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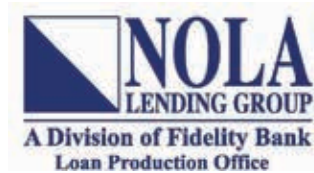


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If you are interested in contributing or nominating REALTORS® for certain stories, please email us at gina.miller@realproducersmag.com.

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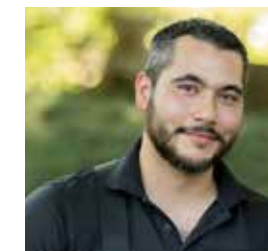
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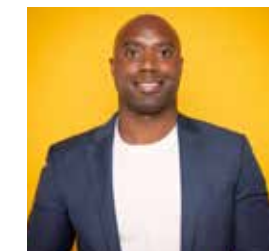
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HENRIETTA WILLIAMS



What began with a glitter Bible quote and a book club is now a full-fledged business.

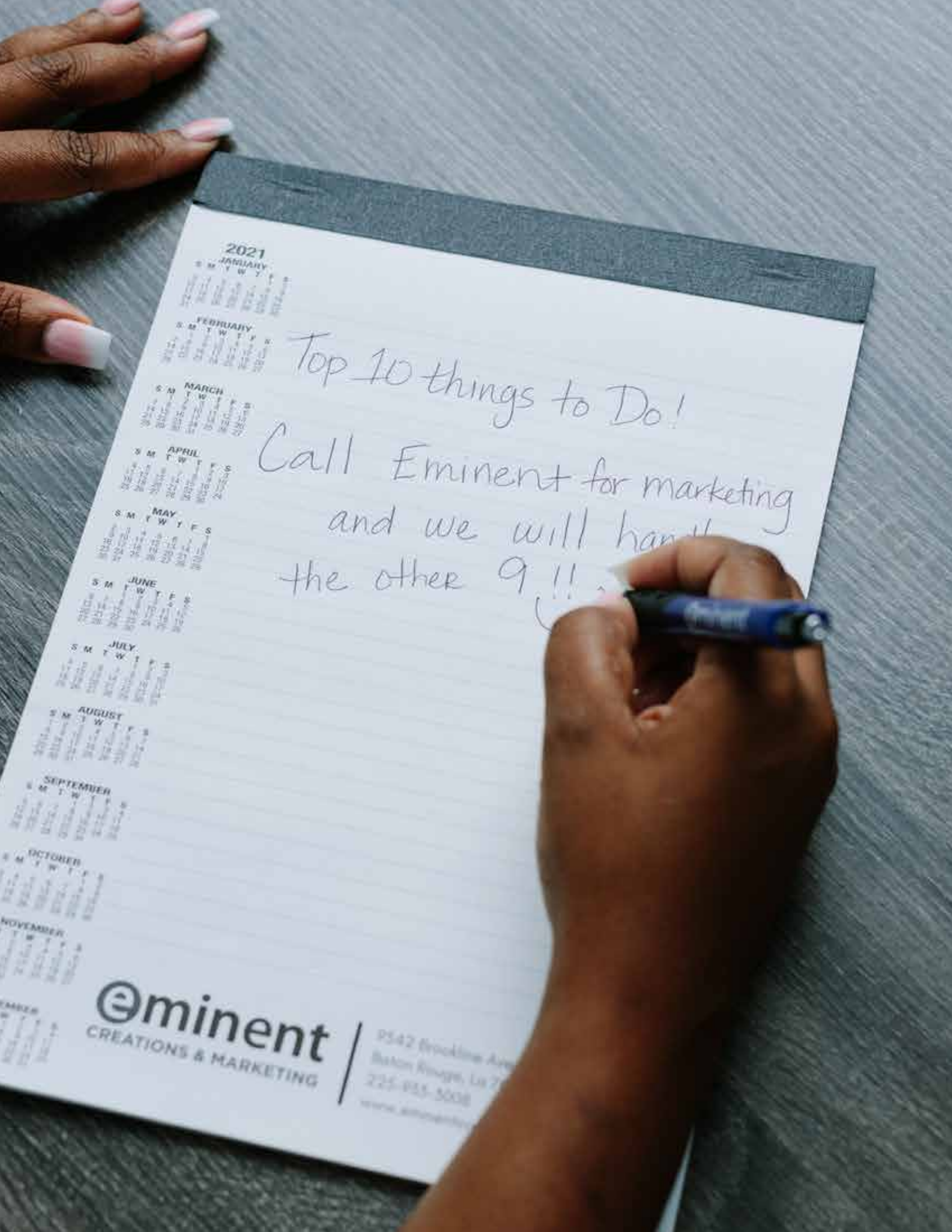
Henrietta Williams has always enjoyed DIY-ing and crafting, but in 2016 she decided to turn her life-long hobby into her full-time job. A woman at her church noticed the custom glitter shirt she was wearing. A shirt she had designed herself with the Bible verse, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” The

woman took notice, loved it, and ordered 20 shirts for her book club. “From that order, I started getting order after order, and I told my mom it was time for me to start my own business. I worked for the first two years solely off word of mouth,” Williams said.

The name of her business, Eminent Creations & Marketing, is in remembrance of her favorite crafting partner and aunt who believed in her ability and spoke into her future. “We would have craft days together and I’d struggle

with making wreaths and bows and she would tell me I’d be an eminent decorator very soon.” Those words resonated with Williams. “When she passed in 2017 “eminent decorator” stuck with me so I registered my business and took the next step in transitioning from a hobby to a business.”

To get her foot in the door, Williams started the best way she knew how: Crafting a product. She created schedule magnets for the upcoming football season and sent them to



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businesses and referrals from friends and family members. Williams joined PPAI, Promotional Products Association International, and became a Certified Advertising Specialist. From there, she began working with business-to-business clients.

During this transition from crafty orders to business orders, she found a love for helping Realtors. “I knew I could help Realtors become memorable to their clients with branded promotional merchandise.” Williams said the best way to stand out is to be genuine but original. She said a product should demonstrate what the company stands for and adds, “Let’s face it, we love receiving gifts!”

Williams focuses on providing branded promotional merchandise that’s fun, creative, and very effective for her clients. “Our goal is to make sure you look good and that you are first in mind when anything related to real estate is needed. If you need assistance creating campaigns for prospecting, referral and closing gifts, I’ve got it covered.”

- Just a few of the services Eminent Creations & Marketing offers are:
- **Unique gifts for birthdays, holidays and anniversaries**
 - **Help with branding yourself in the industry.**
 - **Direct mail marketing for prospective clients**

“And all of our products are made with 100% creativity, 100% thoughtfulness and 100% originality.” Williams said one of her favorite branded products was a blanket she created for a movie day. “A Realtor hosted a movie day for his clients and provided sanitizer, popcorn and a travel blanket. This blanket made its way to airports and even to Jamaica!”

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NAME IT & CLAIM IT

Barret Blondeau



Barret with his wife, Julie, and son, River.



The logo was ready. The website was complete. All of the materials were in place to launch a company. And then a global lockdown happened.

Barret Blondeau founded and introduced Unlock'd last March as the country abruptly shut down from the coronavirus. Eight months later, he received a cease-and-desist letter due to the name.

Blondeau and his team had 90 days to create a new name for the company. This change required a new logo, website, signage and business

cards. Essentially, his team recreated every marketing material for the company. The task called for behind-the-scenes work that was not easy for Blondeau and his team. Say hello to Falaya. The name evolved from the familiar Atchafalaya, yet holds more than one reason to be the brand that houses his company.

"Atchafalaya is Choctaw for long river," Blondeau said. "We envision the real estate process being a river that flows smoothly from beginning to end." He added that his son's name is River making the company name extra special.

The goal of Falaya is to connect homeowners to agents, title companies, lenders, contractors and movers throughout the sales process. Blondeau also wants this process to be efficient and effective on both sides for buyers, sellers and REALTORS®.

After an intense first six months, Blondeau and his team "came out on the other side." Traction increased, and the housing market exploded. Falaya took advantage of the opportunity. Falaya ended its first year in business with over \$12 million in volume, as well as listed over 100 houses in that timeframe.

"We positioned ourselves well, but we had to fight because there was so much noise," Blondeau said.

No Stranger to Hustle

Before his career in real estate, Blondeau was a market manager for DeWalt, selling tools to companies in Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas. This job required early mornings, traveling and hotel stays. At night, he settled into his hotel room and worked on his MBA. However, his schedule left no time for family. After his brother-in-law passed in a car accident, Blondeau decided to control his own outcome.

"I thought, 'This is ridiculous. What if my time comes up tomorrow, and I've been



...

“ We envision the real estate process being a river that flows **SMOOTHLY FROM BEGINNING TO END.** ”

driving around for a fortune 500 company across three states, not seeing my wife – for what?’ I needed to go and create something for myself,” Blondeau said. Hence the decision to transition to real estate full time so he could be his own boss and spend time with his family.

Blondeau is excited to develop technology for real estate, especially for Louisiana and locally to Baton Rouge. He believes in Falaya’s ability to change processes and make the real estate world better. “If you believe in what you’re doing, it makes it a whole lot easier to fight through the problems. And if you’re running into issues, and you don’t believe in it, you’re going to give up,” Blondeau said. “I think that’s what it boils down to: Do you really believe in what you’re doing?”




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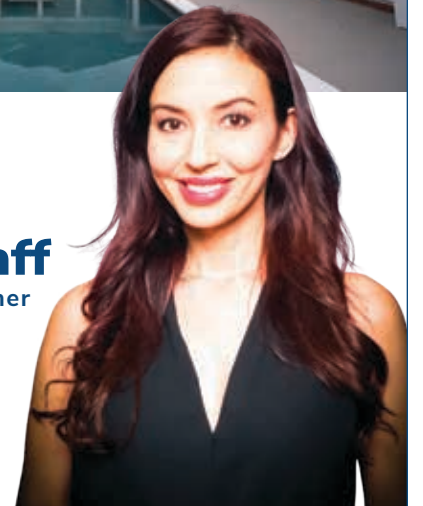
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the right thing to do

By Erin Phelps | Photos by Jonathan Silva

▶▶ rising star

Amanda felt so strongly that real estate is what she's meant to do that she signed up for an online course on a Friday and was licensed by the very next Friday.

"I didn't realize until that week that real estate is my thing — it came so naturally."

Amanda's life path wasn't always so clear. After graduating with a degree in Communications from Southeastern University, Amanda worked as a medical assistant. Eventually, she found her way back to communications by marketing at Associates in women's health. With a laugh, she admits how she would peruse the internet for real estate listings and was always interested in how the market works, but it didn't cross her mind to look into becoming a REALTOR®. Having a background in sales also pushed her

in the direction of real estate.

"I used to be a licensed makeup artist and work at Sephora, so I knew how to sell, and I realized that this skill would help me a lot if I decided to take this path of real estate."

Amanda came into the industry intrigued with the possibilities ahead, but she never expected to do so well her first year.

"I was surprised at how quickly things happened; the market was great, and it taught me so much very quickly." Amanda's friend Brittany Kenney was her support throughout the entire process of becoming a REALTOR®.

...



•••

“Another friend of mine, Sharell Jacquet, has been there for me, whenever, wherever I needed.”

On top of being a new REALTOR®, Amanda has a full life with two kids, James and Allie, three pets, Yoda, Rex and Ella, and her husband, Trey. Amanda also holds the title of Head Coach to her son’s baseball team. “I’m one of those moms that always steps up, even if I don’t exactly have the time,” she says with a chuckle. “It’s been so much fun, though. My daughter does cheer, and while I will never be a coach for that, I love that she likes it.” The family has enjoyed supporting their favorite restaurant P-Beau’s in Denham Springs throughout the pandemic. There’s one place, though, arguably the most magical place on earth, where you can find the Becks twice a year: Disney World. “I’ve always loved Disney, and I can honestly say I enjoy going to the parks more than my kids! My parents never took me, so at 28 I went for the first time, and now we go every year.”

While Amanda will for sure have the legacy of being the most fun mom, she has important goals for her real estate legacy. “When someone talks about the experience of buying with me, I want them to say that I communicated through the entire process. I want them to say that I was there for them, and if I didn’t have the answer right then and there, I found it for them.” For Amanda, her job as a REALTOR® is not just to make the paycheck. “My biggest goal is for my clients to have the best experience they can have, whether that means we make a sale or not.”

Amanda knows that as a new agent, she still has much to learn. Her commitment to learning and embracing the process showed as she spoke about a conversation she had with



her grandfather in college. Sharing his words of wisdom, he said, “Never let what you’re doing be about the money, let it be about doing the right thing,

and never be afraid to ask questions and get all the details.” These words have permeated through Amanda’s career in real estate and will no doubt guide her as she continues to sell families the homes of their dreams. “Even if I only sell a few homes or even if I sell a lot, as long as I know I did everything for the right reasons and I was consistent, I’m proud.”

For now, Amanda’s feet are one in front of the other and her plan is simply to keep doing what she’s doing ... work to make her budding real estate career fully bloom.

@realproducers

Tell us about your education.

Baton Rouge kid through and through. I went to Catholic High School. Then got my BA from LSU in International Studies and French. I then went on to get my JD from Southern University Law Center where I graduated from in 2016.

Why did you want to become an attorney?

I was naturally drawn to the law and was told since a young age that I should be an attorney. I worked in the family business as a Professional Landman for a while after I finished my undergrad degree at LSU. By doing this type of work, I learned a lot about property law, real estate law, mineral law, contracts, etc. and became very interested. Then in about 2012 when the oil & gas market took a hit I decided to go back to law school.

If you were not practicing law, what would be your alternate profession?

I would probably be back working in the oil & gas industry or working back with the Walt Disney Company and/or Universal Studios.

What is one thing you wish you would have known before you went to law school?

How to manage my time better! That is by far one of the most valuable things I learned in law school. It is something I still practice in my everyday life and without good time management there is no way I could accomplish everything that needs to be done.

Are you involved with any other organizations or causes?

My wife and I are parishioners at St. Jude Catholic Church. I am also a member of the American Bar Association and the Louisiana Bar Association.

What is the best piece of advice you have received?

“Why worry? If you’ve done the very best you can, then worrying won’t make it any better.”

Tell us something interesting about yourself.

I attended the French immersion program at St. Anne’s University in Nova Scotia, Canada twice and I am still fluent in French.

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Michael Borne

BORNE2SELL

By Erin Phelps | Photos by Aaron Cox

Whether it's real estate or gumbo, Michael Borne of Berkshire Hathaway United Properties can sell it to you, and by the time you've closed the deal, you'll be friends for life. With an incredible 2020 production of \$20 million, he's already superseded those numbers in 2021 and projected to finish just shy of \$30 million at the close of this year.

Michael spent most of his upbringing thinking he'd be an entrepreneur in the restaurant industry. After watching his father run restaurants all his

life, this path seemed like a natural fit for the personable and food-loving Michael; however, after a conversation with a friend about real estate, he knew it was time for a change. Realizing that many members of his family had found their way into the real estate industry, Michael began the process of obtaining his license and falling in love with the thought of finding someone their perfect home. While doing so, Michael had to tie up a few loose ends, namely his business selling his dad's frozen recipes to grocery stores across Southern

Louisiana. "I don't think my heart was completely in the food business. I saw real estate as something out there that I really wanted to do; I wanted balance in my life and career, and I wanted to be my own boss," he said with a laugh.

It didn't take much time for Michael to realize that he made the right move to real estate. After working at a boutique brokerage for a few years, he needed a space with resources for him to grow and to build a team. "I had always had my eye on Berkshire.



“ LOVING AND CARING FOR PEOPLE IN ANY WAY I CAN IS SO IMPORTANT TO ME.

I sat down with them, and our morals and values aligned. I just clicked with Chase Muller and Jonathan Starns, and I decided to make the move.” One of the most principal values to Michael is caring for his people and community. “Loving and caring for people in any way I can is so important to me. My people

skills started in restaurants with my dad, and those skills help me connect with people in real estate.” Many REALTORS® are in the industry because they love interacting with people, but Michael practices what he preaches, from having a simple lunch with clients to attending tailgating events.

Michael is truly invested in the happiness of the people he works with. “Some of my former clients are now my best friends. I played golf yesterday with a friend who was a client of mine, and now we get together all the time. The opportunity to make friends for life is one of the best parts of my job.” Having Michael as a REALTOR® and a friend means he will go to the ends of the earth to find your perfect home. “I showed one couple 35 houses in the span of two years. During that time, I really got to know them well.” After two years, Michael finally found them the perfect home; “I could really see the genuineness of their heart by how we became friends throughout the process, and now they send me referrals all the time.”

Along with REALTORS® Sara Hart and Madylin Travieso, the BORNE2SELL team is consistently among the top sellers of Berkshire Hathaway United Properties. Michael wants to continue empowering Sara and Madylin to achieve their goals and learn as much as possible. “All I want to do is help my team get better. The girls and I know each other’s strengths and weaknesses, so we interact with each other well. Every day I feel like they get better at what they do.” There’s something to be said about recognizing when you have something great, and



that’s easy to see for Michael. Not wanting to get ahead of himself, Michael’s focusing on growing his team’s skills, knowledge, and clientele to better serve the community. “I see growth for my current team happening right now. We’re focused on getting ourselves to the next level. I don’t want to get ahead of myself. I just want to take this one step at a time and have each step count.”

Baton Rouge isn’t the only place you’ll find Michael selling homes. His team has recently expanded their listings into New Orleans, and for BORNE2SELL it’s been a welcome challenge navigating the very different market. Outside of rocking the real estate world in Baton Rouge and New Orleans, you can find Michael on the golf course or at French Market Bistro chatting with potential clients and friends.

“ I SEE GROWTH FOR MY CURRENT TEAM HAPPENING RIGHT NOW. WE’RE FOCUSED ON GETTING OURSELVES TO THE NEXT LEVEL. I DON’T WANT TO GET AHEAD OF MYSELF. I JUST WANT TO TAKE THIS ONE STEP AT A TIME AND HAVE EACH STEP COUNT.

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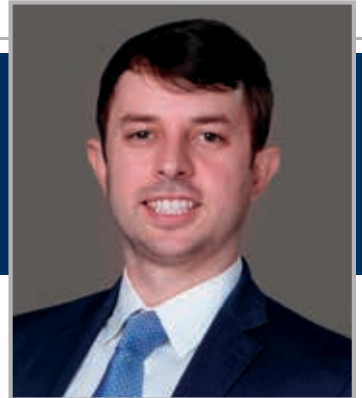
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