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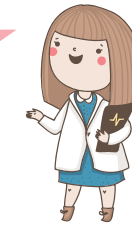
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# David Guardanapo

YOUNG AND HUNGRY



After a few sleepless nights and ample reflection, David came to a powerful realization. He recognized that the true sport of life was his education. So he recentered, refocused on school, and finished his semester with straight A's. Within six months, he landed his first real estate internship, beginning what has become his dream career.

"I proved to myself that even when I get knocked down, I will always get back up stronger and find a way to keep moving forward. I found peace in the saying 'everything happens for a reason,' and I still firmly believe in that today... That whole situation proved to be a blessing in my life. As the final chapter of my football career ended, it opened up the door for me to find my true passion in real estate," David says. "I'm beyond grateful where that led me to."

**DURING HIGH SCHOOL, DAVID GUARDANAPO WAS AN EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT AND A STANDOUT FOOTBALL PLAYER. FROM A YOUNG AGE, HE HAD BECOME FAMILIAR WITH ONE OF THE MOST BASIC TEACHINGS IN SUCCESS: HARD WORK PAYS DIVIDENDS. YET, DURING HIS SECOND YEAR AT SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY, DAVID WAS FACED WITH A REAL-WORLD CHALLENGE THAT WOULD CAUSE HIM TO RETHINK HIS LIFE PATH.**

After months of practice and a stellar try-out, David had made the San Jose State University football team as a walk-on kicker. But when spring training began, he came to find out the school had signed a top-rated junior college kicker; David was cut.

"I was very passionate about the sport at the time and was devastated," David remembers. "I felt like dropping out of San Jose State to work on my football craft and to try to find a different school to play for.

Yet, sometimes, what appears to be a curse may, in fact, be a blessing. As novelist J.K. Ensley said, "Every curse has a blessing, and every blessing has a curse. When you stand face to face with your destiny, will you be able to tell one from the other?"

#### YOUNG AND HUNGRY

David went on to earn his degree in business marketing and administration and a minor in communication studies from San Jose State University. He graduated at the top of his class (summa cum laude), and for the last three years at school, he worked 20-30 hours per week for a local real estate team.

"I started as the marketing intern, became the marketing coordinator, then the sales systems lead, and also got my real estate license during my time there," David explains.

David was drawn to real estate because of his family history in the business. His father works in construction, and his parents own several properties in the Bay Area.

"I come from a background of savvy real estate investors and have always been surrounded by real estate my entire life. Working on a real estate



...

team as the marketing coordinator, I realized I definitely wanted to become a real estate agent. I got to see the kind of lifestyle that real estate agents live and the difference they can make in the lives of others through helping families buy, sell and invest in real estate,” David explains.

Although he’s still only in his mid-20s, David has already made a substantial impact in the business. In fact, he thinks his age has played to his advantage.

“I have always been told I’m an old soul,” David says. “You would always see me spending time with adults at family functions. So I’ve helped a lot of older families retiring and moving out of the area sell, and at the same time, I am helping young families buy their first house. These families love working with a young REALTOR® that is motivated and knows the area well.”

In 2020, David’s fourth full year in business, he closed 14 transactions for \$17.5 million. In 2021, he’s already doubled his business; he’s closed 23 transactions for \$37.5 million as of October, bringing him into the upper echelon of producers.

#### FINDING HIS GROOVE

“I became a real estate agent because I love the lifestyle,” David smiles. “I

enjoy being my own boss and creating my own schedule. I enjoy meeting with new people and helping guide them through the process of buying and selling real estate.”

David finds tremendous reward in the opportunity to create relationships and help others create a better life for themselves. That’s what fuels him to get out of bed each morning and work hard for his clients.

“I have been blessed with the opportunity to help many wonderful families find their dream home in great neighborhoods. I am even more thankful to consider many of those families now close friends.”

Growing up in the Bay Area, David was always involved in multiple extracurricular activities. He was introduced to a fast-paced life early on and has grown to enjoy the speed and momentum of being on the go.

“Living this ‘go-go-go’ lifestyle my entire life has translated perfectly into enjoying a career in real estate where there is always work to be done. Your day may start grinding away in the office, followed by showing homes all over the Bay Area, and then finish back in the office making clients’ real estate dreams become a reality. This busy, fast-paced lifestyle is something I have been accustomed to my whole life and a lifestyle I thoroughly enjoy,” David explains.

Outside work, David remains just as active. He enjoys hiking, biking, going to the beach, and playing sports. When he’s not enjoying the outdoors, David can be found hanging out with family and friends or traveling. His primary focus in life, however, remains his real estate business. He recognizes that he’s building a business that, if done correctly, could last generations.

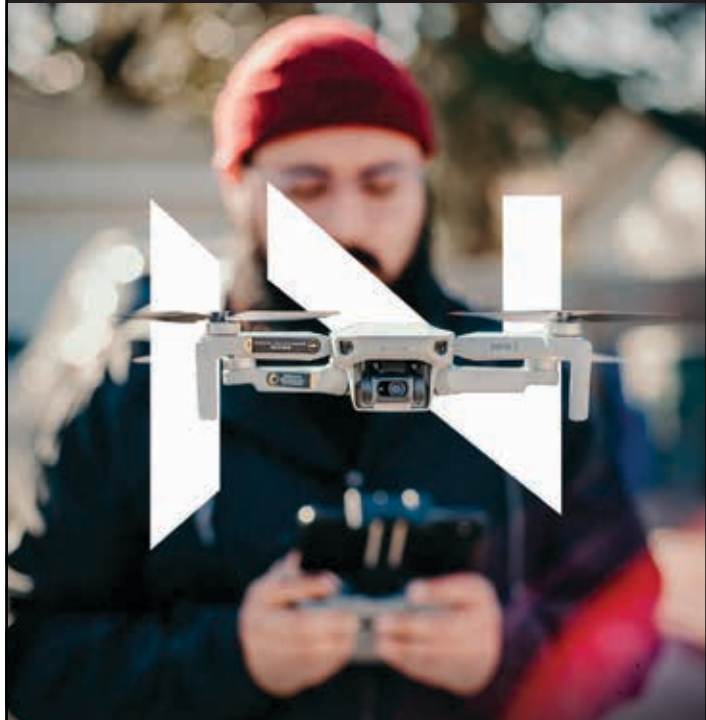
“I am a very goal-oriented individual. The future holds a lot more goals to be accomplished in both my personal and professional life. Some major personal goals are to travel to every major continent. Another personal goal of mine is to own two investment properties before the age of 30. Some major professional goals that my future holds is to eventually help 100+ families and investors buy, sell and invest in real estate all within one calendar year.”

“ I SET GOALS FOR EVERY ASPECT OF MY LIFE, AND IT HELPS KEEP ME MOTIVATED TOWARD ALWAYS STRIVING TO LIVE MY BEST LIFE. ”

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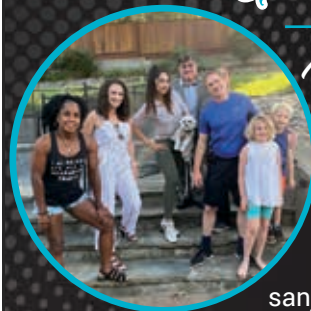
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- July 20, 10:00-11:30
- August 17, 10:00-11:30
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- October 19, 10:00-11:30
- November 16, 10:00-11:30 (SVRP Partners Only)

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# AL & JP MORIDI



▶▶ flashback favorite

ORIGINALLY PRINTED IN NOVEMBER 2018

The 1980s was a dark period for the country of Iran. While it was a human-rights crisis, those words do not come close to reflecting the horror of what was happening. At the time, Al Moridi was a student in Iran. “I was student activist; I raised my voice against the injustice. Thousands of doctors, engineers, and students like me were being killed – that was why I had to escape the country and emigrate to America.” When Al Moridi came to the United States, he had nothing, but if you met him today, you would never guess that was his story. For the last 30 years, Al has been a top-producing REALTOR® in the area. Now he leads an extremely successful real estate team that includes his sons. Past the million-dollar mark in earnings, it’s easy to label his success as another rags-to-riches story, but it is so much more than that. You can learn how

to make millions in real estate from the example of Al Moridi, the more valuable lesson to learn from him is to enjoy the process.

From the very beginning, Al did not let his circumstances confine him. “When I came here, I started to work, and I knew the first thing that I should buy was property. With my income at that time, I couldn’t qualify for a loan; I couldn’t even imagine buying. So, I thought maybe I should find partners to buy a house with. I found two partners, and we bought one house. After that, I found three more partners and bought another house. I found one more partner and bought a third house. Now, I was so happy because I could sell my shares, buy one house, and move in with my family.” While Al understood that real estate was key to building

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wealth, it would be a little while before he passionately started pursuing it as a career. "My main motivation to come to real estate was the people. Before real estate, I was working for a company that builds power transformers. It was a desk and me. Previously, I lost everything I had for human rights. I love people. I wanted to be with people. At that moment, I decided to change my career. I realized that real estate was the best option. I got my license, and here I am today."

"I have been asked what is the feeling to become a millionaire? I said, 'Look, the process is so beautiful. You see, money is not the object; happiness is the object. When you help clients, put a smile on their face, or solve their problems, there is great joy in that. Every morning I can't wait to come to work and help people. It's such a blessing.'"

It's a lesson he's passed down to his sons. Al's son, J.P., tells the story. "In the beginning, when I was putting in 15-hour days, Dad told me, 'Don't ever look at someone as a paycheck; truly help them as a human being, not just a client. Take care of them, and you will always be wealthy, you will make money in the business.' J.P. continues, "We are blessed to be in the job that we are."

J.P. took his dad's instructions to heart. Within four months he had 16 sales. At the nine-month mark of J.P.'s budding real estate career, Al and J.P. had sold 76 properties. Immersed in real estate from an early age, J.P. remembers listening to Mike Ferry tapes in the back of Al's car. While it may have seemed inevitable for J.P. to become a REALTOR®, his success in the business was no guarantee. Al's example provided a roadmap, but the secret to J.P.'s success is his willingness to listen and learn from his dad. "I get asked how I was able to achieve success so quickly. The biggest takeaway I have is I just shut up and listened. I did everything he told me, and my business took off right away. My brother has even commented on how I do everything just like Dad." J.P.'s brother, Nima, joined the business a little later. After medical school, he realized that his true passion lay with real estate and joined his dad and brother in the business. Now the three make an unstoppable real estate team.

For Al, it is a dream come true. "It's been such a wonderful journey. We are spending a lot of time together, and my kids, they listen to me, it's great! I love it!" For any parent that is the ultimate accomplishment.

“  
WORK HARD. HAVE  
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WORK FOR IT.”

Of course, the burning question on everyone's mind is how does Al do it? Top REALTORS® come and go, but Al has consistently maintained his top standing over the years. Al shares his secrets to maintaining perspective and balance in this fast-paced industry. From affirmations to dream boards and coaching, Al and his team keep their priorities in focus. "Every morning I wake up at 4:20 am, and I start the day with affirmations. First thing I say is, Jesus said if you can do something good and don't, it's a sin. From the moment I wake up, I am looking to do something good, something helpful. Second affirmation is live like you are going to die tomorrow and live like you are going to live 100 years, which means have a balance in life. Last, Buddha said don't be attached to anything." Al chuckles, "That one is really tough. I modify that one to don't be attached to the outcome."

With his mind focused, Al meets J.P. at the gym for their morning workout, and then they go into the office. For Al, there is always room for personal and professional growth. That's why he's been following Mike Ferry's coaching for 23 years. As a REALTOR®, it is easy to work 24/7, but the Moridis know that lasting success requires balance. Scheduling family vacations are as much a priority as their daily work schedule. Al remarks, "My favorite place for relaxing is..." Al and J.P. say it in unison, "Hawaii!" Al continues, "It makes me so relaxed. But I like going to different countries, too. I try to go out of the country once a year, I've been in at least 25 countries. Though I drive everyone crazy. For instance, if we are in Rome, I want to see everything in the city the first day."

J.P. closes out the interview with a few words of wisdom. "Work hard. Have a schedule. Don't buy business; work for it." It's good advice, whether you are in real estate or not.


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# LISA SGARLATO

KEEPING IT POSITIVE

“My motto is that I walk into  
a room and try to figure out  
how I can help people.”

...



...

**L**isa Sgarlato is a born-and-bred native of Los Gatos; she recalls her father's stories of abundant cherry orchards and \$3,000 homes. After high school, Lisa went to California Polytechnic State University with the intention of becoming a biologist, and during that time, she worked in the restaurant business. That experience taught her how to build rapport with people from all walks of life.

"You learn how to have a great work ethic, work long hours, customer service, how to stay positive... so that's where I learned how to work with people."

Towards the end of her college years, Lisa realized that biology wasn't going to be her path. She ended up starting a medical-device company with her father and fell in love with sales. Since it was in orthopedic sales, she learned to take her business very seriously. Everything had to be precise because Lisa was working with life-and-death situations.

Although Lisa enjoyed sales and the lifestyle it brought, she eventually reached an impasse; it was time to make a change. Lisa had a couple of kids and had become a single mom, so finding a new way to support her family and have a more flexible schedule was key. Her top priority was being a mother. Continuing in medical sales would mean a significant amount of travel and having to be in operating rooms for 6:00 am procedures, which aren't conducive to that.



“  
**I HAVE GRATITUDE  
FOR MY CLIENTS AND  
ALL THE PEOPLE THAT  
SUPPORT ME.**  
”

clients, efficiently structure a business, and keep things positive.

"He always gives 100%. Having someone like that around you is pretty awesome."

However, once her youngest started going to junior high in 2011, Lisa left mortgages and jumped into real estate with the Alain Pinel Realtors®.

"At the time, we were coming out of the subprime mortgage crisis, so mortgages were not fun to be in. It was difficult to help people and was a depressing time for a lot of people. So getting into something more positive, helping people transition out of their homes or into a new home at a great deal, was much more positive for me. I really feed off the positive energy of other people."

Eventually, Alain Pinel Realtors® was purchased by Compass, but the group stayed together through the transition. The transition to Compass has been positive for Lisa as well; she notes that the company provides all the tools she needs to succeed. These days, Lisa's business is thriving in the Los Gatos/Santa Cruz mountains. The juxtaposition of a harsh ecosystem with the incredible beauty and serenity of the hills makes it an interesting location to be centered around. Since it's above the hustle and bustle

Thus began Lisa's serendipitous entry into real estate.

**Entering the Real Estate Market**

One of Lisa's neighbors owned a boutique real estate brokerage, and when she went to buy her own home, the loan agent's job seemed to be simple. Lisa got her license in 2001 and started in mortgage sales while

her kids were little. She worked part-time, did a lot of volunteer work at their school, and centered her life around her children and community.

One of her career mentors was George Montinari, the sales manager at the mortgage firm. His caring style struck a chord with Lisa, and she learned a lot from him about how to work with

...

...

of city life, it's been an attractive spot for buyers since the start of COVID-19 lockdowns. Lisa's business has doubled since the pandemic began.

Much of that growth can be attributed to her dedication to her clients and her ability to adapt on her feet. Lisa's not a strict scheduling type. Instead, she opts to let the day take over as it will. The fast-paced nature of real estate means that there's no consistency from day-to-day. Being able to duck and groove when needed is key, and Lisa is well-versed at moving through those changes with grace.

"You never know what your clients will need in a day. A million things come up, and I just want to be helpful. Whether it's a run to Home Depot or helping to prep a house, I make myself available to help clients out in a pinch."

Lisa is incredibly grateful for how her business has grown over the years and isn't afraid to give credit where credit is due. While she has a strong work ethic and dedication to her clients, she knows that she wouldn't have been able to get to this point without a ton of help along the way. Lisa considers gratitude to be an essential part of her real estate success.

"I have gratitude for my clients and all the people that support me. I have a huge team of support, an amazing assistant and transaction coordinator, and everyone from inspectors, painters, contractors, stagers, handymen, cleaners, movers... You have to express gratitude for everyone down the line."

### Welcoming the Next Chapter

When Lisa's not working, she loves spending time with her kids, volunteering, and getting out into nature.

"Spending time at the ocean always reinvigorates me."

Although Lisa will be in real estate for the foreseeable future, she's entered a new phase in life. Her



children have grown and started their lives, and she recently lost her parents. She sees many possibilities in the next stage of life.

She still gets a ton of fulfillment from volunteering in the local community. Lisa's currently involved with the Los Gatos Lions Club as well as a group of women in the area that's raising money for firefighters and college scholarships. She's intent on having a stable, balanced life and helping out wherever she can.

"I'll always be involved in community and may at some point retire, but no matter what, giving back will be a big part of my future."



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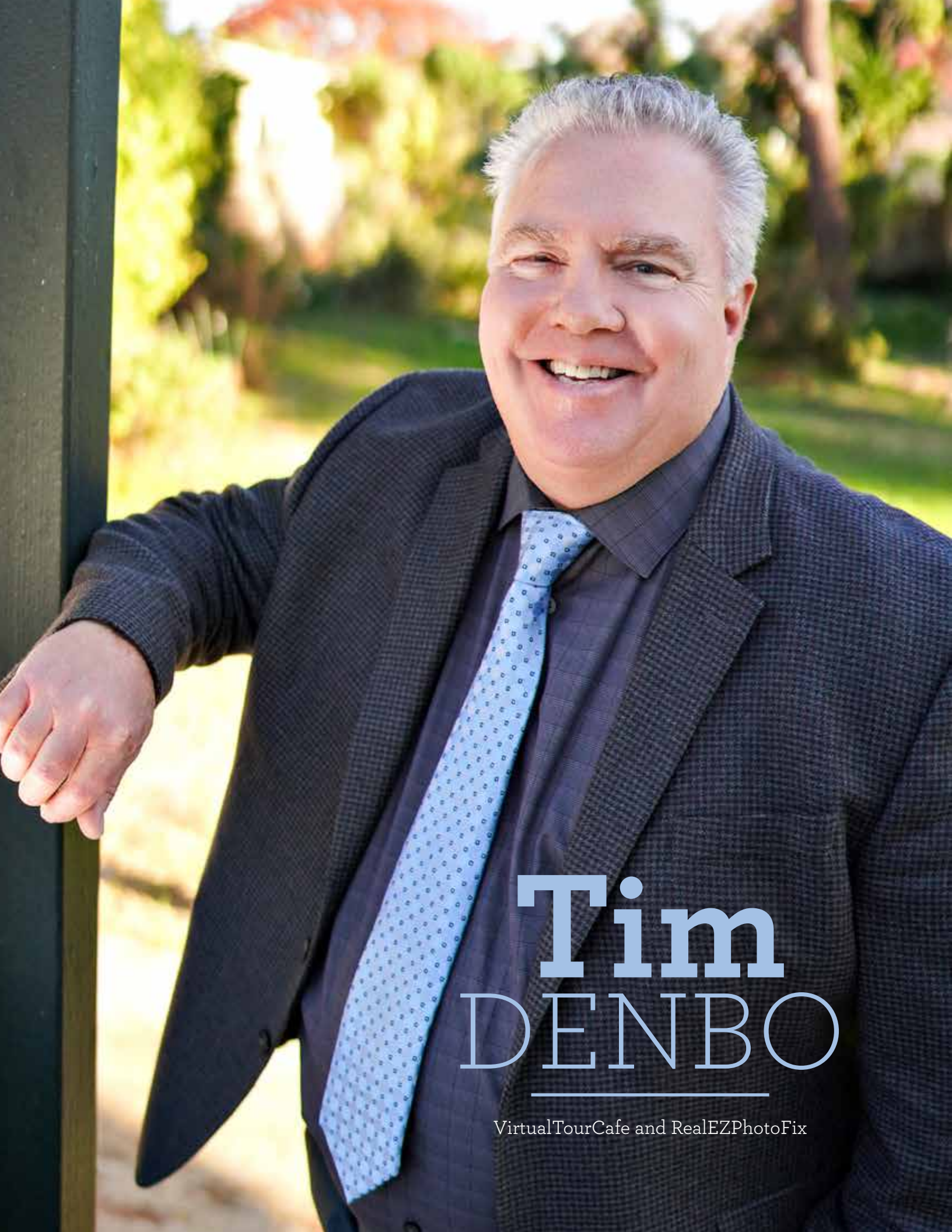


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# Tim DENBO

VirtualTourCafe and RealEZPhotoFix

## ▶ partner profile

By Zach Cohen

Photos By Teresa Nora Trobbe, [www.FotosByT.com](http://www.FotosByT.com)



## HERE TO SERVE

*In November 2010, Tim Denbo stood proudly at the National Association of REALTORS® convention in New Orleans. He had just launched his new project, VirtualTourCafe, with the vision to help agents locally, nationally, and globally.*

Tim's vision was bold and his outlook optimistic. Despite coming out of one of the most challenging periods of his life, he took on the real estate world with one simple idea in mind.

"The more you help others succeed, the more you help yourself succeed. We just stay focused on that. We started with the goal of how we can help other people be successful? And we just stuck with that, every day."

### *Rewind: The Road Home*

Tim was one of the many individuals whose lives crumbled in the wake of the Great Recession. He

had been working as National Sales and Marketing Director for a well-known brand, but after the economy began to tumble, he found himself out of a job, just weeks before the holidays.

"They eliminated my entire department. I found myself wondering, 'What do I do with my next life move? Where do I go from here?'"

Tim had spent decades in marketing, first as a senior business systems analyst and later as a sales and marketing director. He assessed his experience and looked at the market conditions, and he began to warm to the idea of selling real estate. Tim ended up getting his real estate license in two states and closed a handful of residential and commercial deals. He also began working in photography and marketing — two of his well-practiced skills — as he built his sales business.

...



“Other agents started asking me to market their properties and take photos, and it all came together. One night, I was lying in bed, and I said, ‘I can create a better virtual tour service than these others.’ As someone who is taking pictures and helping other agents market, I was working with these tour companies, and their software was archaic, clumsy.”

Tim put together a team of programmers and developers, and within six months, he launched VirtualTourCafe. His initial goal was to be a do-it-yourself tour service for real estate agents across the country.

“The idea was to allow them to use their own photos and use our online software. So we started as an online

software developer to create an easy-to-use platform.”

#### Overcoming Adversity

Tim admits that in those early years, he struggled. He launched the business with his own money — no outside investors, no large fundraising campaigns.

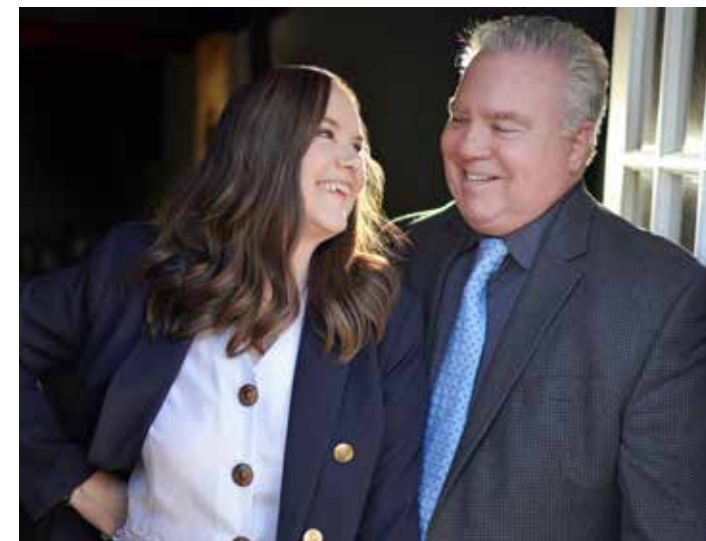
“We were bootstrapping it. So we struggled. It was just the two of us, myself and my partner and co-founder, Hannele Rinta-Tuuri,” Tim reflects.

As VirtualTourCafe gained traction nationally, Tim continued to build his business locally through photography. He realized that he had another opportunity in his lap.

A couple of years down the road, my board of advisors said to me, ‘You’re spending all this time on photography. Why don’t you hire other photographers?’”

Tim began to consider the idea, and within a year, he was building a photography team and a training program to ensure they produced top-quality results. Today, Tim’s team of local photographers handles business throughout the Bay Area. They offer professional photography, 3D WalkThrough Tours, aerial drone, and VIP video services.

In 2018, Tim added another service to his company’s repertoire, RealEZPhotoFix. The service provides virtual staging services and photo enhancements for agents or photographers taking their own photos. The virtual staging, in particular, has been a hit locally and nationally.



Tim has also written three books, the latest of which, *The 7 Secrets of Real Estate Photography to Sell Homes Fast*, received rave reviews from Corcoran Global Founder Barbara Corcoran and was an Amazon bestseller.

#### In Service

Throughout his life, Tim has come to understand struggle on many levels. He’s a recovering alcoholic and has been sober for the past 35 years; his

struggles with alcohol and his ensuing recovery have informed his own relationship with obstacles.

“Life has been an interesting road in sobriety,” Tim says. “You run into obstacles and times in the past where you go, ‘I need a drink — it’s been a long day, it’s been a long life.’ I got relieved from my job in 2008, two weeks before Christmas. Life struggles are there, but it’s not about the struggles. It’s about what you do with them.”

The biggest lesson that Tim has learned is about perseverance. He has come to understand that if he simply stays focused on his goals and is persistent in his effort to execute them, they will come to fruition.

“What I learned is persistence. You just need to stay focused and persistent with your goals... I’ve learned through this time that if you just continue to try to help other people and don’t give up 3 feet before the goal line, you’ll be okay. It’s been a struggle, but I’ll tell you, it’s reinforced to me: Don’t turn around. Don’t stop. Don’t have a plan B.

“I’VE LEARNED THROUGH THIS TIME THAT IF YOU JUST CONTINUE TO TRY TO HELP OTHER PEOPLE AND DON’T GIVE UP 3 FEET BEFORE THE GOAL LINE, YOU’LL BE OKAY.”

“We just want to continue to put food on our employees’ tables and help agents be successful. Our mission is to help our clients, employees, and associates be more successful. Every time when we face a situation, we ask, what is the best situation for them? How can we help them be more successful? That’s what we focus on. When I lay down, I just want to say, ‘I helped a lot of people.’ I just want to help a few more people. That’s my goal.”

**Tim is the President/CEO of VirtualTourCafe, LLC, a one-stop marketing shop for real estate agents and brokers, serving clients in every state from New York to Hawaii. He recently launched RealEZPhotoFix.com, a virtual staging and photo enhancement tool. For more information, please visit RealEZPhotoFix.com and VirtualTourCafe.com.**

#### Words of Wisdom

“What I learned is persistence. You just need to stay focused and persistent with your goals... I’ve learned through this time that if you just continue to try to help other people and don’t give up 3 feet before the goal line, you’ll be okay. It’s been a struggle, but I’ll tell you, it’s reinforced to me: Don’t turn around. Don’t stop. Don’t have a plan B.”



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