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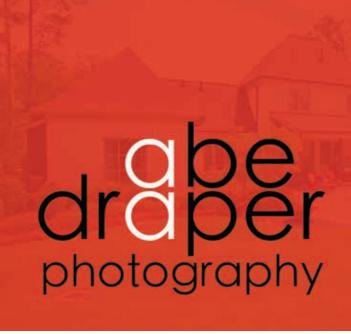




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The holidays are such a special time because they bring people together more than any other time of the year. We hope that you and your loved ones make time to gather and celebrate together this holiday season. Cherish the time and enjoy making new memories in the place you call home!

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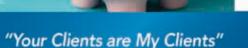
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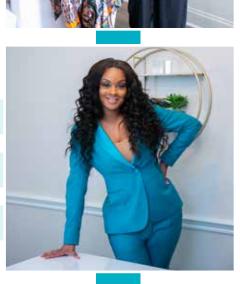
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Written by Susan Marquez Photography by Abe Draper Photography

# Dwanna Stanley DWANNA STANLEY

## IS A NATURAL BORN CHEERLEADER



wanna Stanley has found success by helping others be successful. The Greenwood native moved to the Jackson area in 2000 to attend Jackson State University, where she cheered on the JSU Tigers while majoring in accounting. These days she is cheering on her team of 67 real estate agents at The Agency!HAUS.

While her path to real estate wasn't a direct one, everything she has done in her life has led her to have the largest female-owned and minority-owned brokerage in the state. "I left Jackson State in 2002 when I got pregnant with my daughter," she says. "I then went back to school at Mississippi College and earned a bachelor's degree in business administration. I thought I wanted to do accounting, but then I took a marketing course and wanted to go into marketing." The same thing happened when she took classes in management and finance.

"I wanted to do it all, so I decided to major in business administration. Mississippi College taught from an entrepreneurial standpoint. I wasn't sure exactly what I wanted to do for a career, but I had the itch to be a business owner."

Dwanna was working in property management when she graduated. "I managed an apartment community, but being the over-achiever that I am I became a leasing consultant." She did that for only a couple of weeks before being promoted to assistant manager. She held that position for six months before becoming property manager. "I set my sights on becoming a regional manager over multiple sites." Dwanna decided she wanted to own her own property management company. "I learned that to do that, you have to have a real estate license." She took courses online and got her license in 2013.







Then life took a turn. "When I got my license, friends started calling me. They wanted me to help them buy a house. I had not even thought about selling residential real estate, so I had to go back and study that!" When she first got her license, she went to work for Presidential Real Estate. It was a small brokerage where she stayed for a year before going to Keller Williams. Dwanna discovered there was a disparity with African Americans getting homes. "I became passionate about helping African Americans get into homes." In 2018, she got her broker's license.

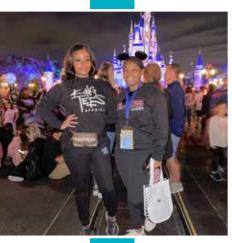
"When I first got into real estate, I felt like I had a lot to learn. My first year, I sold one home. The second year, I sold two. The third year I sold 28 homes. During that learning time, I took all kinds of classes and I spent time interviewing lenders. I wanted to learn about credit repair, front and back end, and I wanted to learn what each lender offered with their in-house programs. The lenders know I am not loyal to any one lender. I work to match the right lender's programs to the right client. That makes all the difference in getting to closing."

Dwanna opened her brokerage, The Agency!HAUS, in December 2018. "I thought a long time about what to name my business. I didn't want my name in it, and I didn't want 'group' in the name. I wanted to find something that can be franchised. Something marketable. My goal is to take this nationwide!"

Now 67 agents strong, Dwanna says she is grateful that she has never had to recruit." She works hard to make sure her agents are knowledgeable. "I'm big on training. We have a general call on Monday and sales calls Tuesday through Friday, with role-playing on Friday. I want to make sure our agents are prepared for open houses and for any situation that may come up. The growth of this agency is due to our agents."

Running a large agency can be daunting, but Dwanna says she has found the perfect balance of selling and managing. "The key is having a strong support staff. I also have mentors in place. All of our agents get two coaching calls a month with my coach. That has made me better at creating my back office. I also meet with all the agents one-on-one











The key is having a strong support staff. I also have mentors in place. All of our agents get two coaching calls a month with my coach.

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annually to work on goals for the next year. Accountability can be very motivating."

Educating people on the process of homebuying is something that is important for Dwanna. "We try to do one big event a year to help get people into homes. Our Home for the Holidays Seminar has a goal of getting a certain number of people into homes between Oct. 1 and Dec. 31." The event features lenders on-site and a home assistant program that helps potential buyers know what to expect. Last year's event resulted in 120 homes sold. "We have a goal of 250 this year," says Dwanna.

Outside of work, Dwanna says she is a super mom and super friend. "I go to all the Jackson State games," she says. Her daughter is following in her footsteps as a cheerleader at JSU. "My 'why' for a long time was my daughter. Now it's establishing my legacy. That's what keeps me going." Dwanna also enjoys traveling. "I love going to different places in the Caribbean and to other countries. We try to go somewhere every other month. I think it's good to have a change of scenery and to unwind. It gives me renewed energy to continue working on growing my business."











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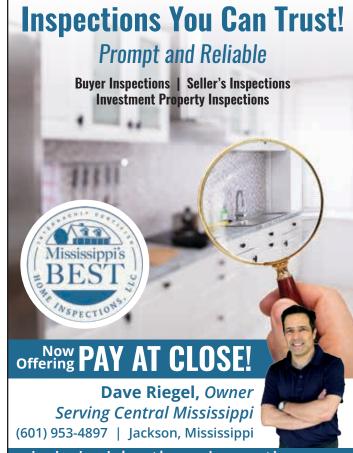
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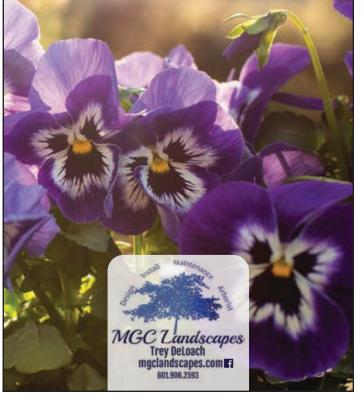
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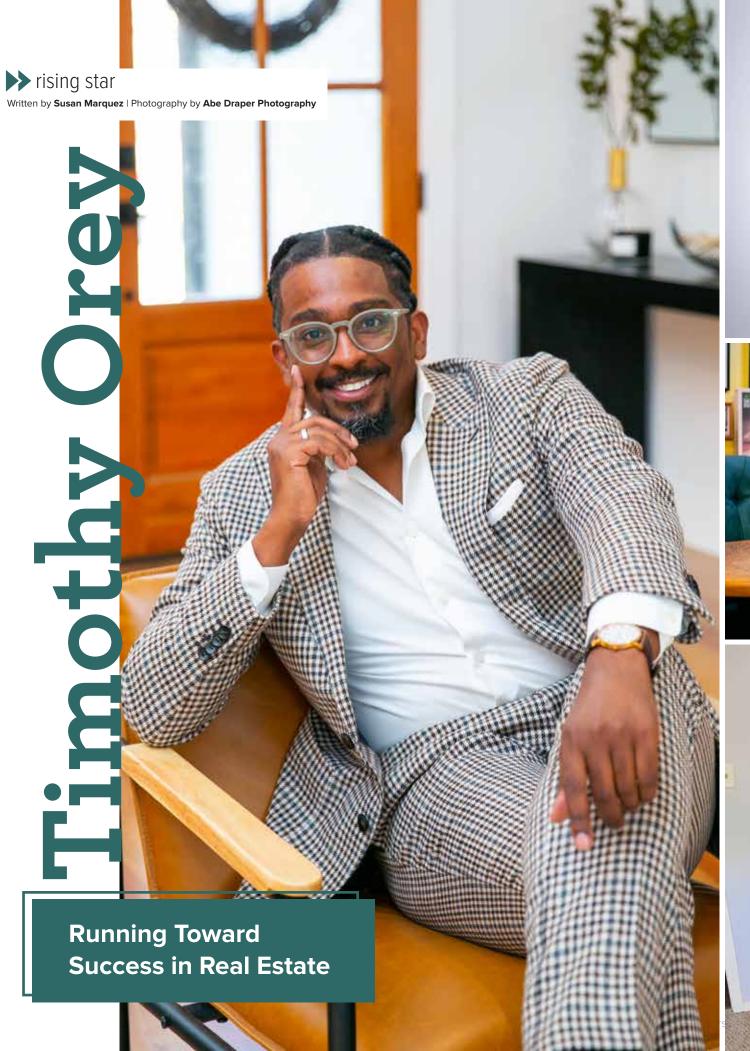
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his next move.

Born and raised in Chicago, Timothy Orey always had one foot in Mississippi. "I was raised by my grandparents but came to Mississippi for summers and holidays." When he was in the ninth grade, he came to Jackson to stay. "I went to Forest Hill High School," says Timothy.

Interested in the broadcasting world, Timothy attended Hinds Community College, where he studied mass communications. "I landed a radio job as an on-air personality on 97.7, with the Ricky Smiley morning show." Timothy spent four or five years on the air and says he learned a lot about communicating with people from that experience.

Timothy then worked with two Fortune 500 companies, where he learned a lot about the corporate world. First, he worked as a technician with Apple. "I worked at the Apple store in the Renaissance in Ridgeland, and that taught me how to deal one-on-one with people, especially with people who were stressed about breaking their phone, losing their pictures, and other phone-related issues." When he had an opportunity to transfer to Atlanta with Apple, Timothy jumped at the chance. It was a larger market, a bigger city and a bit more excitement.

Next, Timothy went to work with the Atlanta Braves as the merchandise supervisor for 27 Atlanta Braves retail stores. "I did that for two years. Despite working 70 to 80 hours a week, I enjoyed the transition to the sports world. It gave me the freedom to connect the brand with the audience, which I liked." But it was not a year-round job. Like baseball itself, it was seasonal. After feeling he had reached his max with the Braves, Timothy decided it was time to make

"My mother, Anita Orey, and several of my cousins and aunties worked in real estate. At that time, my mom had been in the business for 10 or 12 years. I always knew it was something I'd like to try, but I felt that I had to try other things first." Timothy attended the Mississippi Real Estate Institute and got his license in September 2018. "I started at Keller Williams," says Timothy. "I took advantage of their training programs before transitioning to RE/MAX Connection, where I worked with my mom."

Anita then got her broker's license and started Arx Point Realty in Byram. "I joined my mom in her brokerage," says Timothy, who is licensed as a dual agent in Mississippi and Louisiana. "We cover the tricounty area, as well as areas like Yazoo City, Forrest, etc. I will go anywhere within a three-hour drive. I love being hands-on and consistent with clients, so it's difficult to do business further out than three hours."

Timothy prides himself on covering areas other REALTORS® won't touch. "We go into smaller, more rural areas. Many of those areas don't have many qualified real estate agents. I love giving people the kind of service they would find in a larger market."

What Timothy loves the most about the business is working with firsttime homebuyers. "I love to create a good experience for them. It's fun sharing information that they can then share with friends and family. I want them to understand the steps we are taking to get them a home and how different decisions can affect them down the road." Timothy also enjoys working with people who are purchasing a second or third home. "That's a different experience altogether. They become a bit more selective about what they

...



are looking for. But the thrill of buying a different home makes it worth it."

While he hasn't been in the business all that long, Timothy has still had an opportunity to see families he has worked with grow. "My first customer was a family with one child. I sold them a house and then a few rental properties. Now they have three children, and they are buying a larger home for their growing family." Timothy says he enjoys the relationships he has made with his clients, many of whom have become friends.

An avid runner, Timothy started the Jackson Running Club when he moved back here from Atlanta. "First and foremost, I am an advocate for mental health. I began therapy in 2017, but I was tied to a certain day and time. I began running as a way to clear my mind. I learned quickly that I could put on my running shoes any time of day or night and head out. I was in a running group in Atlanta, and I wanted to recreate that in Jackson." The group meets Sundays at 9 a.m., and it is for both walkers and runners. "It's for all ages, races and genders," says Timothy. "We go 2 miles, and it's a free workout. It is also a way to meet other people and support one another. We also gather for social events outside of running, such as bowling, movies or going out for drinks or dinner."

When he isn't running or selling real estate, Timothy enjoys reading and traveling. "My girlfriend and I went to New York last month. We went to several museums, and we went to a New York Yankees game."







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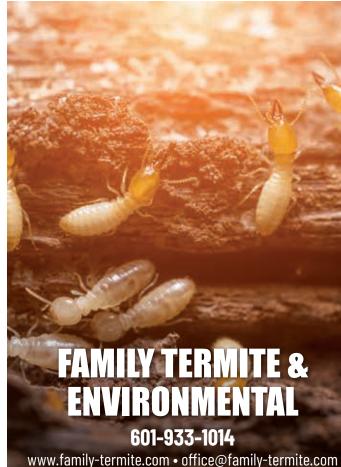
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#### Serving People through Magnolia Inspections

Written by Susan Marquez | Photography by Abe Draper Photography

James Brantley always wanted to own his own business. "I wanted to be an entrepreneur, and I wanted to own a business that would impact people's lives."

James grew up in the Jackson area and graduated high school at Clinton High before going to Hinds Community College. After college, he went to work as a tool and die maker for Packard Electric in Clinton. Eventually, he got tired of working night shifts, and he went to work as a plant manager for an injection molding company in Morton. "We made plastic parts for the medical and architectural fields." That position involved having employees who reported to him, which helped James to learn about employee management.

But James grew restless. "I wanted a challenge." He began looking at franchises, including a catfish restaurant, handyman service and Ward's hamburgers. Nothing made sense until a real estate agent friend asked James if he had ever considered home





Bill Anderson

inspections. "A light bulb turned on for me. I wanted a career that I had a passion for, and I thought that could be it."

James did his research and attended seminars on starting a business. "I looked at a few home inspection company franchises, but I knew I could do it on my own, which would allow me to have more flexibility and more control over costs." He took classes at a community college and learned to write a business plan. He worked with classes offered by the Small Business Association, and that gave him the launch point he needed. James hired a graphic designer to design his company logo and opened his business, Magnolia Inspections, in September 2006, and he has never looked back.

There have been some learning curves and challenges, but nothing James couldn't handle. "When you are dealing with the public, there are sometimes unrealistic expectations and conflicts. But every business has a challenge. I would definitely do it all over again, but if I did, I might do some things differently." But providing an answer to a need is something that makes everything worthwhile.

Currently, the company services a 50-mile radius for residential



Brad Barbee

Cooper Kelly



inspections and statewide for commercial inspections. "We are trying to expand into the Gulf Coast market." In addition to home inspections, Magnolia Inspections provides indoor air quality testing for mold. "That is a big thing for us."

Working with REALTORS® is an important part of James' business. "I have invested a lot of money and time on inspection software that creates easy-to-read reports and repair request lists to send to the agents." James explains that after 16 years in the business, he and his inspectors understand what a defect may be and what isn't. "We understand how to do a thorough inspection without tearing a house apart. We have a liability and respect for our clients."







Adam Pilgrim





A light bulb turned on for me. I wanted a career that I had a passion for, and I thought that could be it.



James Brantley

James has been recognized by the real estate community for his work with two major awards. In 2017 he was nominated as Affiliate of the Year for Central Mississippi REALTORS® Inc. The membership voted, and Magnolia Inspections was named Affiliate of the Year for CMR at the state conference in Tupelo. He then won the statewide Affiliate of the Year award.

James started the company with his wife, Donna, and in the beginning, he was the sole inspector. In 2020 James began searching for a key person to help grow the company. In November of 2020, James hired Kelly Williamson as the new growth coordinator. "Hiring her to assume this vital role has been one of the best business decisions I have ever made, and she has helped us locate and hire our new inspectors and office staff." James now has nine employees, and five of those are inspectors. "And we are still growing."

When a REALTOR<sup>®</sup> calls the office, James says they can speak to a live person, which is important when they are trying to get to closing. "We also have an online scheduling system, so they



...







Donna Brantley

can schedule an inspection on their own." An app that can be downloaded to a REALTORS®' mobile phone allows them to view previous inspections and to schedule inspections online. "We get inspections completed in a short time, and we even do free re-inspections. The agents love it because it makes them look good to their clients."

James says it is important to him to give back to the community. "We have supported many homebuyer seminars, Shower Power, the battered women's shelter, and we participated at Liberty Park for First Responders Appreciation Day, and most recently, the new Suicide Watch and Wellness Program in Canton. And every year, we do the inspection for the St. Jude Dream Home."

James and Donna have two cocker spaniels, Annie and Charlie. They love to spend time traveling, particularly to the beach. "I also have two grandchildren, Kacey and Dominick, and love spending time with them. I also like to hunt and fish when I can find the time." And seeking out new restaurants is something the couple enjoys as well.

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## Meet the staff at Central Mississippi **RFALTORS®**

When Nita Martin joined Central Mississippi REALTORS® (CMR) as its new chief executive officer, she had a certain vision in mind for the state's largest real estate association. Her vision included a company culture that consisted of a customer-first focus, growth and improvement mindset, shared values and commitment. With over 2,100 members actively involved in the association, this vision included bringing key staff members to enhance services and bring the association's goals and mission to fruition.

"I wanted to enlist a team that would exemplify the highest level of customer service, professionalism and dedication to the association," said Martin. "Although our team is small, each member brings an abundance of knowledge in their respective fields and a level of commitment which emphasizes our association's objective to serve as 'the voice for real estate' in the 10-county area of central Mississippi."

Meet Johnny Brown, CMR'S member care represen tative. Johnny brings a wealth



of knowledge and experience to the association through his 17-plus years as a licensed agent and REALTOR®. He's no stranger to CMR. He has served on a myriad of committees since 2000, and he won the coveted REALTOR® of the Year Award

in 2006. In 2008, he served as the treasurer of the Jackson Association of  $\operatorname{REALTORS^{\circledast}}$  and as the esteemed president of the Jackson Association of REALTORS® in 2012. Johnny has also had the honor of working with David Ingram Real Estate and ERA Real Estate Professionals.

Currently, Johnny's role as member care representative allows him to engage with and provide assistance to members and guests. During this time, he assists with onboarding for members and front desk duties. Johnny genuinely enjoys helping other individuals succeed and accomplish their goals. He continues to be the "sunshine" and source of encouragement to the CMR team.

Meet

Jeanelle

Marshall

business

opment.

Jeanelle

devel-

CMR's



brings nearly 10 years of experience as a licensed REALTOR® and dedicated member. During her tenure, Jeanelle has served in countless instrumental capacities. She has worked as a staff associate with CMR and as a professional standards administrator with Mississippi REALTORS<sup>®</sup>. She also had the unique opportunity to serve as the interim education director for Mississippi REALTORS® and Mississippi REALTOR® Institute. Jeanelle also had the honor to serve on the CMR's board of directors. In 2011, she became an esteemed alum of the 2011 Leadership Class of Mississippi Association for REALTORS<sup>®</sup>. Jeanelle believes in the power and impact of service. She has volunteered for several committees on the local and state levels.

Currently, Jeanelle's role as the director of business development allows her to work intimately with the association's member experience team to ensure smooth transitions from licensed real estate agents to REALTOR<sup>®</sup> members. She engages with incoming members through the orientation process and the in-depth discussion of membership benefits and privileges. Jeanelle is also responsible for developing new and existing business opportunities for members within its various industry providers.

Meet Jewell Davis, CMR's public relations manager. Jewell brings over 12 years of experience

as a public

relations and

public com-



munications professional to the association. Jewell has a strong penchant for public service. She worked for the city of Jackson for nearly a decade in various capacities, such as interim director of communications, public information officer for countless departments, and as a public affairs officer for the Jackson City Council. During her tenure as a committed public servant, she had the honor and privilege of working for five mayoral administrations. Jewell also has experience in the private sector, where she worked for the esteemed Jackson Municipal Airport Authority as its manager of public relations, marketing and customer service. Most recently, she spent three years at "Thee I Love," Jackson State University as the assistant director of events and visitor services.

Currently, Jewell's role allows her to enhance her creativity through the development of various social media content. She also ensures the association's website stays relevant with up-todate information and writes numerous news articles and press releases. Jewell has also established a great rapport with local and national media outlets to ensure adequate coverage of newsworthy topics.

bilingual front desk receptionist. Araceli serves as the first point of contact for the association by answering phone calls and directing members to the correct individual for assistance. She also processes existing and new agents' applications so they can enroll in the orientation class, which is required for CMR. Sales is her area of expertise, as she has been involved with the process since 2018. She credits her "sales savviness" to the additional sales experiences she gained while working for AT&T and Ulta. Meet Mary

Kate Rankin, CMR'S event coordinator and the newest addition to the team. Mary Kate has spent more than three years as the executive assistant of the Madison County Business League and Foundation. During her tenure with the nonprofit economic development-based organization, she assisted in the planning of various events, which included the venue selection, catering, attendee lists and budgets for year-round events. Her experience also consisted of event planning, which included 500 participants.

Meet Araceli Martinez,

CMR's



Currently, Mary Kate is planning for numerous events for the remainder of 2022, which include the RPAC Major Investor Recruitment Event & Silent Auction, the board of directors retreat and multiple internal events and classes to benefit our members. She offers new ideas to engage current members and to increase member participation. Mary Kate is a member of the Madison County Young Professionals, and she serves on the Madison County Business League and Foundation's Diversity & Inclusion Committee.





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## 'Tis The Season 'Tis The Season For Hunting KELLER WILLIAM

Written by Cindy Raborn

When we do a feature article, we always ask for some personal photos to include. Many times, those include hunting photos. Although I have never hunted myself, I grew up in a family of hunters. I have heard the stories of the preparation (food plots, hunting houses, etc.), the great kill, the miss, the cold and the adventure.

When asked "Why do you like to hunt?," there are some common answers: it's relaxing, it's a challenge, it's good to be out in nature, it gives a sense of achievement, and camaraderie and memories.

We wanted to celebrate hunting season this November with a few pictures we have received of our REALTORS® and ad partners enjoying the hunt!

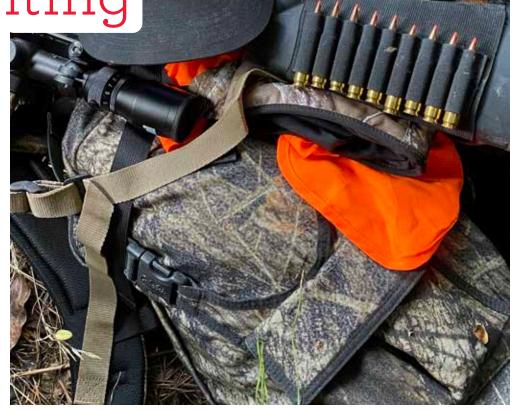


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