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▶ publisher's note: dees hinton

Welcome, SUMMMER!

June is here, and that means summer has arrived! For many of us, summer means a time to slow down, go on vacation and enjoy the places and people we love. The real estate industry is a 24/7 industry, and sometimes it can be challenging to take time off, but it is necessary! E. S. Woods wrote, "A vacation helps to relieve stress and boredom, gives us a change of scenery, provides us with adventure, and helps to bring us closer to the people in our lives." Be sure to make time for a vacation this summer!

While we all love a good vacation, we find time and time again when interviewing REALTORS® that they love their jobs! They love the work schedule flexibility, the relationships they make and that no two days are ever

the same. "Find a job you enjoy doing, and you will never have to work a day in your life." — Mark Twain. Our June features have certainly done that! You will enjoy reading how each of them made changes in their lives, started their real estate careers and are loving what they do!

Even though summers get very busy, be sure to Save the Date for our next Summer Social Night on July 12th. It will be a special night for *Central Mississippi Real Producers*. We will be celebrating our three-year anniversary and want to celebrate with you! We hope that you will join us at Reunion Golf and Country Club!

See you soon, and happy summer!
Dees

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ALISCIA

Oglesbee



From Strawberries to Real Estate, Aliscia Oglesbee is a Natural Born Saleswoman

Written by **Susan Marquez**. Photography by **Abe Draper Photography**.

Aliscia Oglesbee has been in sales as long as she can remember. The great-granddaughter of strawberry farmers in Hammond, LA, she helped pick strawberries on their farm, then sell them on the side of the road in the stand they built. “I learned the value of hard work from my family,” she says. “My grandfather, Guy Puma, was a self-made entrepreneur. He was a contractor and builder who owned several apartments. With only a third-grade education, he sold snowballs to get by. Both sets of grandparents were hard workers, and because of them, I have a respect for small business owners.” Aliscia says her father, Larry Puma, was also one of the hardest working people she

knows. “He is a natural-born salesman. I take after him.”

Now a top-producing REALTOR®, Aliscia has come a long way from that strawberry stand back in Louisiana, but she brings her determination and dedication with her on each deal she works. “My other grandparents owned Imperial Shoe Store in Hammond. My grandpa taught me customer service skills. He cared for everyone. I watched how he and my grandmother worked together, and it has inspired me to this day. I want the best for my clients.”

Aliscia is from Baton Rouge, the middle of three children, all six

years apart. “My parents did that so they could afford college.” When it was time for her to go to college, Aliscia went to Southeast Louisiana University, where she majored in fashion merchandising and marketing. “I’m a certified interior decorator.”

Selling homes was a natural progression for Aliscia, who says her dad built her mom their dream house in Hammond when she was young. “I began looking at houses back then,” she recalls. “When I was a little girl, I loved décor. I rearranged my room a lot. When I was only 6 or 7, I would lay on the floor and push my bed with my feet to a different wall each week.” When she married her



...

husband, Todd, she had to decorate on a budget.

After working in software sales all over the United States, Aliscia began having children. Her real estate journey began when she called Melissa Honea at Dream Home Properties to see if she needed anyone to stage houses. "I was determined, and Melissa saw that. She told me I could be a REALTOR® and that she would sponsor me." When her three sons, Logan, Landon, and Lawson, were ages 1, 3, and 7, Aliscia made the decision to study for the real estate exam online. "They are my reason for working, I want them to have everything they always wanted and more. I got my license in 2012, and I went to work with Melissa. My husband and I tag-teamed watching the kids, while I showed houses after hours and on weekends. That allowed me the opportunity to pick the boys up from school and to be there for all their sporting events. My kids look at me as a strong woman, but they know that I have to work for all my success. I have learned to balance work and family, and how to put the phone down and make them feel special when I'm with them."

Aliscia got her broker's license in 2020. "I made good use of the downtime during Covid! I did it because I want to know all I can about the industry and the opportunities that go with it. I know the future is mine if I work for it." Aliscia says she wants to be known as a REALTOR® who cares. "I feel like a client's house is my own house. I put clients above and beyond and do all I can to make them feel special. I think that the secret to my success is that I think of my clients as family. I always answer my phone and make myself available day and night. I will always answer a text unless I am sleeping or driving."

Entrepreneurship in Aliscia's family. She is proud of her husband, Todd



“

I feel like a client's house is my own house. I put clients above and beyond and do all I can to make them feel special.

”

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Oglesbee, who has recently opened The Oglesbee Group and offers medical and life insurance. And in April, Alicia became the owner/managing broker of Dream Home Properties. "I work alongside the former long-standing brokers, Melissa Honea and Melissa Rhodes. I now have a team of twelve hard-working agents. I have always wanted a business of my own, and it has finally happened. Dreams really do come true at Dream Home Properties!"

Still exercising her creative side, Aliscia enjoys painting abstract art, and she dabbles at flipping homes.



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Cheryl Armstrong

Cheryl Armstrong is no stranger to helping people. She grew up in Jackson, in a family involved in the hospital-ity industry. Deciding to follow in her family's footsteps, Cheryl went to Houston after graduating from Mississippi State to pursue a master's degree in hotel and restaurant management. "I met my husband, Kevin, who was from Rankin County, while I was in Houston," she says. When Kevin had an opportunity to transfer back to this area to work, Cheryl was delighted. "I went to work at a hotel in Jackson, but quickly realized that it was not for me."

Instead, Cheryl went to work in sales. "My husband always wanted us to own a business, but I was hesitant for some reason. "My dad, who was my advisor, died in 2005, so I couldn't run it by him." Cheryl decided to go for it, and in 2006, they purchased a business called Pump It Up, which provided inflatables for parties. "I opened the business in 2007 and owned and managed it for 12 years. I loved it! I had a lot of flexibility, and it was a great fit for our family." She sold the business in 2019 to become a REALTOR®.

"I have always admired Sheila Nicholas since I was a child. She told me I could do this." After meeting

with a few other REALTORS®, Cheryl took the course by the Mississippi Real Estate Institute via Zoom. "I sat in front of the computer from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day for two weeks," she says. She passed the exam and got her license in 2020.

"I interviewed with several brokerages, but I fell in love with Victoria and Austin Prowant at Southern Homes. They are so hard-working and dedicated, and it felt right for me." Cheryl says she loves working in real estate because she is such

a relational person. "I need a good life balance, and this is a field that provides that for me. I love people, and I love houses. "It's perfect! I also love that I went from managing 30 employees to being my own boss."

Admitting that sometimes the real estate industry can be like finding a needle in a haystack, that just challenges Cheryl to work harder. "I tend to have more buyers than sellers, probably because I'm still new in the business. I work with a lot of first-time home buyers, and that is so



...

exciting for me. I love developing relationships with people. I worked with a young couple several months ago, and now they have a new baby. They called and invited me to see what they've done to their home. That's what makes this so rewarding for me."

Knowing she started her job during an unusual time in the real estate market, Cheryl says she can't imagine what a "normal" market will be like. "I am seeing more REALTOR® open houses, which we haven't seen in a while. I'm starting to see a shift in the market." Cheryl also enjoys learning new things. "In this business, I learn something new every day. The market is always changing."

Cheryl and Kevin are empty nesters. "Our son is a police officer outside of Dallas, and our daughter is heading off to Nashville to get her master's in counseling." A recent move to the Reservoir has the couple feeling like they are on vacation every day. "We always wanted to live on the water, and now we are. My sister remodels houses, and her husband is a builder, so the house feels brand new." Cheryl describes herself as "high strung." She doesn't like to stay still for long. She is active at Pinelake Baptist Church where she volunteers answering the phone. She is a tennis fanatic, but no longer plays in a league. "I play with a group of friends once or twice a week for fun. I call it my 'mental therapy.'" And Cheryl participates in a Bible study group that has been together for over 20 years. "For me, it's all about faith, family, and friends. Oh, and dogs. We have two sweet puppy dogs that keep us laughing."

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▶ partner spotlight

Written by **Susan Marquez**
Photos by **Abe Draper Photography**

Armstrong Relocation & Armstrong Commercial Services



Armstrong Relocation has a rich 65-year history in the moving and storage of household goods. Locally under the leadership of Keith Hopper, the company has pivoted in the last five years to become a market leader with Armstrong Commercial Services, providing a wide array of commercial warehouse, installation, and logistics services.

Having outgrown Armstrong's current location on Highway 51 in Madison, the company has recently acquired 50,000 square foot additional space in Madison to accommodate their expanding commercial services business. The company now offers furniture, fixtures, and equipment solutions for tracking, receiving, inspection, storing, delivering and installation for retail, hospitality, restaurant, and healthcare clients in all surrounding states. "We have grown from a 20,000-square-foot household business on Highway 51 to a total of 75,000 square feet with the acquisition of 5 Olympic Way, effectively tripling the size of our operations," says Keith.

Recent projects include the receipt, delivery, and installation of the 200-room Sheraton Flowood, the Refuge Hotel and Conference Center in Flowood, and the AC Hotel by Marriot in Ridgeland. Armstrong also completed the full installation of student desks and equipment at the new Northwest Rankin High School. Armstrong was also involved with a development in the Fondren area of Jackson with Wier Boerner Allin Architects that includes The Pearl Tiki Bar, High Ball Lanes Bowling Alley, and the Capri Theatre.

Armstrong has 31 offices in 19 states. "We are a part of United Van Lines," says Keith. "United is the largest mover in the United States, and Armstrong is the largest agency within United. We provide local, regional, and international residential moving and corporate relocation services out of this location. Some people don't know that we provide a complete array of warehousing, logistics coordination, and distribution services to retail, hospitality, restaurants, and healthcare industries. With our recent acquisitions, we now have a team of project managers and installers that are assembling across



...

the South. We are professional, quality movers and installers who take pride and responsibility in what we do.”

Armstrong’s mission is to provide the highest value to its customers and stakeholders by building an organization of passionate team members working together to deliver excellence in quality, safety, and customer satisfaction. The Central Mississippi REALTORS® Inc. experienced this firsthand when Armstrong moved their offices to the new Sunnybrook Road location. Ask Nita; she will tell you it was a great move!

Keith’s team is recognized as an industry leader for residential and commercial moving as well as commercial warehousing and installation services. Armstrong is confident in its ability to have a unique impact on the success of almost any project with its collaborative approach and extensive scope of services.

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— Billy Graham

"Daddies don't just love their children every now and then; it's a love without end."
— George Strait



Trey DeLoach and family



Cody Bellipanni and family

"The older I get, the smarter my father seems to get." — Tim Russert



Reese Daniels and family



Tom Smith and family



John Polles and family



Ryan Ainsworth and family



Brian Creely and sons



Charles Lacey and family

"A father carries pictures where his money used to be."
— Steve Martin



Adam Ryan and family

"My father gave me the greatest gift anyone could give another person: He believed in me."
— Jim Valvano



Michael Manuel and family

"When I was a boy of 14, my father was so ignorant, I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be 21, I was astonished at how much the old man had learned in seven years."
— Mark Twain



Shane Saxton and family



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By Shauna Osborne



THE MAGIC OF A TIDY KITCHEN

A sparkling clean and clutter-free kitchen? This idea feels like an unattainable dream for many of us, looking around at our overflowing drawers and cabinets and jam-packed countertops. Luckily, the overwhelming task of tidying up your kitchen can be made easier by breaking the job down into categories. Here are a few questions to keep in mind while working through your kitchen space:

How often do I use this? Do I have multiples of this item? Would I buy this again today?

Ready to get started? Grab a box and plunge in!

- **Linens:** Mismatched, worn out, or heavily stained dish towels, cloths, and oven mitts can be re-purposed as cleaning rags, donated to an animal shelter, or thrown out.
- **Cooking utensils:** Assess their condition (look for cracks, peeling, warping, etc.) and how many of each you need, keeping in mind how often you cook and what you use most.
- **Spices, oils, etc.:** Pull everything out, and discard any you don't use or that are expired. Then, stick to the basics, knowing that you can always re-purchase "one-recipe ingredients" in the future if needed. Store these items out of bright sunlight and with labels facing forward.
- **Fridge/freezer:** Take time to wipe down and disinfect your fridge and freezer from top to bottom, and while in there, check expiration dates and re-organize sensibly, with items you use most at eye level. Discard anything expired, freezer-burned, disliked, or that is an unnecessary multiple.
- **Glasses and coffee mugs:** First, eliminate any chipped or cracked glasses or mugs. Next, consider who in the household uses what and how often, plus how often your family washes dishes. Coffee/tea drinkers likely need one or two mugs per day, and many of us have our favorites. Likewise, beer/wine drinkers may have preferred glasses or mugs.
- **Junk drawer:** Now's the time to pull everything out of there and see what's been lurking. Keep only what you need. Discard anything expired, no longer useful, or that would make more sense elsewhere in your home.
- **Toss:** take-out items (plastic cutlery, etc.); mismatched, warped, or stained storage containers; anything broken; "unitasking" gadgets (spiralizer, etc.)



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