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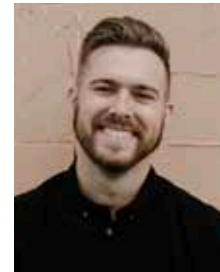
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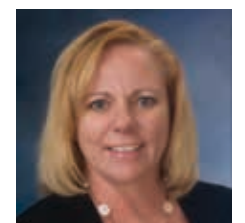
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>10</b> Preferred Partners		<b>14</b> Cover Story: Matt and Jamie Nunez		<b>22</b> Preferred Partner Spotlight: Lavonne Benyola Chicago Title
	<b>28</b> Rising Star: Arianna Louise		<b>32</b> REALTOR® Life: Marcela Herrera		<b>36</b> REALTOR® Spotlight: Laura McKinney



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▶▶ cover story

# Matt & Jamie NUNEZ

Written by **Dave Danielson**  
Photography by **Marissa Menezes**

*When you think about it, getting  
to the closing table is like  
climbing a mountain.*

For your clients who start the process, the task ahead can be daunting, to say the least. They count on you to show them the best way to the top.

That's the dynamic at work with Matt and Jamie Nunez.

REALTORS® with Fire Family Real Estate, Matt and Jamie provide a special brand of trusted guidance.

"I think that's the number one part of this work that I love the most ... being instilled with the trust of complete strangers with the biggest financial decision of their lives and then delivering professionalism and seeing the smile on their face," Matt says. "It feels so good handing the keys to a first-time homebuyer and earning their trust by performing in a professional manner."

Through that process, strong bonds are created.

As Jamie says, "It's fantastic talking with clients on a day-to-day basis, being able to interact with people and having them become our friends."

Both Matt and Jamie earned their real estate licenses around five years ago. Today they enjoy sharing the same path in life and business ... a path that began together long ago.

"Matt and I have known each other since I was 14 and he was 15," she says with a smile. "Fast forward, I worked for an engineering company and then we had two kids, and I became a stay-at-home mom."

Matt is a full-time firefighter of 17 years, and he leads the way for others as a fire captain. In addition to the love he has for his work with his team at the station, he has been surrounded by the possibilities that exist in real estate for a long time.

"I've grown up around real estate. A lot of my family members are in the business. We have always invested in real estate, too," he says. "Once I was promoted to fire captain, I decided to get my license."

...





Matt and Jamie have a passion for what they do and are grateful for the chance to do it together.

“One of the parts about it that is the most rewarding is the fact that we are able to spend our entire days together,” Jamie points out. “There are a lot of benefits to that.”

“It can be tough at times because we are husband and wife, mom and dad and business partners ... and then separating those at the end of the day and remembering that our roles as husband and wife and mom and dad are the most important things in our lives,” Matt explains.

“It’s nice to be with Jamie every day. At the end of the day, you have to be able to know that you’ve done everything you can for your clients. At times, there are things you can’t control. You can only position yourself and be as proficient as possible ... and then be able to separate it and let it go.”

Today, Matt and Jamie have a team of three agents, along with their full-time transaction coordinator.

They’re thankful for the teamwork that has allowed them to build on their success day by day. In fact, in 2021, they recorded an impressive total of 80 transactions. They’re on pace to reach the same milestone again in 2022.

Away from work, Matt and Jamie cherish time with their children — 12-year-old son, Zane, and 9-year-old son, Zeelan.

In their free time, they definitely stay on the move. Spending time in the gym each day is a big part of their lives.

They also enjoy time at their beach house, along with attending sports events, including local high school and NFL games. In addition, they have been very involved with coaching their children’s sports teams in football, basketball and soccer.

When it comes to giving back, they enjoy supporting nonprofit efforts in the community, including the Food Bank of Murietta. They also coordinate sizable toy drives as part of Operation Santa Claus — coordinating drop-offs at Agility Kids in Temecula.

When you talk with Matt and Jamie, you can tell in an instant that they have a passion for the vital difference they make for families across the area.

“We take a lot of pride in being there for people ... being available to pick up our phones and respond,” Jamie emphasizes. “We do our best to deliver a first-class experience with great service and communication.”

The leadership they show in the industry is fueled by a drive to help those around them. Matt teaches real estate classes across the Valley, as well.

Congratulations to Matt and Jamie Nunez for their impact and the rewarding results that they create with trusted guidance and dedication.

“  
IT FEELS SO GOOD  
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AND EARNING  
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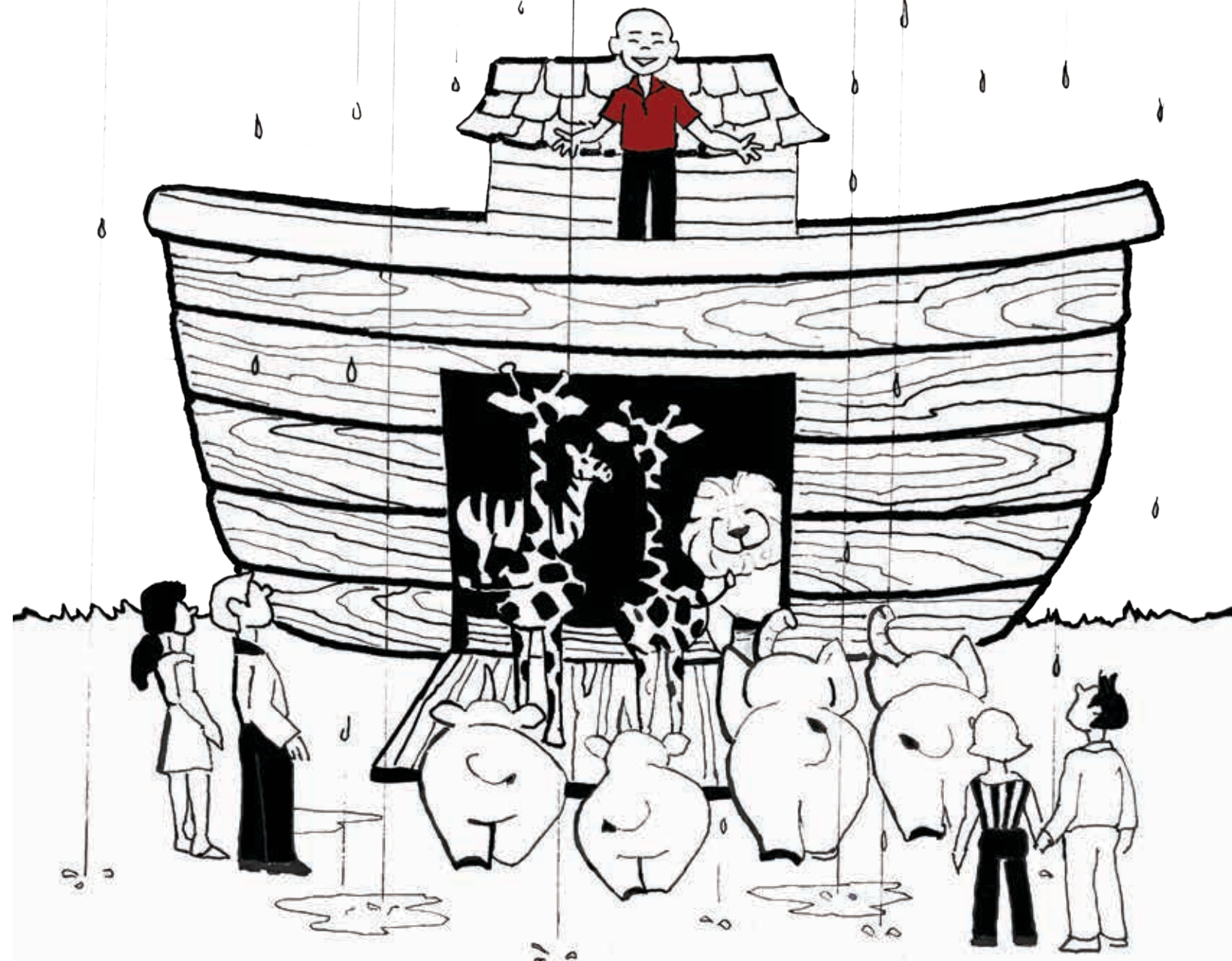
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# LAVONNE BENYOLA

**When you talk with Lavonne Benyola, it is apparent she is a professional who is fully dedicated to lending her experience and expertise to those around her.**

As an account manager with Chicago Title, a 175-year-old pillar in the title insurance, Lavonne has a passion for maintaining long-term credibility with integrity as part of the Chicago Team.

Teamwork is a proud part of the difference that Chicago Title makes.

Lavonne says, “I have an amazing inside staff with outstanding support, in addition to an invaluable county manager, Mark Nassraway. We all work very well together when striving to provide the best customer service possible.”

## CHICAGO TITLE

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Clients can call me any time. I love being an instrumental part in helping anyone in need.

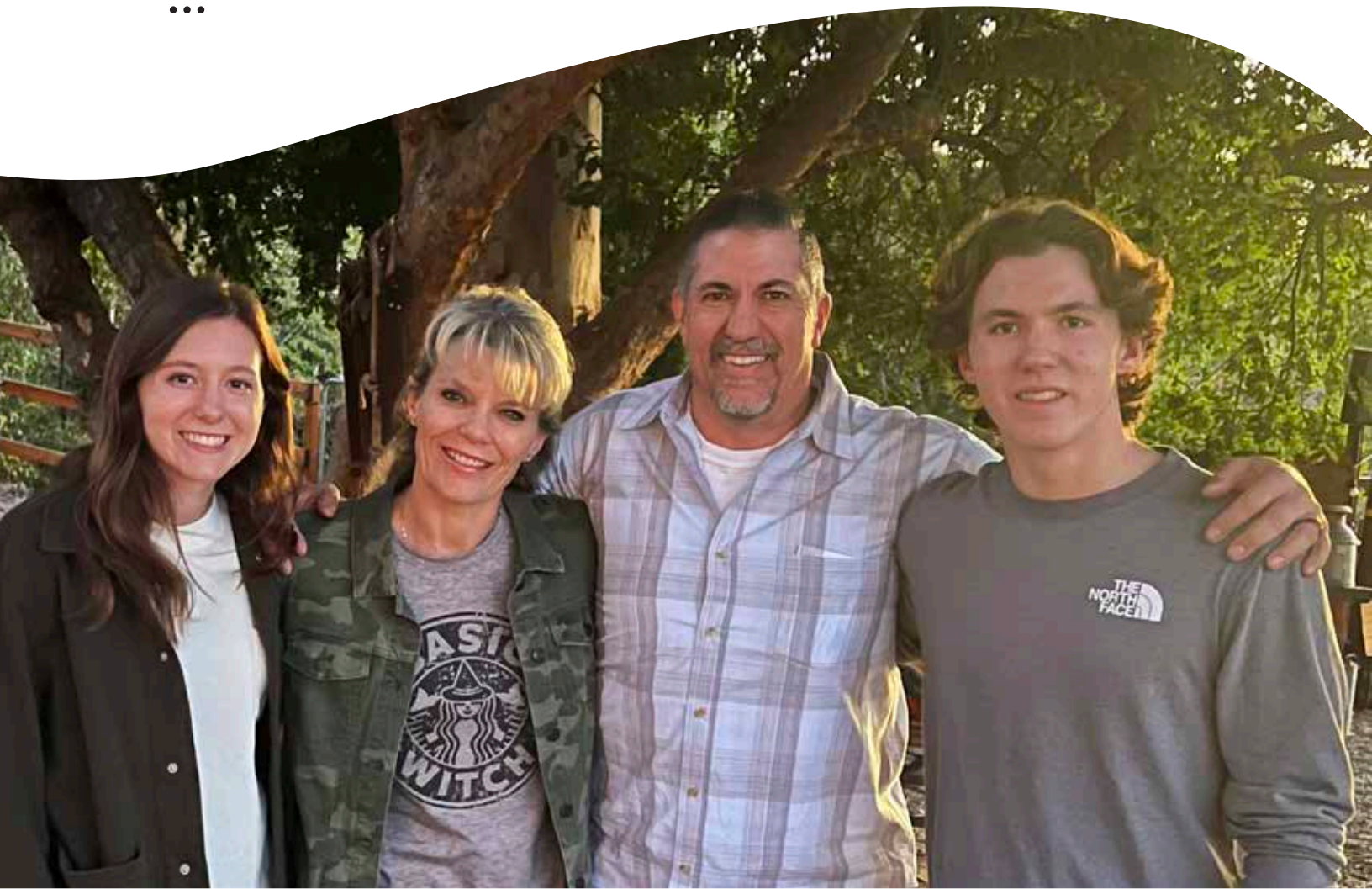


▶▶ preferred partner spotlight

Written by **Dave Danielson** | Photography by **Marissa Menezes**

...





Lavonne shared a few responses when asking her about her job and her customers, clients and friends.

“Clients can call me any time. I love being an instrumental part in helping anyone in need. Whatever their question, concern, property fact, or other assistance needed, I am available to them,” she says. “Anyone who works with me knows exactly what I am referring to.”

Lavonne entered the real estate business at the young age of 18 years old and worked as a lender for three years. Then at 23, she entered into the title insurance part of real estate.

As Lavonne states, “I like being involved in the community and a part of the many organized groups. Being informed of the current changes allows me to share pertinent information with agents and lenders.” She states, “I love being part of the Women’s Council of REALTORS®, the East Valley Association of REALTORS®, as well as the Chamber in Redlands, just to name a few.”

Family life is very fulfilling for Lavonne. She treasures time spent with her husband of 22 years, Rick, and their children — their son, Maverick, who is a high school athlete and class president, and their daughter, Lexi, who is a volleyball and softball athlete.

In her free time, Lavonne and her family love hiking, paddle boarding with their two Boston Terriers, and road trips. She also has a passion for photography. In addition, Lavonne dedicates her time to helping out in the children’s school and with their activities.

Those who have the opportunity to know and work with Lavonne and her team at Chicago Title get a genuine experience. She states, “I enjoy getting to know all the people I with work, professionally and personally.”

**For more information or help with your title or marketing needs, call or text Lavonne at 951-453-7380 or email her at [Lavonne.Benyola@ctt.com](mailto:Lavonne.Benyola@ctt.com).**

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# Arianna

## Louise

▶▶ rising star

Written by **Dave Danielson** | Photography by **Marissa Menezes**

You don't have to search very hard to find the darkness of negativity and obstacles in the world. That's why it means so much when you have someone on your side who can illuminate the answers.

That's exactly what you do for your clients each day with your guidance and trusted expertise. In the same way, Arianna Louise makes a vital impact on those around her. As a Home Advisor with Nest Real Estate, Arianna becomes like a light in the lives of her clients.

"I try to touch people, really find something in common and connect with them," Arianna says. "That's very fulfilling for me ... to be able to provide that light for people around me."

Arianna began her relatively young real estate career on Jan. 1, 2021. And her beginning in real estate wasn't a total surprise, since she grew up surrounded by it. "My whole family has been in real estate, along with my grandma and aunt. When I graduated from high school, my mom said, 'You can go to college, but I know you will be a REALTOR®.'"

As it turns out, Arianna's mother was right. In time, she earned her license. As she made her transition, it was clear that she had made a wise choice. She seemed to be a perfect fit for real estate. In fact, during her first month, she got a listing from a cold call, and she has closed 40 transactions in a little under two years.

"It took off fairly quickly for me. I was blessed to join a team that gave me a lot of opportunities," she recalls. "I think it helps that I seem to be a quick learner."

Arianna also takes a very thorough, individual approach to her work with her clients.

"I love figuring out what my clients really like and getting them into the home that they feel is right for them," Arianna says. "It means a lot to see the smiles on their faces. I know I was put on earth to help people."

Each day Arianna is fueled in her work by having the opportunity to support people as they reach for their results.

"That's what gets me motivated. Most of the clients I work with are first-time homeowners," Arianna points out. "Being able to help people accomplish that goal and for them to know that I made it a pleasurable and fun experience is what makes it worth it to me."

As Arianna considers all of the powerful influences in her life, she looks to the examples set by her mother, Lisa Andre, and her grandmother, Dolly Andre, who both worked in real estate.

Away from work, Arianna looks forward to chances to get away, explore new locations and experience new things.

As Arianna thinks about her own experience in the industry, she offers helpful advice for others who are looking to make their own careers in the business.

# “

I try to touch people, really find something in common and connect with them. That's very fulfilling for me ... to be able to provide that light for people around me.





“

That’s what gets me motivated. Most of the clients I work with are first-time homeowners. Being able to help people accomplish that goal and for them to know that I made it a pleasurable and fun experience is what makes it worth it to me.



...

“First, I would say work works. You have to do the work and put in the long hours, make your calls, do your door hangers,” she points out. “At the end of the day, that is what will get you to the next level.”

One of the keys to her success that Arianna is thankful for is the coaching she receives. She is also a CORE Agent.

As she looks to the future, one of the other paths that she looks forward to pursuing is motivational speaking.

“Mel Robbins is someone who inspires me, and I have thought about how empowering that would be to be able to provide that same feeling for others,” she says with a smile.

At the end of the day, Arianna is pursuing a professional path that makes an ongoing impact on the lives of residents across the area. In the process, she takes pride in giving it her all.

“I’m very hands-on and personalized, and I think that’s why I have been successful. I call past clients every month. I know what’s happening in their lives, and they know me,” she says. “I really want to make sure that people know that’s what it is all about. I’m not a turn-and-burn person. I want to stay very connected through time.”

Congratulations to Arianna Louise. Day by day, she moves forward ... gaining ground for herself and those around her by being a light in their lives.

“

I really want to make sure that people know that’s what it is all about. I’m not a turn-and-burn person. I want to stay very connected through time.





# MARCELA

# HERRERA

“

CONNECTING  
AND BUILDING  
RELATIONSHIPS IS  
SO IMPORTANT  
TO ME.

▶▶ REALTOR® life

Written by Dave Danielson | Photography by Marissa Menezes

Our time on the planet is filled with all sorts of choices. The decisions we made yesterday affect where we are. But the good news is we can always make a new choice for tomorrow.

That's where professionals like Marcela Herrera shine.

As a Real Estate Agent with Mainstreet REALTORS®, Marcela specializes in finding paths to what's possible for those around her.

"Connecting and building relationships is so important to me. It has never been about selling a house or making a paycheck from it. It's truly been about how I can help positively impact lives," Marcela says.

"When someone comes to me about buying, selling or investing in real estate, they'll see how passionate I am about what I do. I'm dedicated, and I'm always 100% honest with my clients. I have their best interest at heart! I'm committed to giving my clients extraordinary service. I'm happy to say that many of my clients have even turned into friends."

As Marcela says, she gets emotional when she thinks about the families she has been fortunate to help.

"Each family is important to me, and they are unique in their own great ways. If a family tells me they don't think they can buy a house, it then becomes my mission to show them that they can," she points out. "I love guiding them through homeownership. It's been the reward of it all, the thing that keeps me going!"

Marcela remembers getting her start in the business as a single mom. Prior to that, she had served others as a nursing assistant at Children's Hospital in Orange County.

"I thought I would be in health care for the rest of my life. I had a friend suggest I get into real estate. She kept insisting I give it a shot, but I was not for it," Marcela says.

"After much thought, I took on my friend's advice; I thought I had no choice. I had a small boy to support, and I thought real estate would give me the flexible hours I needed to raise my

son. But little did I know, long days and hours were ahead, but the reward got too fulfilling to stop. I quickly realized that I was MADE for this!"

Marcela has deep gratitude for those who have been there for her to support her growth in the business through time.

"One of those who has been very important in my development is Marty Rodriguez, who is my mentor," Marcela says. "When I first met Marty, I knew that I wanted to be just like her ... I admire her work ethic, how she is resilient and doesn't take no for an answer. Her success has always been so admirable.

Seeing her work daily made me fall in love with real estate. I wouldn't be the REALTOR® I am without her. She's the leader who I strive to be just like for my team ... HomeGirl Team."

Marcela is the team leader of the HomeGirl Team of Mainstreet REALTORS® ... which consists of five wonderful, hardworking women.

"Our team is so supportive of one another. We are like sisters. The best part of our team is how committed we are and how much we love what we do. We all have the same goal, and that is to genuinely help people. We work hard for our clients, we are constantly training, and that makes us educated when it comes to real estate. I'm our team's support system, I hold them accountable, I'm their coach, and I challenge the heck out of them so that they can continue to grow.

Our team always puts our clients' goals first. We have a motto ... 'Red carpet service for all of our clients.' That's who the HomeGirl Team is," Marcela says.

As she says, the team loves helping first-time home buyers and VA buyers.

"My brother has served in the U.S. Air Force for over 16 years, which is why helping veterans is so dear to my heart. I understand their families' sacrifices. I am so thankful for our military," Marcela emphasizes.



“ I’M  
DEDICATED,  
AND I’M  
ALWAYS 100%  
HONEST WITH  
MY CLIENTS.



“I’m the only girl of three to immigrant parents. I want to make them proud, and I recognize the sacrifices they made to be in the U.S. They faced many obstacles coming to the U.S., so that makes me have a deep appreciation for the opportunities that the U.S. has given my family. I’m thankful for my Mexican roots, but I’m a proud American, and I love my country.”

Family makes life much richer for Marcela, which includes her 11-year-old son, Seven, and her husband, Christopher.

“My son, Seven, and my husband help me tremendously with the business,” Marcela says. “My husband especially because, when he came along, he took on the role of stepdad and the supportive husband, and he takes those roles seriously. I support my husband’s nursing career, and we’re always in support of one another. I love our family.”

In her free time, Marcela stays active, and one of her favorite things is supporting her son, who plays soccer. When she’s not working, you will find Marcela and her husband, Christopher, cheering on their son at his soccer games.

Faith is a very important and central part of life for Marcela and her family, as well.

“We go to church every Sunday. We are very dedicated to our faith,” she says. “Christopher, Seven and I were all baptized together this Easter Sunday.”



Marcela continues to make an ongoing impact on the community, after having helped hundreds of families. She enjoys taking part in giving back by donating to backpack drives, school supply drives and more.

Every year she is very involved with Santa Claus Inc. in Ontario, California — a nonprofit organization that’s very dear to Marcela’s heart.

“Every year, Santa Claus Inc. gives out thousands of toys for Christmas to thousands of low-income families and children in the community. It’s so important for me to give back to

Santa Claus Inc. because when I was a small child, my mother would take me to Santa Claus Inc., where I would stand in line with hundreds of other families, and then I had the chance to pick out one toy for Christmas. This is a toy drive that I will continue to help for as long as I can. We have been able to spread the word and have had the support of so many amazing people who have helped us contribute more than 500 toys each year to Santa Claus Inc. Christmas. I am so thankful for the support of so many people!” Marcela says.

There are many choices in life ... and ways ahead. Those who have worked with Marcela Herrera clearly feel their paths ahead have been made better by the experience of knowing her.



# LAURA MCKINNEY

When you think about all of the positive attributes it takes to excel and thrive in this business, two of the most important ones are caring for those you serve and helping them move forward with confidence.

That's what Laura McKinney does.

As REALTOR®/sales manager with Power of 2 Realty, Laura brings those qualities home for her clients every day.

"It's so fulfilling for me ... being able to advocate and negotiate for those I serve. I love getting under contract and handing the keys over to clients at closing," Laura says.

"It means a lot making them feel confident and comfortable. I also love educating people about the process and what to expect and the ways I will help them get there."

Laura had been in retail sales out of high school and then went into management. In time, she got married, started her family and decided not to go back to work in retail.

"I worked more than 60 hours a week and was always missing family things. I had told my husband for a long time that I wanted to get a corporate job.

I thought that way I would be able to be home more for dinner and that it would also allow me to be at more of our children's events at school," she says.

"Around the same time, we decided that we wanted to sell our house. I had always been watching the real estate market, and based on what was happening, I said I think it was time we moved."

Through that process, Laura's husband suggested that she seriously consider getting her real estate license and moving into the industry.

"At first, I thought he was crazy. But he said he thought I had a knack and a passion for it," she says.

"I said I would figure out how to start. I got my license in November 2017 and was on the phone the next day talking with brokers. I am so glad that my husband opened that door for me. I'm so passionate about real estate."

When you talk with Laura, it's easy to see the care that she has for her clients.

"It's not about the paycheck. It's about doing something that I'm truly passionate about."

Away from work, life is made much richer by her family, including her husband, James.

“

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She and James treasure time with their children — their son, James McKinney IV and their son, Owen McKinney.

In their free time, Laura and her family love spending time together visiting Disneyland and Disney World. Other favorites include camping and traveling.

Those who are looking for a positive spark to help them reach their real estate goals appreciate the fact that they find that in Laura McKinney.

“I’ve had a lot of people through time tell me that you seem like you have a very positive energy. I always try to put out to the universe what I hope to get back from it,” Laura explains.

“I like being the go-to person for questions people have about anything related to homes and real estate. I’ve learned so much that has been life-changing to me personally, and so I want to share what I know to help them in their own lives.”

In an uncertain world and real estate market, there is very little margin for error. Laura McKinney helps her clients stay on the path ahead to their goals ... with her commitment to supporting them with care and commitment.



“  
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