in the molding, as well. These cracks can usually help you determine the location of the problem in your foundation, and if caught early on, you may be able to repair the foundation rather than replace it.

## FLOORING

Just as cracks in the ceilings and walls can indicate a foundation problem, cracks in flooring can do the same. If you begin to notice cracks along the grout joints in your tile or hardwood floors sepa-

rating, call a professional right away. Same if you have floors that have sunken, bowed, or separated from the wall or are sloped. While some of these issues can be attributed to poor installation, they can indicate a more serious problem, especially if your flooring is installed over a concrete slab.

If any of these warning signs of foundation failure pop up around your home, contact a foundation repair professional immediately for an evaluation. Catching any of these issues early on will save significant time and money!

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# STEVE LaMothe

Elevate  
Realty Group,  
Keller Williams



### Elevating the Experience

Leaders aren't just about the moment. They are in it to make an impact for others through time.

Steve LaMothe is someone who leads in that regard by example.

As founder of Elevate Realty Group with Keller Williams, Steve works with a true drive to evolve the experience and lead change in the industry.

"I'm really excited and passionate about leading the change in our industry and creating the next generation of real estate experience. Our mission statement is to redefine the real estate experience for our customers," Steve points out. "I'm passionate about innovating and coming up with new ideas to deliver far more value to the customer and improve efficiencies in the transaction for our agents."

When it comes to the agent experience in the industry, Steve admits that the statistics are dismal, and he's on a mission to change that.

"The attrition rate in the first year for agents is 70+ percent. By the fifth year, 90 percent have failed out. The lucky 10 percent who get past five years have a chance at an incredible career in this amazing industry. The median income for real estate agents in California is \$48,000," Steve says.

"My goal as a real estate team is to disrupt the status quo and give our agents the ability to build incredible lives through my proven models/systems. Becoming an agent is starting a business. Many forget that's



what it really is, and I truly believe that's why the attrition is so high. You can be great at sales but not be a great business person, and fail. That's our role as a real estate team ... to give everyone the tools and systems to succeed at a very high level and be their business operating system, per se."

### Hard Work and Creativity

Steve earned his real estate license just under 10 years ago. Before getting his start in the business, he had a successful career in the printing industry.

"I've always worked very hard since high school. Coming out of the recession of 2008 through 2010, my dad and I talked about buying some homes," Steve says. "I wasn't super happy doing what I was doing, even though I had a great job. When the opportunity came to work on the project, I jumped on it."

In the course of two and a half years, Steve and his father worked through the renovation and flips of three homes, all while continuing to work full time and doing the renovations on their own at night. It was during this endeavor that Steve saw a big opportunity with real estate and decided to quit his job and study full time to become licensed as a REALTOR®.

"During that time, I met a young agent, and we did some deals together," he says. "As part of that process, I made the decision that I wanted to do this, too."





“  
SUCCESS IS 90%  
FAILURE AND  
PUSHING YOUR WAY  
THROUGH IT.  
”



••• Steve got his start with RE/MAX in Midtown, where he facilitated REO transactions.

“From there, I had an opportunity to join a top producer, as an agent on a team in the early stages of building his team. In my first year, I sold 48 homes and was immediately obsessed with the business and building this team.” Steve quickly built up an opportunity into a leadership role as he assisted in building out their team. “We were running the top team when teams were basically non-existent in our market.”

**An Opportunity to Make a Difference**  
Along the way, the group became one of the top 20 teams across the Keller Williams organization. In the process, Steve’s work included running the listing division taking over 1,000 listings in five years, and leading their team of 20+ agents and staff.

When everything was seeming to be in momentum, things changed in an instant in the summer of 2018.

Steve’s team leader and partner of five years made the decision to switch brokerages unannounced, just months before Steve’s first daughter was to be born.

He was faced with a pivotal decision – go the sure route and follow, or take a leap and build a business on his own. A call and invitation from the most influential man in real estate, Gary Keller, solidified that decision for Steve.

“Of course I took the call. Gary flew me out the very next day after we heard the news and spent seven hours with other leaders from our team, discussing his vision for real estate. He shared with us his vision of the future of real estate, the digitization of the transaction, where consumers were driving the experience and how commissions will inevitably compress,” Steve shares. “The conversation three years ago was literally what we are seeing unfold in our market today with all of the ‘disruptors’ and consolidation.”

•••



...

### A Mission to Disrupt the Status Quo

During that meeting, Steve made the decision to stay with Keller Williams. This meant building a team from scratch, starting with no staff, no database, no marketing, no signs, as he'd had no intention of starting up his own team before that time.

"It was the end of 2018 when Elevate Realty Group was launched from scratch. We're finishing up our third year now," he says.

In just three years, Elevate Realty Group has grown to a total of 11 team members, including two producing agents, three brand-new agents, and five administrative support staff. Elevate has completed 400+ transactions since launching, Steve personally completing 300 of them. In 2021, the team is on pace to exceed \$100 million in sales and over 200 units, making them one of the fastest-growing teams in the nation to hit \$100 million in sales. Steve says, "During the last three years, there have been so many challenges, mistakes and terrible hires with lessons learned. But we now have an incredible team of amazing individuals that I'm confident want to build the future of real estate. We wouldn't be where we are without them; most importantly, our lead agent, Nick Gonzales, who's been with me since our launch and has had an incredible career so far. Honestly, success is 90% failure and pushing your way through it."

As Steve thinks back on the path the team has taken through the last few years, he feels thankful for the group of professionals and the opportunity.

"When we launched Elevate Realty Group, it was a great opportunity because I had an opportunity to build the real estate experience of the future from scratch that was designed purely around the customer and delivering an experience and options they cannot find anywhere else in the market, just like Gary's vision. I also was able to re-design a real estate business that empowered agents to break the mold and build huge lives to create real financial freedom and wealth."

"Through innovation and technology, we are building the most streamlined real estate experience for our clients and then giving that power to our agents so that they are far more competitive in the market vs. more experienced agents. We are also

putting our team revenue to work to offer incredible programs that are unique, and invest in cutting edge technology and marketing."

Steve is on a mission for the future.

"I believe that real estate is evolving, and it's going to change quickly as we've seen post-Covid. We are seeing disruption all over our industry. We choose to disrupt the industry rather than be disrupted. That's my mission from a real estate team perspective ... to give our agents the best platform to go out and close as many transactions as they would like to create incredible lives and build generational wealth.

### A Life by Design

What drives Steve's passion and relentless drive is his family, including his wife, Felicia, and their two daughters — 3-year-old Layla and 6-month-old Madeline, who were both born amid his business being built. Steve explains, "There is no way I could wake up every day without Felicia and my kids. They drive me, and without a doubt, if Felicia wasn't as incredible as she is, Elevate wouldn't be where it is today."

In his free time, Steve has a passion for long-distance road biking. He has also become an avid investor in real estate and will complete 10 to 20 flips this year, and is teaching what he has learned to his team, to build wealth.

As Steve considers his career and the drive to make the way better for others, his excitement is contagious.

"There are two separate missions that our real estate team is trying to achieve. The first is about what we are doing for our customers that's unique and delivering an entirely unique experience. I think about that every day ... about how to create an experience they can't get anywhere else," Steve says. "The second part of that is how do I give that to other members on our team and be able to live a big life themselves and create true freedom. Those are the things outside my family that really drive me."

Congratulations to Steve LaMothe who makes an impact for those around him and is leading the next generation of real estate.



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