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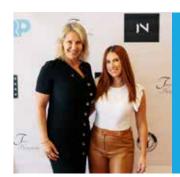
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Mitch Felix
Founder & Publisher



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Teresa Nora Trobbe

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bbbe Ewa Samples
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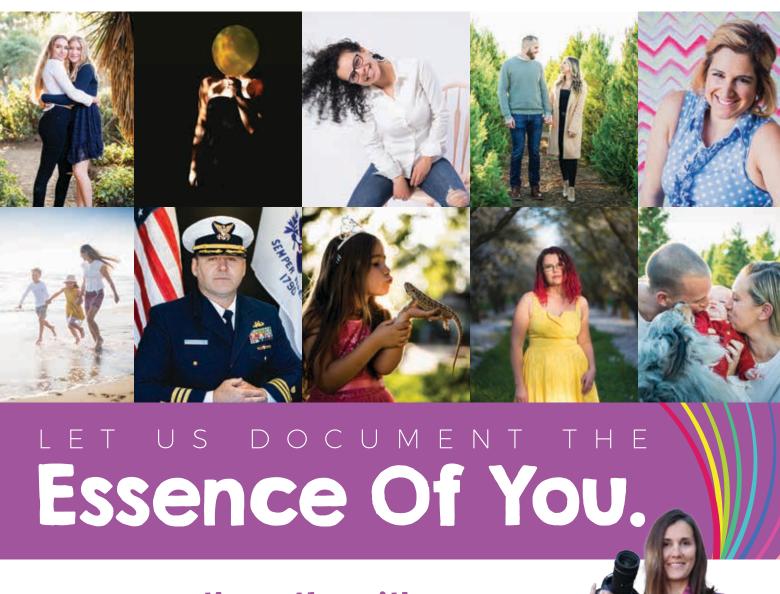
Dave Danielson
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Nick Ingrisani
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BIG THINGS ON THE HORIZON VENTURA

rising star

"I wanted something different, and I wanted to be happier," Joe Ventura begins with a smile. "So, I decided to bet on myself this time."

After a decade in the tech industry, Joe returned to his roots in 2016, joining his father and uncle in business at Ventura Barnett Properties, which is now part of Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate.

"I have a unique story," Joe continues.

While working for CyberSource, an e-commerce payments company that was eventually acquired by corporate giant Visa, Joe sold a complex software product to large, enterprise-level companies. The sales cycles were long, forcing Joe into a role that extended far beyond just sales.

"It felt like project management. I was overseeing all sides of the transaction," Joe says. "It was a very detailed sales cycle. I had to stay very organized, on top of everything."

Joe's career in tech was loaded with success, but after 10 years, he came to a realization: He was ready to work for himself. Handcuffed by corporate structures and product limitations, Joe aspired to be free in his ability to execute for his clients.



"I ended up getting tired of the big corporate scene and wanted a change," Joe explains. "What prompted me to get out of tech wasn't the money – I was doing well. It was feeling like I didn't have control over my destiny. I'd go on sales calls, travel across the country, and oftentimes the client would compliment me, personally, but go a different direction because our product wasn't the right fit, or due to pricing and contractual challenges. I didn't have control over these things."

Growing up in and around the real estate business, Joe recognized that in real estate, the opportunity to sink or swim based on his own merits was available. He was ready to bet on himself.

"I was looking for a career that afforded me more control and flexibility over the service/product I could provide to my clients. The great thing about this industry is that I get to be the product and tailor that to each individual client's goals. The sense of personal appreciation I get from clients is really what fuels me to work tirelessly for each and every one of them."

"Real estate, at its core, is dependent upon the ability to form and maintain trusted relationships. There is no amount of technology that will ever replace that aspect of this business."

In 2016, Joe got his real estate license, and by 2018, he was working full time in the business.

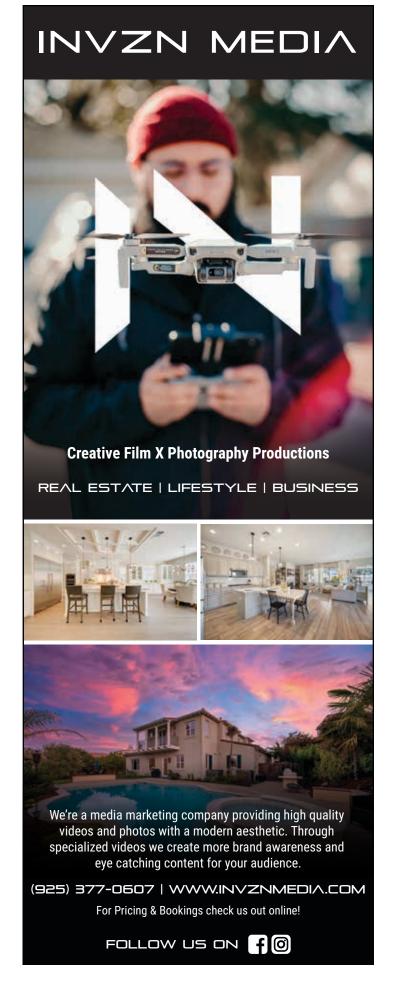
Drawing on his Roots

Growing up, Joe was continually surrounded by real estate table talk. His uncle, Tony, owns the brokerage he now works for. Joe's father, Frank, has long been a real estate agent.

"I've grown up around this industry. It's been ingrained in my life for the entire time. My uncle has been an office manager and agent since the '70s. In the early 2000s, he opened his own private brokerage after stints with Cornish & Carey, Coldwell Banker, and Century 21," Joe says.

"Talk about having two incredible mentors,"
Joe beams. "Tony, along with my father, Frank,
both served as mentors for me early on in my
real estate career. I have always admired the way
both of these men carried themselves, personally
and professionally."

After graduating from San Jose State University, Joe wanted to cultivate his own professional path. He didn't want to feel like he was handed a career opportunity or that he took the easy road. He wanted to grow – his own way.



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The decade in tech sales served Joe well. Not only was he able to forge his own way, but he gained skills and a professional outlook that have made him unique in the real estate world.

Joe has always considered himself highly self-motivated. It's a skill that's served him well in sales. As well, the experience that he gained in managing long-term technology projects has been ever-valuable in real estate.

"My career in tech – that's what's made me a more successful real estate professional, in a smaller

"Clients appreciate that I am present for them each step of the way," Joe says.

Big Things on the Horizon

"Ultimately, my goal is to get a brokers license," Joe says. "If there is ever a time where my uncle retires, I have a long-term vision of wanting to become a broker, to keep the family name that my uncle has built for all these years.

"There's a sense of pride I get when I go to work every day, and I hand out my business card, and it's my last name on there. I'd be proud to carry that on."



Real estate, at its core, is dependent upon the ability to form and maintain trusted relationships. There is no amount of technology that will ever replace that aspect of this business.



amount of time. I relate well with a lot of the buyers and sellers here in the Silicon Valley," Joe says.

Discovering Personal Success

Over the past few years, Joe has found considerable success in real estate. In 2019 – only his second full year in the business – he was fortunate enough to close around \$22 million in sales over 26 transactions. He was ranked the number-one agent in his office and number-two agent in the Peninsula region.

"I was pretty proud of being full time for just a couple of years and getting that accolade," Joe smiles.

Joe has found success by resting in his ability to manage projects from beginning to end. He brings value to his clients by staying involved in every single aspect of a transaction. Joe has always taken a very consultative approach, focusing on more than just the purchase and sale of the property.

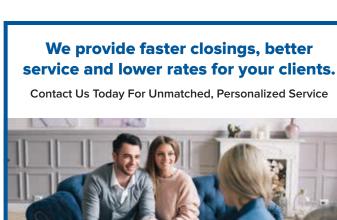
For now, Joe takes pleasure in the joy that real estate has brought to his life. He set out in real estate with the goal of living a happier life, and he's accomplished that.

At home, Joe and his wife, Linsay, now have a young daughter, Olivia. Another benefit to his transition into real estate is the daily flexibility it's allowed him.

"When I dove into this change of career, I wanted to be able to have a little more control over my schedule, those sorts of things. I wanted to find the right work-life balance," Joe says. "Most importantly, being in real estate has made me a happier person. I know that if I'm happier, I can be a better husband, father, and real estate agent.

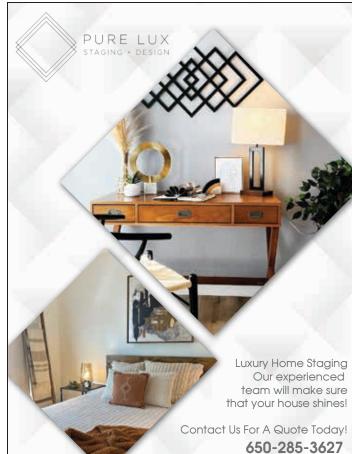
"I know I made the right move here."







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Mini Kalkat's story begins across the Atlantic
Ocean in Kenya, where she was born and raised.
Her parents immigrated to the East African
country and succeeded in building a life for
themselves in a foreign land.

"You know how people come to America to start a new life, new beginnings? That's how my family came to East Africa," Mini explains. "My parents were pioneers."

Unbeknownst to Mini, she would eventually follow in her parents' footsteps, crossing continents — but for Mini, the move was for love.

Forging Her Own Path

Mini watched her parents transition from immigrants in a foreign land to successful business owners, as her father went from civil engineer to businessman to land developer. She remembers the East African country as a beautiful place to grow up.

"When my dad started building houses and taking us to development projects, that was the beginning of my career. That inspired me," Mini reflects.

Mini's father recognized her gifts and suggested that she head to England to study, and at 19, she moved to the UK to study land management. Since that time, she has been connected with real estate in one form or another.

"I eventually became a Chartered Surveyor in the UK. There, it's a very professional credential, not just going and getting a license. I did a four-year degree, then two years of training, followed by professional exams."

Mini's first job was with one of London's top real estate companies, Jones Lang LaSalle. She became a member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and was well on her way to building the career of her dreams.

Across the Pond

After her time with Jones Lang LaSalle, Mini transferred to a smaller company in Mayfair. She was given a portfolio of 50 prime Central London buildings to manage.

"I had the dream job. Life was good. I was in my mid-20s and couldn't believe where I was," Mini reflects.



And then, Mini met her husband, Kuljeet. He had just completed his MBA at Carnegie Mellon and had landed a tech job in the Bay Area.

"Before I knew it, I came to California in the middle of the recession. He got a job, and I moved here with no job. I never thought I'd come here," Mini says.

Mini and Kuljeet rented a house in Palo Alto, but Mini struggled to find her place in a new culture. Finally, at the encouragement of her mother, Mini called the head of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, and within a month, she had a job with a commercial appraiser.

"I'm commuting to San Francisco, and I'm back in the business. But I'm in a different world."

Mini's boss understood what she was capable of and often gave her the most challenging projects. She found herself appraising wetlands, an office building transformed into a car dealership, and a building in Sausalito with an eroding foundation.

"Those are the kinds of jobs I was being given. It was challenging but a great start to my career in America. I would drive around different areas and get familiar," Mini says.



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Finding Her Community

"What I was missing, though, was the community spirit that I had in the UK and in Kenya. I didn't have any friends. I didn't have a connection. The soul was missing for me," Mini remembers.

Mini connected with a gentleman who sold businesses in the area. One day, he called her and said that he had found a home and lifestyle gifts shop in downtown Los Altos. Mini purchased the Cranberry Scoop, which she ran for six years. She also joined the local planning commission to stay involved in real estate.

"I became part of a community," Mini smiles.

The Return

Mini had gotten her real estate license when she arrived in the U.S. in 1990s, but it wasn't until 2011, when she sold her own custom home development in Los Altos Hills, that her residential real estate career began.

"It was an art piece. I always had in mind this would be the start of my career back in real estate development. Little did I know it was the beginning of me getting into sales," Mini reflects.

While selling her home, Mini fell in love with real estate all over again. Her listing agent became a friend and, eventually, her business partner.

"My career has been inspired by building that house in Los Altos Hills. I realized there was something missing in the real estate industry — relationships. There aren't many people that sit down to discuss the big-picture vision," Mini says. "Deep down inside, I had this vision that I'd become a person that people would know by my commitment to building connections. I thought it would be in development, but it turns out it was in sales."

Real Estate With Heart

Today, Mini has been selling real estate in and around Los Altos for over a decade. Suffice it to say, the Bay Area is truly home.

"Now, I've been living here in Los Altos for decades, and I know so much about this place now. I've managed property here, built property here, and remodeled homes here."



Mini has come to understand that, oftentimes, people sell their homes due to a loss — death, divorce, or a relocation. Her own experience with loss has made her realize that she wants to help others like her.

"We're brothers and sisters. There are so many emotions involved in selling your family property," Mini says. "I'm different because I care. I care about my relationship with people. I want my clients to walk away thinking that I was a friend, that I sold their house as if it were my own."

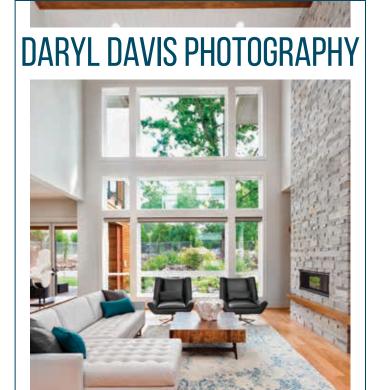
As Mini looks ahead, she envisions a long career in real estate. She feels she is in the right place at the right time.

"I have found a place that not only makes me happy, but it fills me up. I give so much to people, and I hope they feel good. I hope they receive that."



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star on the rise By Dave Danielson

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EVERYTHING THEY CAN TO MEET THEM.

That's the way Jason Buqeileh approaches the work he does with his clients on the Peninsula. Jason has honed his own special brand of hospitality throughout his career — even long before he entered the world of real estate.

CREATING AN EXPERIENCE

Jason worked in the restaurant industry for a number of years, including serving as Front of House Manager at Limon Rotisserie.

"I had been familiar with the restaurant industry and was working there as a server while I explored real estate," he recalls. "And then the opportunity came up for management."

In the end, Jason answered the call he had felt for a while to become a full-time real estate agent and started in February 2017.

He has definitely enjoyed the fit he feels in the industry.

"One of the things that I really like about real estate is you're not in the same place every day," Jason explains. "In the restaurant, you're doing the same thing, and it can get to feel very routine."

Jason also enjoys the depth of the experience he gets to share with his clients.

"Generally, in a restaurant, the relationship you have with clients is relatively more shallow. You meet someone for 20 minutes to an hour, and then they're gone," he explains. "In real estate, we have the ability to really get to know clients more in-depth."

PERSONAL APPROACH

While sales are an obvious component of his career, Jason thinks of his role in other terms.



Jason's clients agree, as well. In a short time in the business, Jason has already achieved his fair share of success.

HOMETOWN INSIGHTS

Another advantage Jason enjoys sharing with his clients is his hometown knowledge.

"A lot of the people I have the chance to work with aren't from the area. They're moving here from somewhere else in many cases," Jason says.
"Being born and raised here in the Bay Area I think definitely allows me to add a personal, hometown touch with clients and give them some insights into the surrounding area."

There's no substitute for learning through experience. And Jason has definitely had that experience in his first couple of years.

"Starting with Redfin -- they are definitely supportive, and they also throw you into the fire, so you get to meet a lot of clients and get to see a lot of houses ... and do it all very quickly," Jason points out. "I think my first few months were really challenging in terms of learning the business, and, at the same time, being asked to produce. It was a pretty tough, but very good experience."

IT'S THAT FEELING OF GIVING SOMEBODY THE KEYS. THAT'S WHY WE DO IT, AND IT'S THE BEST PART OF THE WHOLE THING.

NURTURING GROWTH

Jason believes in reaping what you sew in the business.

"It's like a seed that gets planted. You plant a lot of seeds, but if you don't water the seeds and nurture them, those seeds will never grow. You have to really take care of them and grow them yourself. And then the averages will be better over time," Jason emphasizes. "Not everybody is going to buy, and not everybody in the economy is going to buy with you. But the more you follow up and take care of those clients, the more they're hopefully going to buy, and buy with you ... and have a good experience throughout the whole process."

The learning process continues. Along the way, Jason measures his success through his clients' results.

As Jason says, "I've never really done anything for money personally, and I think that helps me to focus more on my clients' needs, rather than on my own personal ones."

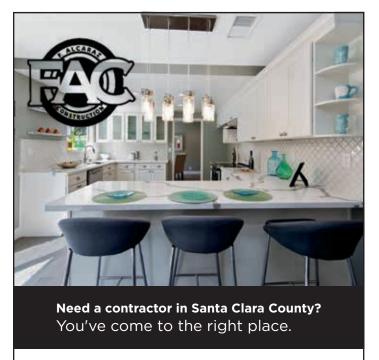
The learning process continues. And Jason is enjoying the journey.

"Even though two and a half years in real estate is a relatively short amount of time, I feel like it definitely has helped me build a lot of confidence," he explains. "I'm always looking to get better and to improve on what I'm doing. With every transaction comes more competence, and I'm learning something new."

As a lifelong fan of the area's pro sports franchises, Jason enjoys the rush of creating a win for the clients he teams up with.

"It's that feeling of giving somebody the keys. That's why we do it, and it's the best part of the whole thing," he smiles. "I'm really enjoying it. I feel like it's really starting to be a nice fit for me."

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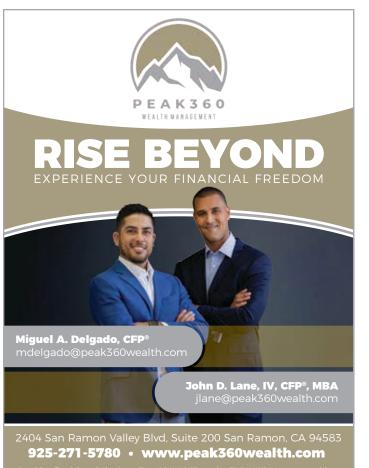
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panel discussion on team building

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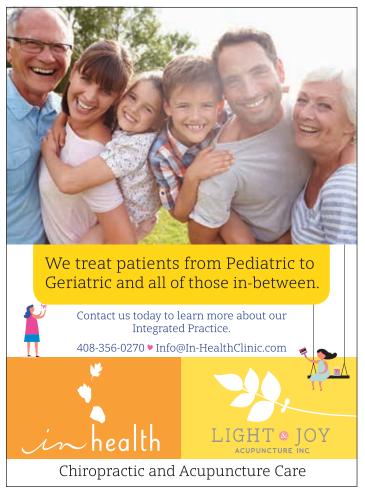


















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