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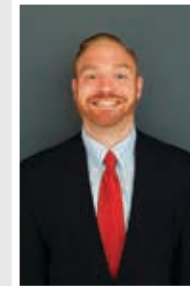
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# MEET THE SILICON VALLEY

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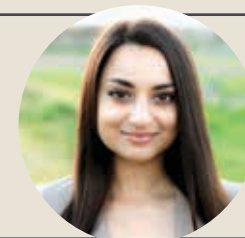
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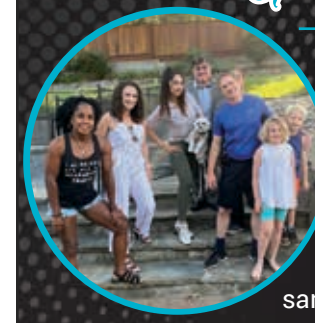
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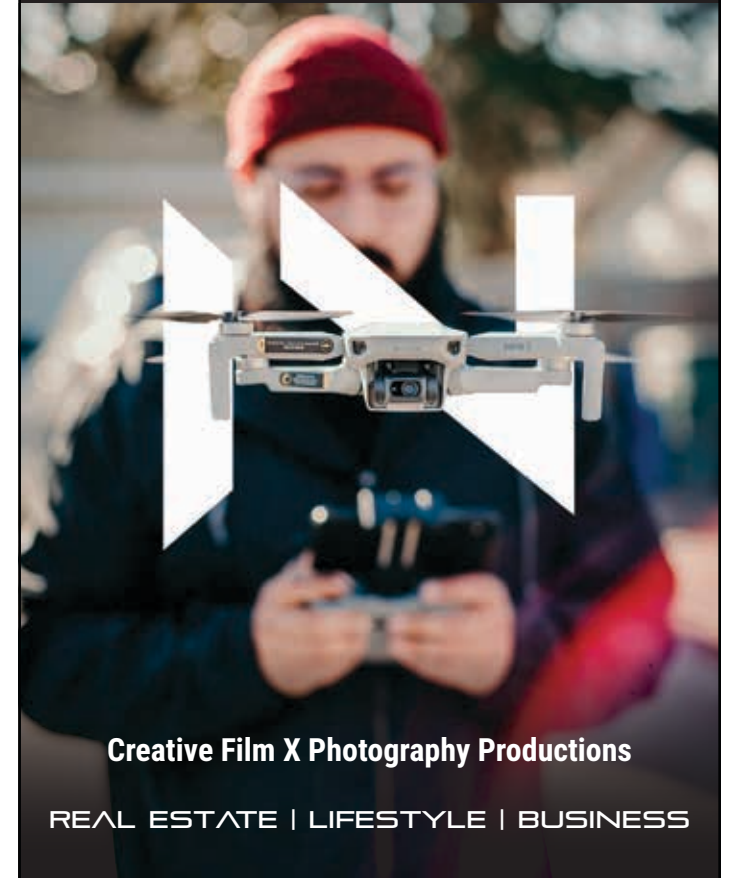
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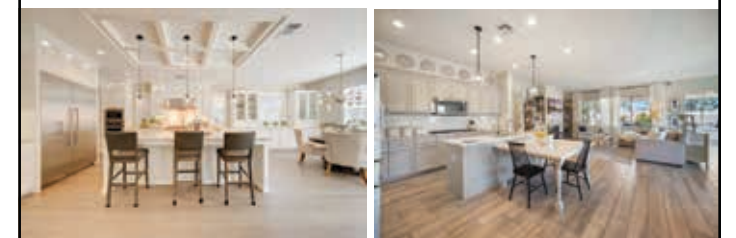
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► publisher's note

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Founder & Publisher,  
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We partnered with N2 Publishing, a 15-year-old custom printing company with over 1,000 markets in print. They will be responsible for the layout of the magazine, as well as selling the ad space to the best local businesses to cover the costs. We work by nomination most of the time - using businesses you already use, know and trust. We screen our potential partners to ensure that they can provide the types of services that you may need or want.

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I'd like to personally thank all of our business partners who fund making the magazine free to all of you, as well as the many people who contributed to the issue. Know that *Silicon Valley Real Producers* would not exist without you! I look forward to meeting each of you at our upcoming events!

Want to contribute original content or nominate a real estate agent to be featured in a future edition? Know a business who should be a part of our community? Email us at [Mitch@SiliconValleyRealProducers.com](mailto:Mitch@SiliconValleyRealProducers.com).



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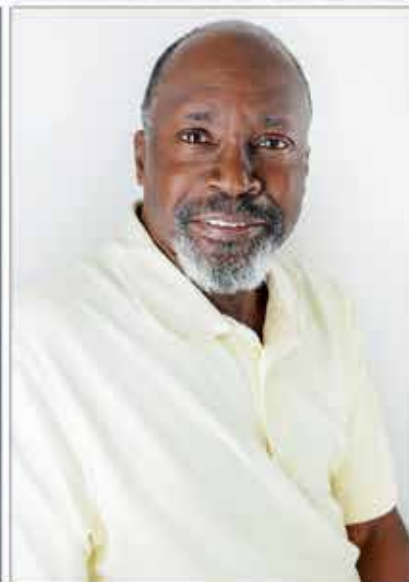
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July 20, 10:00-11:30

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▶▶ flashback favorite

Originally printed in May 2020  
By Zach Cohen

# PAM TYSON

*a wealth of knowledge*

**“I’m a forever student,” Pam Tyson begins.**

From an early age, Pam expressed a deep love for learning. From the time she was in school to her days in the tech sector to her career in real estate, Pam has allowed her drive for education to propel her to the top.

Prior to getting her start in real estate a decade ago, Pam was a successful account manager in the tech sector. “I pretty much self-taught myself everything there was to know about the sales process and negotiating,” Pam says. “I self-taught myself how to code. If I could understand what I was selling better, if I could explain it to developers, I would be a better salesperson. That’s my sales philosophy throughout my career. I go above and beyond to learn about my job.”

Today, in real estate, Pam applies the same principles to her work. She believes that’s what separates her from her competition.

“I’ve done the same in real estate. When I got started, I got knee-deep in learning. I learned as much as I could... Even now, I read as many books as I can.”

#### **A WEALTH OF KNOWLEDGE**

“One of my last competitive listings where I competed with six other real estate agents – I had not





“

The difference between the other agents and me was that I came very prepared. I did research on the town, on the neighborhood. I go above and beyond to really understand the market that I'm selling in.

”



a sudden, I couldn't fit it in part-time. I had six sales in my first year just from people I was working with.

Pam realized she could make really good money in real estate. So late in 2007, she quit her job in tech and went into real estate full-time. "And that year, we had no business. This was a time - 2008 - the market crashed. The one good thing is I didn't know what it was like to be in a really good market. I had gotten in right before it crashed."

True to her nature, Pam hit the books, educating herself on short sales and REOs. Soon enough, her business found solid ground.

Ten years later, Pam couldn't be happier that she made the choice to dive into real estate fully. With her ability to educate herself and her willingness to go above and beyond for her clients to draw in, she continues to solidify herself as a go-to real estate agent and local resource.

... done a lot of sales in that area but grew up in that area. The difference between the other agents and me was that I came very prepared. I did research on the town, on the neighborhood. I go above and beyond to really understand the market that I'm selling in."

Pam explains that while most listing agents operate under "Three P's" - put the listing on the MLS, put signs up, and pray buyers will come, she takes this concept a step further. "I do three more - proactively go look for buyers, price watch, and presell the house upfront. That's my value proposition."

Pam draws on her wealth of knowledge about local neighborhoods and the real estate market to provide top-notch service to her buyers and sellers alike. She grew up in and around the construction industry - her father and father-in-law were both in construction - and as a result, she has an in-depth understanding of what goes into building a home. It's another way she's able to go above and beyond for her clients. "When I go and look at a house, I don't just look at the inside. I go beyond that. I have the house measured by an appraiser.

I walk around the property to see any issues. I really do my research."

**REWIND: BEFORE REAL ESTATE**

"I've always been an entrepreneur," Pam explains.

After almost 20 years in the tech industry, Pam's dreams of being a business owner seemed to have fallen to the wayside. Then, a friend approached her about getting her real estate license.

"My girlfriend, a really good friend of mine, had her real estate license and said, 'We should do this on the side and make extra money. I didn't know I wanted to be a real estate agent, but I said, 'I'll get my license; what the heck.'"

Deep down, Pam had little interest in leaving her work in technology. She had great success there and was the number-one sales agent year after year. "I really liked it," Pam smiles. "I got the license for fun. My friend and I started telling people we had our license, and we started doing it part-time. All of






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Virginia Commonwealth University with a degree in political science and began to explore law schools.

“My older cousins and some friends were working as attorneys. I saw them having kids, struggling with that lifestyle, leaving the office late,” Michelle remembers. “My husband and I were starting a family, and as I was studying for the LSATs, I thought, ‘I always loved real estate; let me get my license.’”

As a kid, real estate had become a sort of hobby for Michelle and her mother. Together, they’d go to open houses just for fun, and as an adult, Michelle continued this tradition. So when she turned to real estate in lieu of going to law school, she was turning back towards one of her most natural attractions. Michelle has been in real estate since 2006.

“I had a great example in my mom. My mom started her business out of the guest room of our home when I was 7. She’s a speech therapist and opened a pediatric rehab clinic for infants and babies. That entrepreneur was always in me, and real estate is such a good fit for me. When I found that piece, I felt this is what I’m meant to do. It’s a great job for a young mom, and it’s been an awesome career for me and for many women.”

**BEGINNINGS: GEA CARR**

After graduating high school, Gea moved to Paris, France to begin her modeling career. Beginning at 17 years old, she worked in Paris for two and a half years. After having her daughter, however, Gea knew she needed to put roots down.



ALL TOGETHER NOW

“CORCORAN GLOBAL LIVING: TOGETHER WE ARE ONE. WE WANT TO BRING THAT TO OUR AGENTS. WE ARE INDIVIDUAL AGENTS THAT COME TOGETHER TO CREATE A SUM THAT’S GREATER THAN OUR PARTS,” MICHELLE ELLIOTT BEGINS.

In 2020, Michelle Elliott, Gea Carr, and Susan Laragione teamed up to bring the Corcoran Global Living brand to the Bay Area. The three are passionate about their vision for

teamwork, female empowerment, and service in the real estate industry.

**BEGINNINGS: MICHELLE ELLIOTT**

Michelle’s first career aspiration was to become a lawyer. She graduated from

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“I made quite a bit of money. I came back and bought a house in San Jose,” Gea explains. “When my daughter turned 5, she needed to go to school, and I needed to put roots down somewhere. I was born and raised in San Jose, and it was a no-brainer that we would stay here.”

The spark for Gea’s real estate career was lit at a family barbecue. She had a friend looking for a house and a cousin selling a house. Gea connected the two and helped the off-market sale to completion -- effectively brokering her first transaction.

“After that, I started to look into being a REALTOR®. And I felt this could work for me.”

Gea has been selling real estate since 2002.

**BEGINNINGS: SUSAN LARAGIONE**

At the age of 18, Susan found herself faced with major life obstacles, including the tragic loss of her mother.

“My mom passed away of cancer, and my dad retired from Lockheed Martin early in his career and decided to move out of the area to enjoy a more peaceful life,” Susan explains. “I was on my own. I had to figure out my own route. Where do I live? How can I afford a home or rent? It was super difficult.”



Susan landed a job at Fujitsu, where she climbed the corporate ladder. There, she found a love for sales and a drive to succeed. Susan’s self-determination helped her purchase her first home at 21, and in 2006, she decided to combine her love for sales and design to become a REALTOR®.

Susan’s own struggles finding a home as a young adult continue to drive her to help others find stability in their lives.

“I know how it feels to move from instability to the security and comfort of homeownership,” she explains. “It’s my passion

to share my experience and knowledge in order to help others find their forever home. In my mind, home is where the heart is. I don’t want others to feel lost like I did... Housing is important, and I want to make people feel at home.”

**A RISING TIDE LIFTS ALL BOATS**

In September 2021, Corcoran Global Living had its grand opening in the Silicon Valley. Michelle, Gea, and Susan’s vision is to be the Bay Area’s resource for luxury, high-end real estate.

“We’ve been lucky enough to get some of the big landmark listings in San Jose. It’s a great honor to represent these sellers,” Gea says. “So we’re stepping into a role as the luxury brand in San Jose.”

By creating an uplifting office atmosphere with an environment of collaboration, Michelle, Gea, and Susan are acting out the old adage that “a rising tide lifts all boats.”

“There is no competition in our office. It’s about us all doing well and achieving success together,” Gea continues.

“We wanted to create a name for each individual agent. We want each individual agent to become successful,” Susan adds.

**EMPOWERING FEMALES**

Another one of Michelle, Gea, and Susan’s focuses is women’s empowerment. Just the fact that these three women are leading a Bay Area real estate company is a statement in itself.

“I’m originally from the East Coast — from Washington, D.C. — and I’ve been here since 2000. The West Coast is very different, and some say progressive in some ways. But real estate was one way where it was not as progressive in terms of leadership; it was male-driven and dominated in this valley. The vast majority of the workforce is women, but the leadership teams are majority men. We felt it was time for a change in this valley and that women appreciate being led by women,” Michelle explains.



••• Michelle, Gea, and Susan are inspired by their female leaders, Corcoran Barbara Corcoran and Corcoran Global Living Growth Officer Nancy Robinson.

“We want to echo our founder, Barbara Corcoran, who stands for female empowerment in the real estate space,” Michelle continues. “Having an office led by three women is something unique... We are putting our hand out for the next woman coming along. We would love to see other women in leadership.”

**LIVE WHO YOU ARE**

While Michelle, Gea, and Susan are just getting their brand off the ground in the Silicon Valley, they are already receiving tremendous success. Their personal businesses are flourishing, and their team is steadily growing. With an eye on the luxury market and the vision to empower and uplift all those

around them, Michelle, Gea, and Susan step into the future with high hopes.

“We’re super excited. We’re already selling tons of real estate. We’re excited about the grand opening. We’re excited about the future. It’s an exciting new phase,” Michelle says.

“Our tagline is ‘Live Who You Are,’ and we stand behind that,” Susan explains. “Your home is that special place that belongs to you. We want you to be able to be yourself in your home and able to live every day to the fullest. That’s what we do here as REALTORS®. We help our clients achieve their goals and their dreams. If we have a small part in helping our clients live more fully who they are, then we’ve done our job.”

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# KATY THIELKE STRASER

*Changing with the Times*





*Back row:* Richard Hernandez, Lisa Mackie,  
Aimee Hove, Jason Mansfield, Natasha Sherbaf  
*Front row:* Zoe Tentoglou, Lena Gustafsson,  
Katy Thielke, Virginia Henderson, Marcia Dapena

...

**AFTER 18 YEARS IN THE REAL ESTATE BUSINESS, KATY THIELKE STRASER MADE A MAJOR SHIFT IN HER BUSINESS IN 2019. THAT YEAR, SHE FOUNDED HER TEAM, STASER SILICON VALLEY, SETTING OFF A CHAIN OF EVENTS THAT WOULD ALTER THE COURSE OF HER PROFESSIONAL LIFE.**

By 2019, Katy realized that she needed more hands on deck to serve her clients. So that year, she hired an administrative assistant, marking the birth of her team. Over the next two years, Straser Silicon Valley has grown to be a thriving team of 12.

As her team has grown, Katy's vision has shifted, too. For 18 years, she was the center of her business. Now, that's changing.

"It was me for 18 years. Now it's 'we.' I have created a team culture that feels like a family where everyone has different strengths, works together seamlessly and collaborates without ego."

#### **DRAWING ON HER ROOTS**

After graduating from college in the late '90s, Katy began her career in sales and marketing. She was given the opportunity to move to Atlanta to work for the Olympics and jumped on what she calls a "once in a lifetime opportunity."

"I had no mortgage, no kids, no husband. So I figured I'd move my world to Atlanta and dive into the adventure to get experience in my areas of interest."

Katy spent nearly a year in Atlanta before returning to the Bay Area, where she landed a position doing promotions for Coca-Cola.



In the early 2000s, the real estate market and the Bay Area tech scene were booming. Katy's mother, Judy Staton, had been in real estate since Katy was a kid; in such a strong market, Judy needed assistance.

"When she had too much business, she told me to get my license to help her out. I did and never looked back,"

Katy remembers. "I grew up around the business, so it was the perfect fit."

Katy's mother mentored her, showed her the ropes, and inspired her to grow personally and professionally. While Katy was hesitant to take on a commission-only position, her mother encouraged her.

...







“She was so fun to watch — so dynamic and knowledgeable in the business. She kept saying that I would be great at this.”

Within two weeks, Katy closed her first deal. The commission she made was twice her yearly salary at Coca-Cola. Suffice it to say, she was hooked.

#### HUSTLE AND ENERGY

Over the past 20 years, Katy has learned a great deal about real estate and what it takes to be a successful business owner. Managing the pressure and around-the-clock requirements of the business requires tremendous perseverance and commitment.

“I have a lot of energy and the ability to multitask. I love people. I love houses. Making people feel good is important to me.”

Katy relies on the power of positivity to derive the energy she needs to excel in real estate.

“I would say it takes a lot of hustle, great follow-through, great energy, consistency, diligence, and drive. And relationship building is definitely a piece of what it takes to be successful. You want to have great relationships with agents, with buyers, with sellers, with title companies, with any vendor you come across — a window cleaner, stager, designer. Being positive, your genuine self, and a likable person are important traits.”

As Katy looks ahead, she believes the entire Bay Area real estate market will continue to thrive. And regardless of the market conditions, Straser Silicon Valley will be there to serve client after client in making their real estate dreams come true.

#### FAMILY SPOTLIGHT

Katy and her husband, Erik, live in Menlo Park with their two teenage children, Anna and Alex.

“I’m in charge of the social and emotional, and my husband is in charge of the academics and logistics. Just like my real estate team, we all have our strengths within the family.”

#### WORDS OF WISDOM:

“I would say it takes a lot of hustle, great follow-through, great energy, consistency, diligence, and drive. And relationship building is definitely a piece of what it takes to be successful. You want to have great relationships with agents, with buyers, with sellers, with title companies, with any vendor you come across — a window cleaner, stager, designer. Being positive, your genuine self, and a likable person are important traits.”

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# GINA MARCIANO

## A CALMING FORCE

**“Abundance is not something we acquire. It is something we tune into.”**  
– Wayne Dyer

“Life is abundant,” Gina Marciano begins humbly.

When Gina speaks of abundance, she skips the buzzwords and spiritual talk. Instead, she believes that for something to be abundant, it is, quite simply, in ample supply. Gina recognizes that love is abundant. Blessings are abundant. Food is abundant.

“If you live life in a good way, life will work out for you. You will have friends, you will have food. You will have happiness,” Gina says.

Gina is quick to point out that houses are abundant, too — even in this wild, low-inventory market.

“Yes, the inventory is low, but it also keeps coming. Every week, another house comes on the market that’s a good one for my client. For me, I look at that like it’s abundant.”

### Keeping Her Cool

Gina has built a career around her calm demeanor and steadfast approach to real estate. She has been in the business since 1993. Her approach was born in the wake of her experience as a first-time homebuyer.

“When I bought my first house, my REALTOR® was excellent, but she always made me feel like she was keeping the deal together. I was very nervous about what was going to happen with my loan. Just nervous. So when I became a REALTOR®, I vowed not to do business that way. I thought the process, although complicated and something most people only do once or twice in their life, should be calmer.”

Gina believes that a good contract is mutually beneficial, one that benefits both the buyer and seller. She believes that everyone can walk away from a deal feeling satisfied and well-represented.

“It’s not a stressful business,” she continues. “We’re not saving lives. We’re selling houses. Things come up. It’s my job as your trusted professional to get you through the process, keep you calm and make you feel represented.”

### Into the Present

Alongside her optimism, Gina acknowledges the reality of the challenges of today’s market. She believes that the inherent stress of buying a home simply elevates the need for a grounded, calming force.

“When I’m representing buyers in this market, I set the expectation. You have to put in an offer you feel good



about, and if it doesn’t work, we’ll find another one. That’s it,” Gina says. “It’s a house. We’ll find another one. I try to get my buyers in that space. And I think when you’re calm, they’re calm.”

Gina also acknowledges that the current industry landscape is bound to change.

“Believe me, the market will change. It always does,” she smiles.

### Family in Focus

In June 2021, Gina became a grandmother. She and her husband, Richard, have three adult children.

“We are a big Italian family. We all live within an hour of each other,” Gina smiles.

Gina was born and raised in Willow Glen, the same community she lives in today.

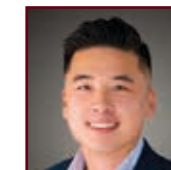
“Living and working in the area where I grew up gives sellers and buyers the expertise they need when choosing a REALTOR®,” she says.



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