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SPRING EVENT

Topgolf Naperville

Thursday, June 2nd at 2 PM

Details on page 20

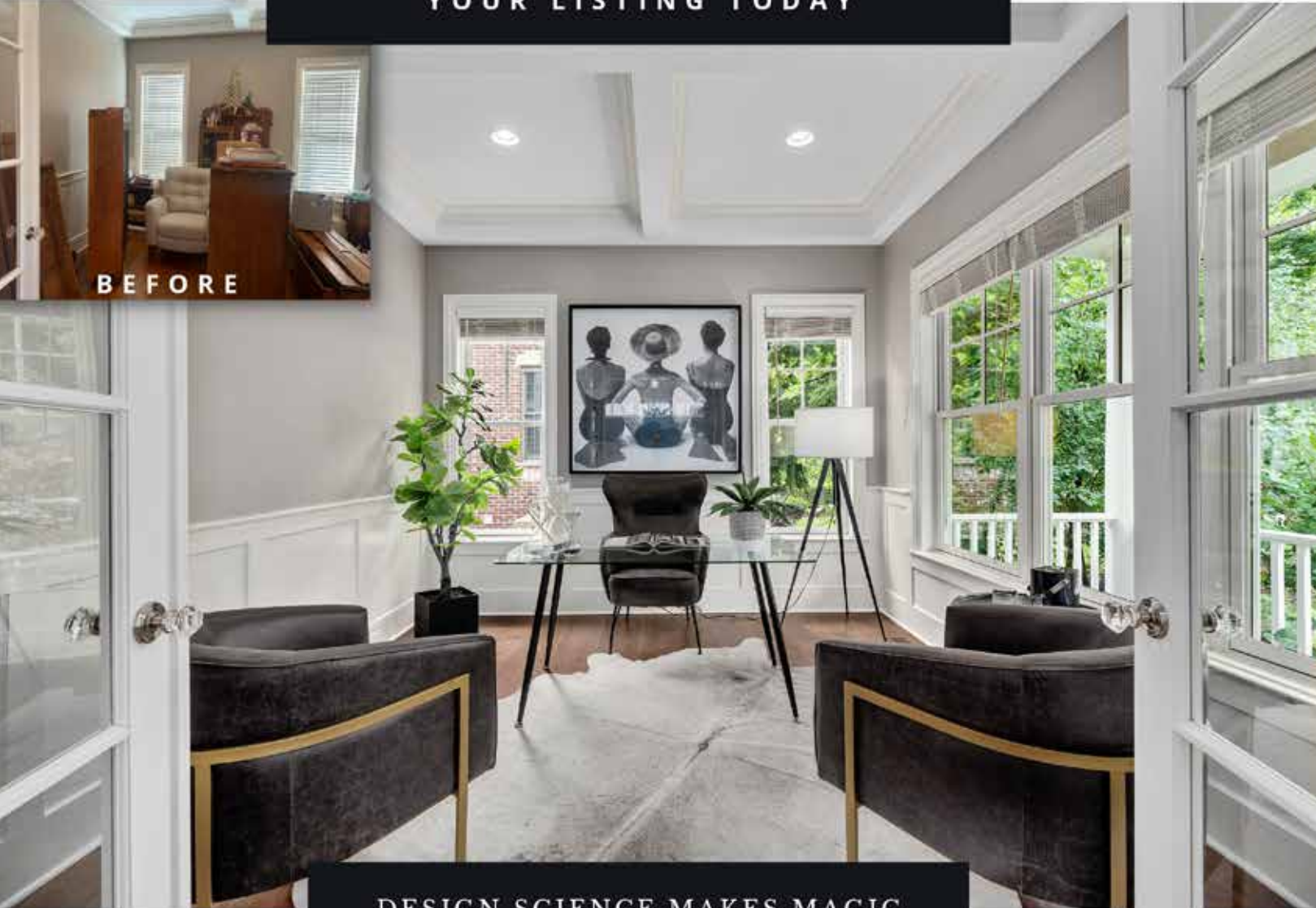
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MEET THE DUPAGE REAL PRODUCERS TEAM



Andy Burton
Publisher



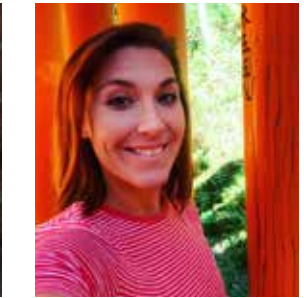
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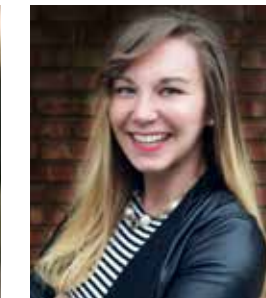
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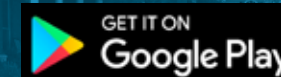


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PUBLISHER'S NOTE



I was recently reminded of what it felt like to go on vacation. Not a family trip; a real vacation. Those of you who have young children can probably relate to that statement. My wife and I earned a company trip to Cancún for a week. It was the first time we have been out of the country since 2019. God bless my parents for watching our four kiddos while we were away!

The more quality time I spent with her as our trip progressed, the more memories surfaced from our dating years together. As I processed these nostalgic thoughts, I questioned why it took traveling nearly 1,500 miles for me to think about her in this manner. There were no urgent obligations, no diapers to change, no meals to cook, and no kids to pick up and drop off at school for a full week.

As much as we are designed to work and produce, we are intentionally crafted to rest as well. The time we were able to unplug put me in a better headspace and resurrected my appreciation for my bride. I was grateful for the brief change of scenery and the positive mental state which was born from it!



Andy Burton
Publisher

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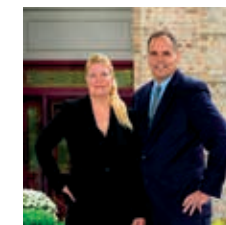
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Carol with her husband, Bruce.

Carol Fisher

WITH WHITE GLOVE BUILDING INSPECTIONS, INC.

For One Naperville Couple,
the Inspection Business Fits Like a Glove

“If Tom Hanks had called us in [to inspect the house he bought in] *The Money Pit*, he wouldn’t have experienced all the problems he had,” claims Carol Fisher, co-owner of White Glove Building Inspections, Inc. in Naperville. “With all the knowledge we’ve garnered over the years, we know exactly what to look for to diagnose potential problems in a home.” ...



Carol with her office staff: Cole, Jillian, and Randi.

...

Bruce and Carol Fisher were introduced to building inspections in 1990, right as the profession was emerging in the Chicagoland area. At that time, most real estate transactions did not include an inspection; only a small number of homes were inspected prior to purchase. The couple realized that with Bruce's background in managing his own construction company, and Carol's degree in design, it was a perfect fit. They decided to establish a dedicated home inspection business.

"Our goal has always been to help people understand the scope of the current structural and mechanical issues, any environmental concerns, and any and all maintenance issues in the home," says Carol. "So when they do purchase a property, they do so with confidence, peace of mind, and knowing what they need to do."

Over the more than thirty years they've been in business, the couple has seen almost every issue imaginable. They've also seen the rise in the public's knowledge about homes and homeownership on account of the internet and networks like HGTV, and with that, they've seen the former "buyer beware" transaction market shift to "everyone's aware" because people are now smarter and more informed about homes than ever.

“ THE WHITE GLOVE EXPERIENCE IS MARKED BY SPECIAL AND METICULOUS CARE. WE PRIDE OURSELVES IN OUR UNMATCHED ATTENTION TO DETAIL. ”

And that shift includes knowledge about home inspections. "It's definitely changed from no one knowing that a home inspection was an option to a very high percentage of every home being inspected before it's sold," Carol explains. The inspection business itself



The office mascots at White Glove Building Inspections, Inc.

has changed with the growing demand too. "We started out writing NCR-carbon-copy reports," she continues, "but now we use much more accessible reporting software as well as modern systems that facilitate all aspects of the business." They've also stayed up to date with technology, and specifically, technology that allows them to execute more efficient inspections and clearer reporting formats.

Over the years, the firm has grown beyond the one-man inspector crew to meet the rising demand. They've also supplemented their residential and commercial inspections with a variety of other services, including radon testing, mold testing, volatile organic compound testing, EIFS inspections, thermal imaging, drones (FAA Certified), sewer scopes, and more. The company's name, which was inspired by the military's use of white gloves to inspect artillery and more, reflects the intense scrutiny and thoroughness with which White Glove Building Inspections, Inc. conducts each and every inspection they do. The business name is purposeful since we are veteran-owned and is named specifically "Building" since we do commercial inspections as well.

"The White Glove Experience is marked by special and meticulous care," says Carol. "We pride

ourselves in our unmatched attention to detail—we take the needed time to properly inspect all components; properly discuss the findings with the buyers; and to write a clean, concise report with a summary—and our excellent customer service throughout the process."

The Fishers' passion for care has become a family affair: all three of Bruce and Carol's children are actively involved in the business. Robert is the inspection manager, Cole is the operations manager, and, the youngest, Randi, manages all of the marketing.

"I'm not sure how they all ended up in the business, but they did!" laughs Carol. "We all work hard together, and I'm so glad we do."

The family frequently travels together too, regularly visiting Disney parks and the national parks across the country. All avid movie watchers, they're known for conversing using lines and phrases from movies with each other. Their four rescue dogs—all Chihuahua and Pomeranian mixes—complete the busy family.

Beyond integrating the latest technologies and best customer service practices, White Glove Building Inspections, Inc. offers a variety of free warranties, as well as an optional eighteen-month warranty, for all their inspections. And because their team includes multiple qualified inspectors, they are a valuable asset for busy, time-crunched REALTORS®. White Glove is consistently adding to their services to meet the changing needs of their customers and partners.

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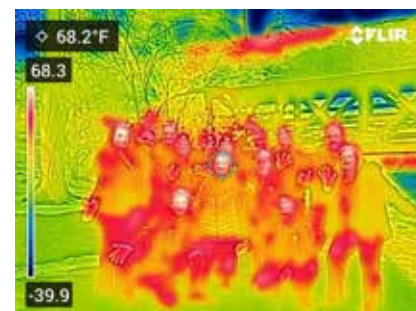
The Fisher family (left to right: Cole, Robert, Carol, Bruce, and Randi).

“One thing we did during the COVID-19 pandemic was pivot and adopt virtual inspections,” says Carol. “Although most clients usually came to the inspection, we knew virtual inspections were vital and an important option for many clients and REALTORS®. We could talk with the buyers over live video, or send them videos throughout the inspection and then follow up with a call. It allowed us to have the same level of care during such a tumultuous time.”

As they look forward, White Glove Building Inspections, Inc. is focusing on innovations and new service choices to make inspections even more

accessible, safe, client-friendly, and practical. “For example,” explains Carol, “we believe it would be very beneficial for homeowners to provide pre-listing inspections. This could facilitate the process of selling and eliminate some of the bumps during the selling process. It’s just one way we’re changing the option in home inspections.”

Another new feature they’re offering is same-day inspections, geared for the current fast-paced market, allowing REALTORS® and homeowners to beat the time crunch and get an inspection done in a timely manner. “We reserve two afternoon spots just for this service,” says Carol. “We can do it as long as the appointment is booked and confirmed by all parties by 10:30 a.m.”



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To reach Carol and to learn more about the services White Glove Building Inspections, Inc. provides its clients, visit their website at www.WhiteGloveInspections.com, or call 630-428-4555, or text 630-495-4555.

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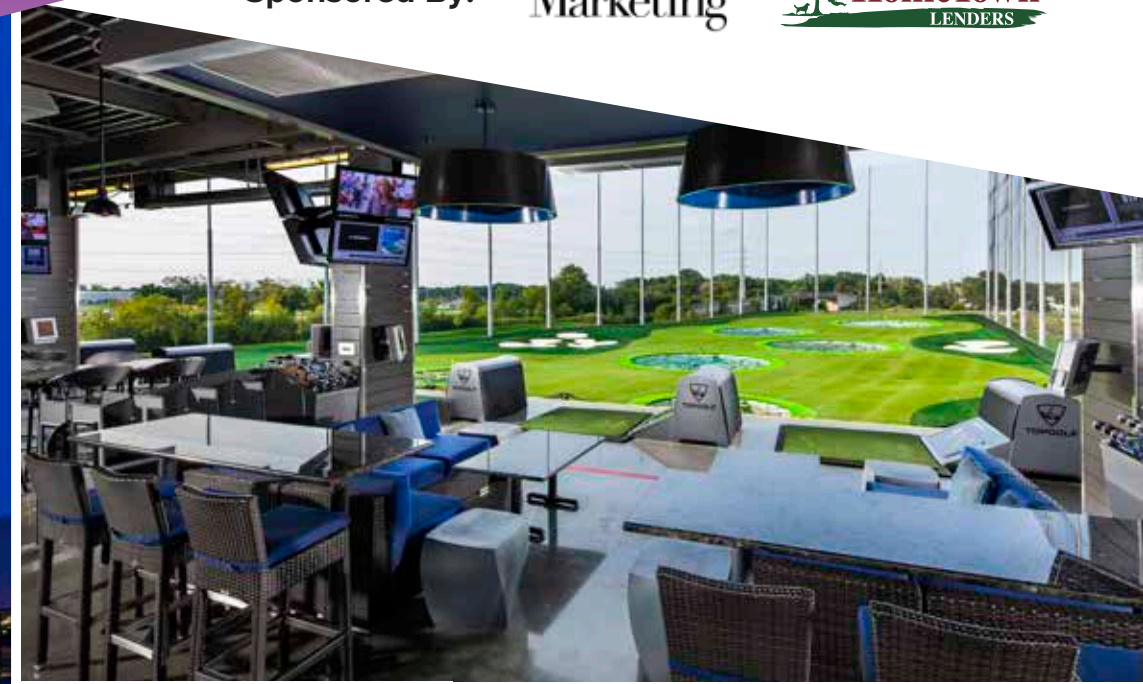
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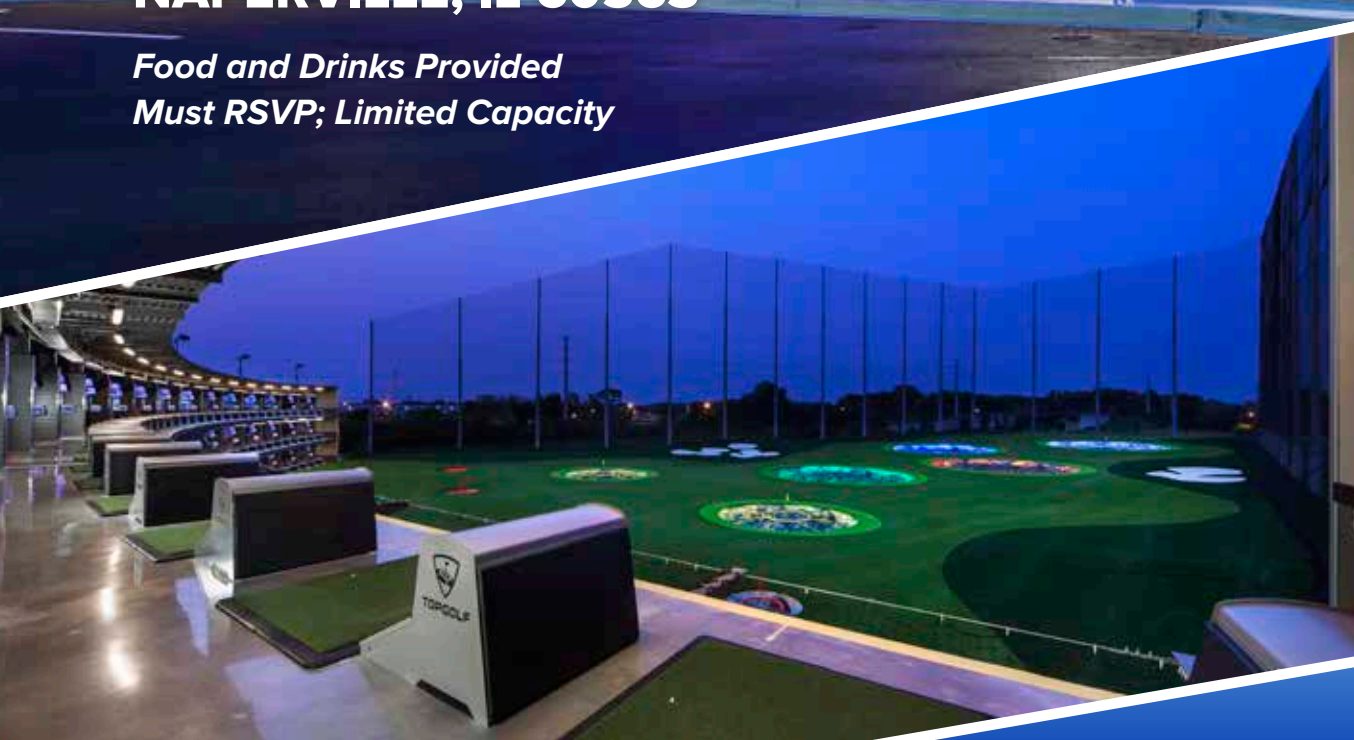


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“I wanted to solve a problem and set a new standard for service...”

“We often look at successful people and consider their roadmap the template for obtaining success,” says Rishawn Boone, REALTOR® with Century 21 Affiliated. “When I first started out in the industry I wondered, ‘How will I fit in?’ I realized I just needed to be myself.”

Rishawn was born in Clarksdale, Mississippi, and then moved to Decatur, Illinois, during grammar school. He went on to work in the healthcare industry for almost ten years, but then decided that he wanted to move in a different direction and homed in on a, now promising, career in real estate.

“I realized that for so long, I had been following the paths of others, and not the one for myself,” he says. “Honestly, I had to do some self-reflecting and find myself, who I was, and what imprint I would leave in this world.”

When Rishawn and his wife, Andrielle, bought their first home, they came away feeling under-represented. “However, when I did my homework, [I learned that] the way we were represented was the norm. It was mind-blowing to me that a consumer

would get better service at a \$300/night hotel than they would when purchasing a \$300,000 home.” Rishawn understood there was a need for quality service in the industry.

“I wanted to solve a problem and set a new standard for service,” he explains. “My objective was to be the example of how clients should be represented. I’ve helped clients that never thought buying a home would be a reality, and it became one. It’s incredibly rewarding.”

In his early years, he was given three tips from an experienced agent: One, wear black suits; two, be clean-shaven; and three, go by Shawn, not Rishawn. “I considered that advice for one hot second, but then I remembered that I’m a limited edition,” he laughs. “The world is full of individuals that have adopted the ‘copy and paste’ way of living. And don’t get me wrong, if that makes them happy, I wish them all the best. However, that’s not my desire. Every day I wake up wanting to be the best version of myself.”

Rishawn uses his natural sense of humor and his ability to relate with just about everyone to full benefit. Though he’s still in the early years of his career, his experiences have already been diverse.

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•••

“I’ve been a part of joyous engagement proposals at final walk-throughs, and serviced sellers who were divorcing and closing chapters,” says Rishawn. “No matter the circumstances, each time my objective is to give each client, and their families, more than what they expect and to leave a positive lasting impression.”

Since launching his real estate career in 2016, Rishawn has made it a goal to give back to his community. “We give to a number of charities, specifically some of those that played a huge role in our upbringing,” he says. “It means nothing to climb the ladder if you don’t then send it back down to give others a lift up.”

When Rishawn is not managing his real estate business, he enjoys traveling, collecting sneakers, going to the gym, and spending time with family. His kids, Micah and Moriah, enjoy movie nights, vacations, milkshakes, and long drives. Rishawn is also passionate about music—everything from Maverick City to Chris Stapleton, and from Ray Charles to John Legend.

Looking back on his success (he hit the fourteen-million-dollar sales mark last year alone) he’d say it all stems from that decision to be himself. And that’s the biggest lesson he shares with other agents.

“Don’t look at the success of others and try to duplicate what they have done,” he advises. “Ask yourself what you want to accomplish and then figure out how to get there.”



Photo credit: Michelle Dokes Photography



One future item on Rishawn’s to-do list is to establish a scholarship foundation for students. The foundation would send students to college debt-free or pay off crippling student loan debt. For Rishawn, it’s all about making a positive impact on others, his main motivation for becoming a REALTOR® in the first place.

“Real estate is what I do, but it doesn’t exclusively define who I am,” Rishawn says. “I want to do more than just buy and sell homes. I want to leave behind a legacy.”

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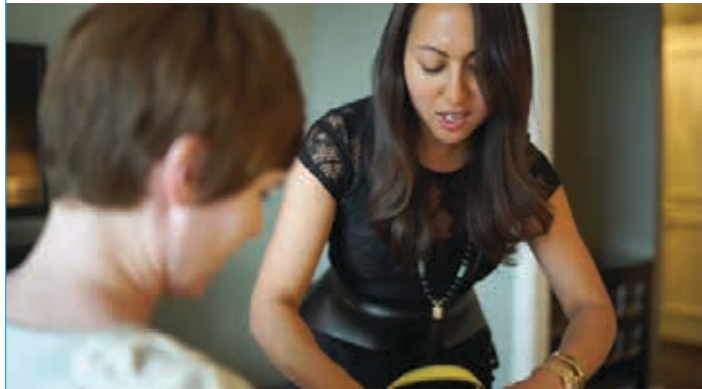
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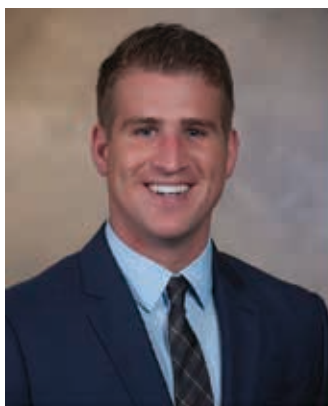


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» cover story

By Lauren Young

Photos by KDE Photography

SHEENA BAKER

SUCCESSFUL LIFE, POSITIVE IMPACT: REALTOR® FINDS PERFECT COMBO

“Success, to me, is being able to live a life I have always imagined while also making a positive impact on the lives of others,” says Sheena Baker, principal broker of the Sheena Baker Group at Compass in Aurora. By choosing a career as a REALTOR®, Sheena has found the perfect way to achieve both of those aims.

“The meaningful moments that stand out to me include seeing the smiles on kids’ faces when they are telling me they will finally have their own rooms,” she says. “And it’s when buyers cry because they are the first in their family to own a home.”

“It’s also when sellers call me, yelling with excitement after they [learn that they have] earned over their list price by taking my advice,” she adds. “And it’s in watching my team grow and thrive within their roles.”

Sheena has always had a passion for connecting with people, bonding with family, and fostering community. Born in Oak Park, at age five she moved to the Village of Bellwood, Illinois, with her parents and three siblings.

“I have so many fond memories of growing up in such a close-knit neighborhood,” says Sheena. “To this day, I have best friends from kindergarten and elementary school. We even frequently travel together.”

When Sheena was in junior high, her parents divorced, and her family moved every year after that. Each fall she would attend a new school. That is, until her senior year when Sheena’s principal allowed her to commute the hour distance so she wouldn’t have to start a fourth high school. Moving every year, Sheena learned how to make new friends quickly—a skill she relies on today as a REALTOR®. ●●●

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“Moving so often helped me grow in my self-belief, which is key in my role as an agent,” says Sheena. “If you don’t believe in yourself, certainly no one else will, and others will see your self-doubt. I have to stay focused and confident for my clients and always be willing to learn.”

Immediately after graduating high school, Sheena landed a full-time job with a great salary. At age nineteen, she moved out of the apartment she shared with her sister and built her first home in Aurora. Many of her friends and family began to ask her about her home-buying experience. She enjoyed the process (and talking about it) so much that she pursued her real estate license.

Over the next few years, Sheena juggled school—attending Prairie State College and Benedictine University—while working in human resources full-time and doing real estate on the side. Finally, in 2013, she decided to focus solely on her career as a REALTOR®. She’ll tell you none of it would have been possible without the support of her family.

“My mother, Bessie, is such a strong woman with the sweetest spirit and has been my biggest cheerleader in life,” she says. “Any challenge I face, she has a way of calming the storm and making me feel like everything will be all right.”

In addition to her mom and second father, Antiwone, Sheena’s extended family has always had her back. That team includes her older sisters, Shantell and Everlie; her younger brother, Sinnell Jr.; and her father, Sinnell Sr. If you’re lucky enough to get all the siblings together at the same time, they’ll be at Bessie’s house for dinner, engaging in competitive games, and making each other laugh.

Looking into the next phase of her career, Sheena hopes to grow both personally and professionally through new experiences and challenges, and she plans on facilitating growth opportunities for her team members too.

•••



Sheena with friends on a girls trip celebrating her

Photo credit: Kevin Wright of Live Lime Photography



“Success, to me, is being able to live a life I have always imagined while also making a positive impact on the lives of others.”



Sheena in Jamaica with friends.

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“I am excited for the year ahead,” she says. “Recently, I began flipping homes again with some partners, and I plan to continue investing—it’s a big part of my retirement plan.”

“Some of the defining moments in my career were when my managers allowed me to be creative and explore fresh ideas,” she explains. “I want to allow that space for my team—to bring change and be creative too—and to push them to realize their greatness.”

Given all, Sheena Baker is clearly choosing to live her definition of success.



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Jen CAVANAUGH

» agent feature

By Jennifer Mitchell
Photos by AbiV Photography



FINDING HERSELF WHILE HELPING OTHERS FIND THEIR HOME



Jen with friends in Nashville, TN enjoying music.



Jen with family.



Jen and her family: husband, Jim, Daughters Colleen, Leah, and son, Ian.

Before Jen Cavanaugh could become a top producer, she had to figure out who she was—both as a REALTOR® and a person. It was only after embarking on a journey of self-discovery that she was able to really hit the ground running and find success.

Jen and her five siblings lived with her mom and stepfather in Riverside. Growing up, Jen looked up to her mom, stepfather, and father. Her father was a REALTOR®, so she was exposed to the good and bad sides of real estate from a young age. He was a broker and commercial investor, and when interest rates rose to 13 to 16 percent in the 1980s, things went poorly for both his company and Jen's family, which made her feel cautious about the industry. But she also saw the benefits of the entrepreneurial side of real estate.

Not only did Jen have a hard-working father, but her mother worked incredibly hard as well, doing whatever it took to make ends meet. Meanwhile, Jen's stepfather, another great influence on her work ethic, was a junior high school teacher and counselor at the school Jen attended. He always looked for solutions to guide Jen and her siblings through life.

At Northern Illinois University, Jen pursued an art degree with an emphasis on jewelry design. After graduation, she worked for several jewelry retailers and outside sales companies but always felt she could do more—a feeling that stayed with her until she entered real estate.

"While I was raising my kids, I worked part-time in the evenings from five o'clock to midnight, running reports for the CFO of a healthcare organization," recalls Jen. "There was a hiring freeze at the time, but I was told that once the freeze was lifted, I would get a full-time position with a salary. When the freeze was lifted, I received a 25-cent pay increase to my modest hourly wage. That's when I decided there had to be more out there for me. I worked hard, was willing to go the extra mile, and would often think outside the box. I wanted a career where my paychecks would match my work ethic."

Around that time, Jen's husband, Jim, earned his real estate license to bring in some extra income. Together, they bought a condo, built a custom home, flipped houses and condos, and became landlords. Jim was passionate about real estate and Jen enjoyed helping him with the transactions.

"By that point, I had spent a lot of time in sales, and I loved helping people find solutions to their problems," explains

...

Jen. "I knew I wanted to get back into that. Also, I wanted to work in an industry where there was no glass ceiling. Real estate checked all the boxes, so I decided to get my license."

Jen made the switch and loved it. Although, as she states, "As a woman entrepreneur, this [real estate] is the place where I have felt unstoppable," it took a while before she found her groove. She was operating under some false assumptions about what she thought clients were looking for in an agent. She thought she had to dress and present herself in a certain way to succeed in the business.

"I was working with a client and had shown them several homes when one

popped up that they wanted to see right away," recalls Jen. "I jumped in my car and apologized when I showed up because I was wearing jeans and a sweatshirt. After the showing, we went back to my office to write up the offer, and we were having a good time laughing and joking. My client turned to me and said, 'I like this Jen more than the one we met before.' At that moment, I realized that my client was more comfortable when I was more comfortable, and that I was actually better off showing up as my most authentic self."

Since that realization, Jen has had monumental success with an eleven-year career volume of almost \$100M. She's passionate about helping families find solutions for



As a woman entrepreneur, this [real estate] is the place where I have felt unstoppable.

their unique real estate needs and challenges, and she loves hearing people's stories as she helps them through major moments in their life.

When it comes to Jen's personal life, she's had her fair share of big moments. She and her husband, Jim, who is also her business partner, have raised three kids: Colleen (twenty-three), Leah (twenty), and Ian (eighteen). Although everyone's lives seem to be moving in different directions right now, the family still gathers to listen to music, have dinner together, play cards, or watch a movie.

When Jen has some alone time, she loves working out and staying active—whether that's riding her Peloton; walking her dog, Bella; doing yoga and meditation; or bowling with Cathy's Bowling League. And in 2022, she has a rather unique goal.

"I want to eat corn on the cob one row at a time," claims Jen. "My sisters Clare and Molly do it and claim you don't need to floss when you're finished."

But in all seriousness, Jen says, "Success to me is setting goals, and enjoying the journey while reaching those goals. I have started to reassess those goals every ninety days, instead of yearly, because it keeps me focused on enjoying the journey."

No matter how this year shakes out, Jen will undoubtedly be able to accomplish her goals and enjoy the ride.



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SHEENA BAKER

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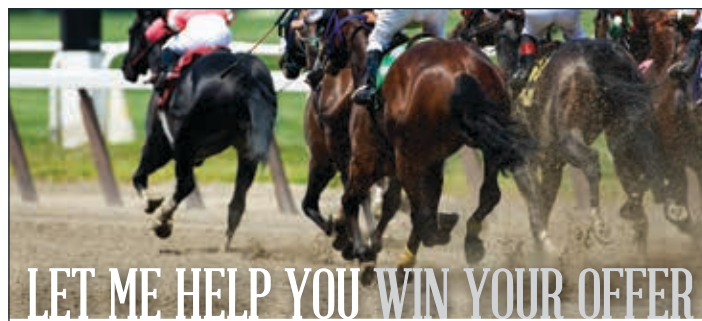
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