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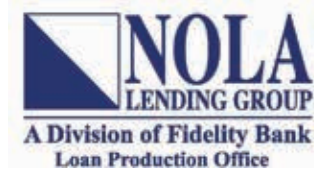


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 If you are interested in contributing or nominating REALTORS® for certain stories, please email us at [gina.miller@realproducersmag.com](mailto:gina.miller@realproducersmag.com).

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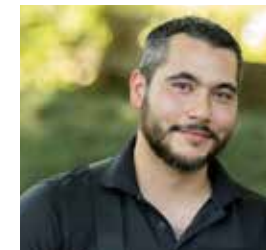
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▶ guest columnist  
By Angie B. Wilson

# Grow With It

This year I am thrilled for my 14 year old to go back to school. She is a rising sophomore and is excited to experience high school in a normal setting this year, as compared to last. She is looking forward to pep rallies, school dances, Friday night games and of course last minute sleep-overs that follow. I'm sure parents can relate to Friday night 6pm texts...*"can we sleep over at our house tonight?"* Panic ensues! We've got dinner reservations at 7pm, her room is a mess, and even worse...her room decor has been the same since elementary or middle school, with some LED lights thrown across a mirror!

Parents, it's time to stop the madness, because they won't stop the last minute texts! And let's be honest, you really don't want them to. They are making wonderful memories, in their rooms, in your home...and you get to soak it all in. So now is the time to make a plan to decorate your child's room, considering function and longevity first, making smart purchases, with the fun fluff to follow. As an interior designer, I recommend a professional consultation first...with both parents and your child present.

Believe it or not, this could be a fun project resulting in organized, inspired chaos that actually works!

### Here are a few tips on how to get started...

- Schedule a consultation with a CIDA degreed Interior Designer
- Discuss what activities take place in the room: exercise, homework, hair/makeup, etc...
- Decide what existing items can be re-purposed in the new scheme
- Consider new core furniture purchases that will last through college years
- Discuss necessary task/ambient lighting
- Discuss window coverings
- Discuss themes and color schemes
- Make a Pinterest Board
- Time to start shopping!

Enjoy this precious time with your child... and don't blink!



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▶ partner spotlight

# FLEUR DE LIS

## Emblematic Experience *title*

By Breanna Smith | Photos by Aaron Cox



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The Fleur de Lis is a prominent symbol in Louisiana and one that businesses in a variety of sectors adorn their logos with, but there's one company that holds the legacy of the Fleur de Lis especially dear, carrying on the legacy of the beloved emblem that represents royalty, faith and unity.

Jeff Lesaicherre founded Fleur de Lis Title in 2011 and over the years has built on a solid foundation of integrity, enthusiasm and hunger for knowledge, assembling a team of nearly 100 experienced attorneys and real estate professionals to help the residents of Louisiana with a variety of legal needs. The culture Jeff built attracts top Louisiana law school graduates who are eager to learn and strive to provide the best experience in everything they do.

"I'm grateful for the opportunity to work for Jeff," Britney Duke, managing attorney of the recently opened Denham Springs office, said. "When you have a great leader at the top, it trickles all the way down. And a big thing for me is our culture – we're fun, but we also pride ourselves on our integrity and teamwork. Jeff established that foundation for the company and gives us the tools to customize and apply it to our market."

### Experience the Difference

The Fleur de Lis team is chock-full of experienced attorneys dedicated to providing an excellent closing every time, in almost any Louisiana city – and even a few in Mississippi. Fleur de Lis Title, established in 2011, started in Hammond and over the years has steadily expanded, now boasting of 12 offices across Louisiana, from New Orleans to Slidell with an additional office in Mississippi. The Baton Rouge office opened about a year ago, with Dylan Yesso at the helm as Closing Attorney. This

summer, Britney Duke led the way in opening the Denham Springs Office, and this fall another office will open in Prairieville.

While there are nearly a dozen offices across the state, there's no such thing as a stand-alone office, Dylan said. "Everyone gets along great, delegates efficiently and works together. We're an integrated, streamlined company." And every team member has the same goal – provide the highest quality service and support to Louisiana real estate agents.

Seasoned real estate professional and soon-to-be attorney Bonnie Smith heads business development. Bonnie was a licensed real estate agent for seven years, working in commercial real estate, private equity and staging. "I'm just obsessed with real estate," she said. "I've closed with a lot of different title companies over the years, so Fleur de Lis understands what REALTORS® want in a closing and in a title company." Bonnie graduates from law school soon and looks forward to being on the other side of the table.

### Full Service, Full of Fun

Fleur de Lis Title is a full-service law firm, providing assistance for a wide variety of legal needs ranging from wills and successions to business formation and franchising. Jeff, owner and CEO, is a member of the American Land Title Association, Louisiana Land Title Association, Northshore Home Builder's Association and 21st JDC Bar Association. He has been named to the Louisiana Super Lawyers list since 2012. Each member of the Fleur de Lis Team carries an impressive resume. On the Greater Baton Rouge Area team, Dylan has years of experience in family law and abstracting, Britney has years of litigating experience and graduated

“ Everyone gets along great, delegates efficiently and works together. We're an integrated, streamlined company. - Dylan

...



Dylan Yesso  
Attorney

Magna Cum Laude from Southern Law School, and Bonnie knows the ins and outs of the local real estate market from every angle.

They're a fun-loving, energetic team that is passionate about crushing business and providing the best service for each client. "We're eager to please and hungry. It's an energy that people gravitate towards. Fleur de Lis really makes it fun and easy for agents and their clients because their experience is so important to us," Bonnie said.

Their first priority is building relationships built on trust and integrity with their fellow Fleur de Lis attorneys and local REALTOR® partners – the booming business is a natural byproduct. "One of the main reasons I came to Fleur de Lis Title is because of the environment and the people... Everybody had great things to say about the company and that's hard to find – a place where you really love the people you work with and the environment that you're in," Britney said.



Britney Duke  
Attorney



Bonnie Smith  
Head of Business Development

Fleur de Lis Title is a full-service law firm, providing assistance for a wide variety of legal needs ranging from wills and successions to business formation and franchising.

It's always an all-hands-on-deck approach in every aspect of the business – whether providing courtesy closings at other offices or getting behind the wheel of a moving van to set up a new office. "If any agents need something moved, I'm pretty good with a box truck," Britney said laughing. "We'll do anything for our REALTORS®!"

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# LEO DESSELLE

PENNANT REAL ESTATE

broker spotlight 

By Breanna Smith | Photos by Aaron Cox





Behind life's big wins are years of hard work, perseverance and determination that define a person's character. Leo Desselle knows all too well the sacrifice it takes to end up on the celebrating side of a win – as an LSU Tiger, as a Junior Olympic gold medalist and black belt in Judo, and as the leader of a real estate company that consistently ranks in the top 1% of the Baton Rouge market.

Leo attributes his work ethic to the lessons he learned from his parents, Leo III and Isabelle, while growing up. At age 10, he landed his first job with his mom's tourism company – the longest-running tour company in New Orleans – cleaning out the tour vans after school and whichever sports practice was in season at the time, whether football, baseball, track or martial arts. After the New Orleans native graduated from Archbishop Shaw High School in 2002, he attended LSU as a football team walk-on. While he had scholarship offers to other schools, he felt right at home at LSU. He knew it was alongside the Tigers that he wanted to make his dream of playing college football come true. His dad, who excelled at football during high school watched as his son fulfilled a legacy. His father aspired to play college football, but money was tight and he needed to work to pay for college,

there were simply not enough hours in the day for him to play on the team.

Leo's first year at LSU, he was redshirted. He practiced with the team day in and day out, without playing time during his freshman and sophomore year, when LSU won the 2003 BCS National Championship. He remained unfazed – the lack of playing time never showed in his training or dedication to the team. And in his junior year, Coach Les Miles put Leo in against North Texas. In his very first play, he got a tackle. Leo finished that season with four tackles, two tackles for a loss and two quarterback hurries – and the



invaluable experience of playing under those Tiger Stadium lights as the fans roared.

As Leo finished up his last few classes at LSU, coming off of a win over Notre Dame, he realized the big decisions that lay ahead of him. “I thought, what am I going to do? And Coach Tommy Moffitt – who I think is the best in the country – pushed me and encouraged me to become a personal trainer. I thought, that’s not a bad idea. I’ll do that.”

Leo began a successful personal training business, helping people reach their physical goals with motivation and instruction. At the same time Leo’s dad, Leo Desselle III, suggested he try his hand at real estate. “I told him I didn’t know anything about real estate, and he said, well, learn.”

He trained with clients, showed houses between those appointments then headed to LSU for his last few night classes. That year, the market crashed, but Leo was so engrossed in working he barely noticed. “Nothing was planned, but it all worked together, all of the stars aligned because I was able to meet a lot of people out of that gym and create a sphere of networking. Because for a



lot of people, if they trust you with their body, they’re going to trust you with buying or selling a house.”

After eight years as a real estate agent, Leo earned his broker's license and began Pennant Real Estate. “My new goal became opening my own company to teach others what I did well. I was really good at training and motivating people in the gym, I knew I could do that with REALTORS®, too.” Over the past five years, Pennant Real Estate has steadily grown to 37 agents. “Slowly but surely, I was growing with the right people. I’m proud that everyone who is here is truly meant to be here, and they’re good people that are going to do a great job and uphold their morals.”

Leo is happiest when he’s training and motivating others, fostering their drive, determination and helping them build the grit it takes not only to

get to the celebration end of big accomplishments but to become better people.

“It’s about the development of the whole person,” he said. “My true passion is seeing others succeed.” Leo offers the same bit of advice to all new REALTORS®: “Show up and be coachable. Be ready to work your butt off in this crazy market, too!”

He is continuously motivated by his wife and three children, Leo Paul, 9, Landry, 8, and Liv, 3. “They are my why and what pushes me every day to get up before everyone else and go to bed later than everyone else.” When he’s not training and motivating adults, he’s on the sidelines as a volunteer parent coach for baseball and football, and always looking for opportunities to help at St. George events.

“My new goal became opening my own company to teach others what I did well.”

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▶ rising star

# Kaylyn Ward

## Small Town Team + Big Dreams

By Erin Phelps | Photos by Jonathan Silva

For Kaylyn Ward, real estate is truly a family affair. As a wife, mom of two girls, and one-half of a mother-daughter team, Kaylyn centers her career around her family, which makes her the perfect person to help other families find their dream home. Dipping her toes into the industry with real estate photography and marketing, in 2019 Kaylyn decided it was time to dive in the deep end and obtain her license to sell.

“If I had known what I know now about real estate, I would have started

a long time ago. This is 100% what I’m made to do.”

Now, Kaylyn works on a team with her mom to make the process of buying a home a breeze from start to finish. “My mom and I are extremely close. We think the same, we talk the same, we are the same person,” she says with a laugh. “My mom excels at her current job, and I felt like if she jumped into real estate even part-time, she would do fantastic.” After some encouragement, Kaylyn’s mom, Karla Feigley, got her real estate license

this past February, and the two began focusing on becoming the dynamic duo known as Small Town Team.

Having a successful team with her mom allows Kaylyn to spend time with her two daughters, Landry and Micah, and keep her career steady. “If I’m busy with my daughters and a client wants to see a house, my mom can jump in and manage the showing, and I can jump in for her when I need to. It’s just seamless.” Just like what Karla instilled into her, Kaylyn is hoping to show her daughters the power







“ IF I HAD KNOWN WHAT I KNOW NOW ABOUT REAL ESTATE, I WOULD HAVE STARTED A LONG TIME AGO. THIS IS 100% WHAT I’M MADE TO DO.

of a great work ethic. “My mom was always my biggest cheerleader growing up and instilled in me the power of hard work.”

Kaylyn already has a plan to set her daughters up for success in the future. “In the long term, I want my girls on board with me! I told my husband, when our girls graduate high school, I’ll help them get their real estate licenses. What they do with it is their choice, but they’ll have a way to join the family business and start making a career for themselves.”

Between her career and her family, it’s hard to believe she has time for

much else, but Kaylyn will always make time for working with the community. As long as Kaylyn can remember, she and her mom would get involved with volunteer work. Over the years, Kaylyn has worked in the community organizing fishing events for differently abled children, a birthday party with Foster Village celebrating kids in foster care, and even bonded with members of a local nursing home making sure they had company and care. “Throughout the years of volunteering, seeing the smiles on people’s faces when you make a real connection with them is the most rewarding part of it all.” In 2020, Kaylyn was honored as one

of Capital City’s Finest for her work raising money for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. “I thrive on being able to pour into people and make a positive change in their lives. I think that’s a huge part of why I love real estate; getting to help people accomplish one of the biggest goals of their lives is so rewarding to me.” In addition to continuing her charitable work, this Rising Star has big plans for her family team. “One of our biggest goals is to expand our license to sell in other states.”

Kaylyn emphasized that everything she does is for her family. “I plan to start buying investment properties in the near future to begin setting my girls up for school.” With a sparkle in her eye, Kaylyn explained that Small Town Team has big-time dreams, and there’s no slowing down now. In just two short years in the industry, Kaylyn Ward has changed so many people’s lives; it’s safe to say you won’t want to miss what she’ll do next.

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- Kyle Petersen




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# Brittney HOWARD

Happy is the Goal

▶ cover story | By Erin Phelps | Photos by Jonathan Silva

## WHEN I'M HELPING MY COMMUNITY

in whatever form that may be,  
I know I've been successful.



Just like the homes her father helped build, brick by brick Brittney Howard has created a stunning life and career.

With her bubbly, optimistic, yet steadfast personality, it's not surprising that Brittney helped her mother sell a home at the age of 12. Growing up in Memphis, Tennessee, she often watched as her father bricked homes as a mason in the community. She learned about construction and design, but, more importantly, she saw how a simple structure can be transformed into a home. Brittney studied biomedical engineering at Vanderbilt University but had to take a step back from her education before her son was born. As a single mother with student loans, Brittney was tired of living paycheck to paycheck and recalls the moment she knew something had to change. "A lot of the reason why the word no is not an option for me in my career is because I remember counting nickels at the drive-thru and thinking there has to be a better way."

There was a better way.

Brittney made her way to Baton Rouge, built a beautiful family, and found her way back to selling homes making her KDK Realty's 2015 Rookie of the Year. In just six years in the industry, Brittney has spoken at countless conferences, lectures, and on podcasts sharing her wisdom on real estate success. "Especially as an African American woman, people can think that you're something you're not. If you're not a pushover, people think you're aggressive. But I knew, even if I

had to ruffle some feathers, if I had to make people mad, I was going to make sure failure wasn't an option for me."

### Coming Home to Herself

Knowing what it's like to lose what's important to you, Brittney centers her career on helping others, winning her Club Wealth's 2017 Humanitarian of the Year award. Brittany lost her father in 2010, and her own home was affected by the 2016 flooding that saw most of the Greater Baton Rouge area underwater. Despite these setbacks, Brittney made sure her community was taken care of. "When I'm helping my community in whatever form that may be, I know I've been successful." After the floods, Brittney and her team began donating a turkey per closing to families in need. She even organized pictures with Santa Claus for families who had lost their photos to the water. This idea likely came to her in the night; as a self-proclaimed night owl, Brittney is up in the late hours planning, thinking, and dreaming. And it was also during one of these late nights that she realized there is too much on her plate. "This year, I was diagnosed with high-functioning anxiety. That probably explains why I couldn't sleep," she said with a laugh. "For a long time, I tried to be what other people wanted me to be. I believe I lost my authenticity, and I needed to slow down and come back to myself."

Brittney explains that her career began to take up valuable time with her kids, and she lacked time to take care for herself.



••• “You don’t have to be anything but yourself. My anxiety made me great at real estate, but at what cost?”

Even with the business adjustments brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, 2021 has been Brittiny’s best year of real estate so far. In addition, her current broker, Carlos Alvarez, has allowed her to spread her wings, and Brittiny credits him with instilling a fight in her to achieve. A proud moment in her career was a recent client giving her full reigns to design their home. “I felt like I was finally connecting my visions to reality and seeing what my father taught me and what I learned in school all come together.”

**Watch Me Work**

Brittiny is looking forward to prioritizing her family, mental health, and getting back to traveling and speaking at conferences.

“My goal is to be happy. I used to think I had to be number one, but the only thing I have to do is take care of my kids and my family. Sometimes we miss the small everyday wins when we set huge goals for ourselves.” With her success, she is often asked about balancing her work and personal life. Her

**“**  
**FIND**  
**SOMETHING**  
**YOU’RE**  
**GOOD AT**  
**AND CHASE**  
**THAT.** Always go back to what you’re really good at. The universe will always provide.



advice to other agents?  
“Honestly, sometimes the balance doesn’t exist, but that doesn’t mean you can’t stop the pendulum from swinging too far to one side or the other.”

Brittiny believes in manifesting your success. “Find something you’re good at and chase that. Always go back to what you’re really good at. The universe will always provide.”

Brittiny found her way back to her roots, and I’m sure her father is proud to know she is doing exactly what he did ... helping people turn houses into homes.

# What Our REALTORS & PARTNERS ARE SAYING ABOUT US!

"I am enjoying EVERYTHING about being a part of this! Magazines are refreshingly positive & encouraging!"

Aundrea Allen

"I love all of it! It's so great to get to know fellow Realtors on a more personal level. Keep up with all of the positivity!" Nicole Rowell

"Love it!! The networking- through the magazine, social media, and events are great!! Your enthusiasm is wonderful!"

Jill Lemoine

"I love the magazine. Positive article and helpful. Need to make an event but seems a tornado comes every time!"

Sondra Richard

"The networking! I missed everyone so much during quarantine that it was ridiculous. It's been amazing seeing familiar faces and meeting my fb friends in real life sometimes for the first time."

Brittney Howard

"Charles and I LOVE everything about being a part of this! We find the magazines to be uplifting and authentic. We really enjoy reading about others in the real estate community and networking with the best!"

Darby Baronet

"Love reading these articles! Very well put together."

Rachel Jordan

"It's all perfectly amazing!"

Bambi Guilbeau

"Love reading the articles!"

Ericka Queen

"I love it all!"

Nikki Calmes

"I LOVE THE MAGAZINE!!! It's a great way to get to know some of our agents while we are so busy & unable to attend many functions!"

Karen Moore

"I do look forward to receiving the issues and always take time to read them. The events are a great opportunity to network and socialize with fellow REALTORS which is fun & beneficial!"

Ryn Jones

"Love it! It's so refreshing reading about other Realtor's success- and the best part is that it's all local Realtors. Keep the events coming! So appreciative of the vendors and the connections that BRRP has allowed me to make. Love ya, Gina!"

Kelly Mitchell

"Great magazine.. Always looking for new vendors so it's a good resource and it's nice to get agent back stories."

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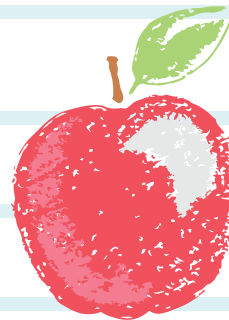
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**Tell us about your education.**

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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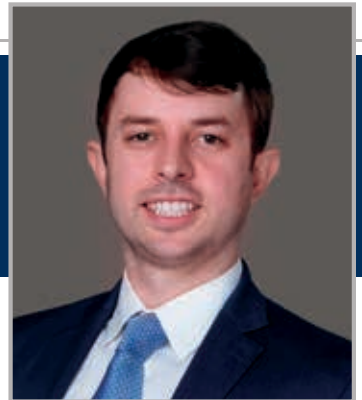
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