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TABLE OF CONTENTS



10
Preferred Partners



16
Celebrating Leaders:
Scott & Traci O'Connor



24
Partner Spotlight:
Brandon Kirk



34
Up-and-Comer:
Daniel Padilla



44
Partner Spotlight:
ALINK Insurance



56
Real Producer:
Jeff & Stephanie Ryder

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE



Welcome to our November veterans-themed edition of *Colorado Springs Real Producers*. I would love to give a huge thank you to all the veterans in real estate who are reading this right now! If you would like to nominate an agent for our November 2023 edition, please reach out.

As I type this, I'm planning a few improvements to our platform. I'm personally looking to bring on an assistant to help me with administrative tasks: article coordination and follow-up, event planning and invitations, leads organization, systems, and transcribing my meeting notes and writing my "About the Agent" social media posts. My work days feel like they're 75% admin tasks, and I know I need to be focusing on business development (meeting REALTORS® and potential advertisers). To anyone who has hired an assistant, you probably can relate to how frightening this can be, but by putting this in print, I feel like I'm one step closer to making this goal a reality.

Another plan of mine is to bring on a few brand ambassadors. These can be real estate agents, real estate vendors or anyone who is networked within the industry. A good fit would be anyone who would like to make a little extra money on the side by making simple introductions for me to qualified real estate vendors with the intention of them becoming advertisers in Real Producers.

Finally, I'm planning a new sort of event: magazine release parties. These will be monthly or bi-monthly events where we invite all the agents, teams and partners featured in a specific edition to a happy hour-style gathering where everyone can get to know each other better beyond the pages of the magazine. The purpose of Real Producers is to build community in real estate, and I think these will help us further achieve that.

Look out for some big things coming in 2023!

Brian Gowdy

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Scott & Traci O'CONNOR

THE FRESH FACES LEADING RE/MAX ADVANTAGE

Scott and Traci found each other through real estate, and it is now central to their lives and livelihood. They have each been involved in real estate, in various forms, for over two decades. As RE/MAX fans for 20 years, they were delighted to become the owners of RE/MAX Advantage in January. The O'Connors continue to uphold the RE/MAX legacy as a business that builds businesses, helping their agents and clients thrive while achieving their own dreams.

SCOTT: LAND THAT I LOVE

Scott O'Connor was born on a ranch in Montana. Land was the cornerstone of life to his family and community, so he grew up with a deep understanding of the personal and generational value and security that could come from the ownership of land and real estate. Working side-by-side with his parents on the ranch helped him develop a tremendous work ethic and wholesome values.

He has always been a very analytical person, loving both education and the satisfaction of hands-on application. He attended college on a "full-ride" Air Force ROTC scholarship, where he majored in physics. Upon graduating, his first assignment in the Air Force was in Los Angeles, a far cry from his rural upbringing.

The Air Force began to hone his skills in leadership and collaboration while applying his technical expertise toward solving complex system development, integration and operations problems. Continuing on this path, he earned his master's degree and ultimately ended up in Colorado Springs.

During his service, he developed a significant medical condition that prevented him from maintaining the standard of performance that he expected of himself, and he made the difficult decision to end his active-duty service. After leaving the Air Force, a significant surgery in 2000 successfully restored a majority of his physical function. This coincided with an opportunity to take the lead for a small Ohio-based defense contractor. Scott accepted the challenge; opening their first Colorado office, competing for and winning contracts, hiring employees and ultimately managing a sizable Colorado Springs-based team.

A few years later, he was asked to return to government service as a civil servant. This began a series of technical leadership roles that grew in size and scope over the next decade. The general theme of his work was to identify technical issues and bridge the gap between system designers, developers and operators to identify how to resolve those problems in timely and efficient ways. He was frequently lauded for his calm demeanor, nimble mind and ability to enable and implement out-of-the-box thinking and solutions.

In 2003 he put his house on the market and met an amazing REALTOR® named Traci.

TRACI: STAYING FLEXIBLE

Traci grew up in Cañon City, CO, and was raised to be industrious and to look for ways to help other people. Her mom started and ran a successful small business, teaching Traci to *give 100%, no matter what the task*. Her mom's example would guide her decades later.

...



Written by Ruth Gnirk
Casa Bay Photography

“In 2003 Traci had a listing appointment, and the client was Scott. She sold his home and stole his heart, and they were married two years later.”



Her father lived by his favorite saying: *When the train is moving, get on!* When Traci was in high school, he developed part of what is now Williamsburg. Traci appreciated how her father helped make people’s dreams come true. She also had an aunt and uncle who owned a real estate brokerage, but Traci had a heart for children and a passion and talent for gymnastics, not real estate sales or development.

She taught at both ends of the talent spectrum through her “Mommy and Me” gymnastics classes and by coaching high-level gymnasts. Even after becoming a single parent, she purchased her own townhome. After befriending her REALTOR®, Traci realized that a career in real estate would allow her time to parent *and* an income that reflected her work ethic. She became a licensed

REALTOR® and began her career at a small boutique brokerage.

Although Traci was happy to have high volume early in her career, the focus seemed to be all about numbers. She wasn’t able to dedicate the time she felt each individual client deserved, and her life was unbalanced. Fellow REALTOR® and friend Mary Lynch mentored Traci on the importance of serving clients and

developing long-term relationships. Traci joined RE/MAX Advantage and was on Mary’s team for almost five years before stepping out on her own.

In 2003 Traci had a listing appointment, and the client was Scott. She sold his home and stole his heart, and they were married two years later. Although it seemed best at the time, Scott regretted selling his house. However, with Traci’s help, insight and

counsel, he bought five houses his first year as an investor.

“I worked and traveled a lot,” reflected Scott. “Traci brought my dreams into reality. I literally couldn’t have, and probably wouldn’t have, fulfilled my investment goals without Traci. She had market knowledge and expertise, but she also believed in me and honestly wanted to help me

achieve my goals. That is how she is with clients, too!”

BOGO: “STRONGER AS ONE”
The O’Connors relocated to California from late 2008 through 2011 for Scott’s work. When a medical issue reared its head again, the O’Connors came back to Colorado, where Traci rejoined RE/MAX Advantage, and

•••

Scott focused on managing his health and their investment properties. He became a jack-of-all-trades, repairing and improving properties, doing landscaping and working with tenants.

Scott had a surgical procedure April 2015 and began a long period of recovery. By September of 2017, he had not only recovered but had earned his own real estate license. During those interim years, Scott and Traci had developed a strong, open, trusting relationship with their RE/MAX Advantage broker and mentor, Bruce Betts. After Scott received his license, he and Traci joined Bruce's team. Traci continued working with buyers and sellers and helping Scott learn the ropes.

Because of his interest in the *business* of real estate, Scott also began helping Bruce with client and contract issues. Scott became the office focal point for client relations and problem resolution and became the sales manager by 2020. At that time, the office was doing around 100 transactions a month, and Scott quickly built trust with the other agents as he became an expert in contracts and nuances of transaction-related issues.

In December of 2021, the O'Connors offered to buy the brokerage from Bruce. This January, they virtually signed the official paperwork to become broker-owners of RE/MAX Advantage while on a family trip to Mexico. Traci commented, "As REALTORS® often say, *if business is slow, go on vacation!*"

Faith, family and service are at the heart of their leadership philosophy. "We are here to help our team live and thrive, engage, flex and adapt," smiled Traci, "as people and as professionals. We are also here to help our agent-partners empower their clients to do the same. I love teaching and coaching clients and agents, especially those who need help taking their first steps." Scott added his agreement: "We leverage our strengths to support our agents so they can support their clients and our community."

Knowing the critical importance of personal relationships and collaboration, Scott and Traci met one-on-one with agents early in the year. This allowed them to leverage agent knowledge and feedback to help mature a sense of community in the office and help create personal and team plans for success. The office also has weekly meetings for training, development and encouragement, as well as frequent team-building and casual social events.



After tax season, the brokerage sponsored an outward-focused community shredding event, and they have a fall blood drive planned. They also hosted a bowling and arcade night for agents and their families and will be having an open award ceremony so that family members, especially children, and friends can see the agents being recognized for their diligence and success.

Through RE/MAX, agents support the Children's Miracle Network. Their office and agents partner with other local organizations in activities including charity golf tournaments, casino nights, charity auctions, clothing drives and more. Scott and Traci directly sponsor organizations such as the Rocky Mountain Leadership Foundation (rmylf.org), Special Kids, Special Families (sksfcolorado.org) and Angels Of America's Fallen (aoafallen.org), where Scott serves as a managing board member.

"Although our office is full of producers," Scott noted, "it is not a 'production office.' It's an office of skilled and passionate *people* who are here to serve other *people*. We keep our priorities straight, and if you have a love of real estate and a passion to serve, we have a place for you." Traci agreed, "Scott and I have a passion to help our agents thrive ... and it is up to each individual agent to define what 'thrive' looks like for them."



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Brandon Kirk has gone from being homeless to running a million-dollar company. And he's just getting started.

Originally from Yuma, AZ, Brandon first moved to Colorado Springs in 1991. He was a sales manager in the wireless industry in Colorado Springs and Fort Collins. In 2001, he relocated to Las Vegas. Five months later, the planes hit the towers. The city shut down, and Brandon went bankrupt and lost everything and was left living on the street.

After four months of being homeless, Brandon finally asked for help. He reached out to a friend who knew of an opportunity back home in Yuma. In short, Brandon was hired as a government contractor testing vehicle and

weapon systems for the United States Army. "I drove tanks and blew things up. It was a lot of fun," Brandon says. The job paid the bills, and Brandon was able to start over.

In '05, Brandon decided to finish his education. He moved back to Colorado Springs and earned his project management degree from Colorado Tech. At the same time, he opened up Colorado Handgun Safety, a firearms training company. He ran the company for 11 years and trained 25,000 people in concealed carry classes. Today, Brandon's brother runs the company.

Because their concealed carry classes were held on nights and weekends, Brandon grew bored during the day, so he bought a carpet cleaning company off of a friend. In nine

years, he grew the carpet cleaning company from one truck to six trucks and achieved \$1 million in revenue. In July 2021, he sold the company to another friend.

On March 31, 2019, Brandon started Planet Duct. "I had always wanted to get into air duct cleaning. There were other companies that offered it, but they were using the wrong equipment, and they didn't have the right training." Wanting to do it right, Brandon flew out to Michigan for training and purchased his first truck. Today, three years later, they're already up to four trucks.

Planet Duct cleans, seals and disinfects air ducts. They also clean dryer vents and air conditioning coils. They serve both residential and commercial clients.

"I had always wanted to get into air duct cleaning. There were other companies that offered it, but they were using the wrong equipment, and they didn't have the right training."



“Planet Duct is certified by the National Air Duct Cleaners Association. That means we follow an industry standard. We train and educate our team members, and we use the correct equipment.”



...

commercial and have completed jobs for American Furniture Warehouse, the USAA building, Costco, the Air Force Academy, Fort Carson, the Pueblo Airport and even local schools! No job is too big for the team and the powerhouse equipment at Planet Duct.

“Air ducts should be cleaned every three to five years (every three if you have pets and kids), or anytime you’ve completed a restoration job or a remodel that has created large amounts of dust.” New builds also need their ducts cleaned. Subcontractors often will fill the ducts

with trash and debris while they’re on the job, and builders often don’t clean them when they’re finished.

Air quality matters. “We recently completed a job where we found eight dead mice in a single duct system. Consider what you’re breathing in.” Poor air quality can cause illness or worse. If someone has asthma, allergies, COPD or a compromised immune system, breathing dirty air can make things much worse.

The most black-and-white reason for hiring Planet Duct is for energy savings and efficiency. Clean air

ducts will cause HVAC systems to operate more efficiently, saving the client money. “It’s common for ducts to have been sealed poorly, letting air leak out between the walls. Customers who have us clean and seal their ducts can expect a 15-20% savings on their energy bill.”

For REALTORS® who are looking to refer an air duct cleaning company to their clients: “There are a lot of amateurs with shop vacs that call themselves air duct cleaners. Planet Duct is certified by the National Air Duct Cleaners Association. That means we follow an industry standard. We train and educate our team members, and we use the correct equipment.” There are a number

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“ Brandon loves being the “captain” of Planet Duct because what they do makes people’s homes safer to live in. ”

...
of carpet cleaners who also offer air duct cleaning services, but their trucks aren’t designed for cleaning air duct systems, and they simply aren’t powerful enough to get the job done.

Planet Duct gives back to the community. They sponsor the Tri-Lakes Cares golf tournament, whose purpose is to improve people’s lives through emergency, self-sufficiency and relief programs. They support Fostering Hope, which provides support for foster

families, restoring the sense of family and belonging that foster children need to thrive. And they support Inside Out Youth Services, which builds access, equity and power with LGBTQIA2+ young people through leadership, advocacy, community-building, education and peer support.

Brandon loves being the “captain” of Planet Duct because what they do makes people’s homes safer to live in. Sometimes it’s cleaning dust, debris

or long-dead rodents. Sometimes they rescue lives critters and discover long-lost wedding rings or other sentimental treasures. What Planet Duct does makes a difference, and they would be happy to help any REALTOR® help their clients feel more comfortable in their new home.

“Whatever you allow determines your culture.” — Unknown

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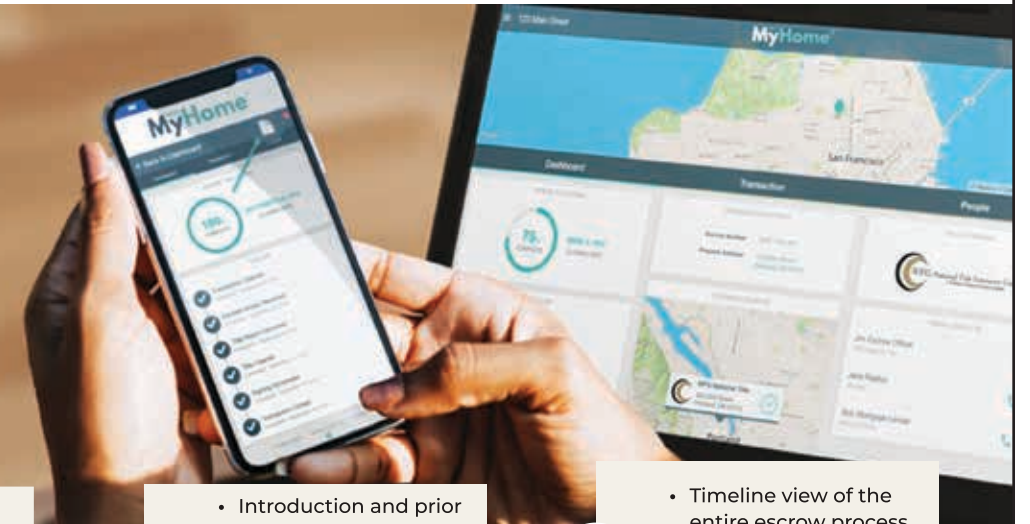
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Written by **Ruth Gnirk**
Photography by **Heidi Mossman**
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“PCS: Permanent Change of Station”

After faithfully serving in the U.S. Army for 20 years, REALTOR® Daniel Padilla continues to serve commanders who go by the code names “homebuyer” and “seller.” The retired targeting officer makes informed recommendations and then supports the goals of the “commander” he is serving. Daniel is the co-owner/co-founder of the award-winning **719 PCS Team**, which is comprised entirely of retirees, veterans and military spouses. They focus on people, positivity and community.

Daniel was raised in Mesa, AZ, with strong examples of faith and patriotism. His grandfather was a Spanish missionary who had served in the war, and he taught Daniel to be content with little and to work diligently. Daniel worked at the local Check Mart while he was in high school, but he wasn’t sure what he wanted to do with his life to make a difference. When he found out he was going to be a father, the 19-year-old had no direction for supporting his family.

BE ALL THAT YOU CAN BE

His family was supportive of his decision to join the Army in 1998, and by April ’99, he had started basic training. Daniel advanced in rank quickly, learning how to communicate task, purpose and motivation. He served as a drill sergeant from 2005 through 2008, and it was sobering to know he was preparing soldiers to fight in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

He ranked up in 2008 to become a U.S. warrant officer, or a subject-matter expert, and became a crucial, trusted advisor to his commander and peers. Later, he became one of the senior targeting officers in Afghanistan, analyzing data and teaching people how to engage with their target. He became very successful in high and key positions.

In 2018 Daniel came back to Colorado Springs from his last deployment after two decades of service and sacrifice. He was invited to a social event for Team Red, White and Blue. He felt a little out of place, so he forced himself out of his comfort zone by introducing himself to *everyone* in the room one by one. During a discussion with one attendee, Daniel was asked if he was a REALTOR®. The attendee observed that Daniel was confident and good at connecting and knew how to make people around him feel valued through his one-on-one conversations.

MILITARY OPERATIONS ORDER

Daniel became a licensed REALTOR® in March of 2019. After multiple interactions with fellow REALTOR® Tim Wilson, an artilleryman with a similar sphere of influence, Daniel wrote up the first draft of the business plan for a brokerage called 719 PCS. A lifelong friend created the logo, and Daniel and Tim launched their new business. Team members are all former or current members of the military

or military families. 719 PCS serves military and civilian clients, making them a company *by* the people, *for* the people.

“At 719 PCS, we value people, positivity, passion, community and camaraderie,” shared Daniel. “We know that real estate is about constant two-way communication and that it requires continual understanding of the market on a local, state and national level. My team and I have had a permanent change of station. For us, real estate is about building up our community by building up the people. It is about making friends and *being* a friend.”

Daniel is broad-based and orchestrates the team’s community outreaches and social events, while Tim takes care of the “close-quarters” details and specializes in educating veterans about homebuying. Tim is also expanding their base of

...





•••

operations in Cape Coral, FL, as many veterans from Colorado Springs are retiring there.

A PATRIOTIC LIFESTYLE

Daniel enjoys giving back to his community. He has served in schools in Districts 11 and 49 as a WATCH D.O.G.S.® (Dads of Great Students).

He is the Colorado chapter treasurer for Honor and Remember Inc. (honorandremember.org) and the athletic director for the 2,000-member Colorado Springs chapter of the veteran's organization Team Red, White and Blue, which promotes physical activity and gives a hand up to veterans in need. Daniel has served

as a Team Red, White and Blue deputy chapter captain in the past as well. (about.teamrwb.org)

The 719 PCS team donates funds from each transaction to help clients with closing costs. Last year alone, they gave over \$50,000 to help families in need. They have also been renting



dumpsters and bringing them to neighborhoods for all-day spring and fall clean-up events. 719 PCS also donates toys to a different organization each year. Their first year, they donated rucksacks full of toys, Wounded Warrior in 2020 and to the local Children's Hospital in 2021.

They also give back through education. Daniel, Tim and the team educate people and are especially passionate about ensuring that qualifying families understand VA home loans. They know the statistics show that only 12% of entitled veterans actually use the VA home loan, and most don't know it can be used more

than once! They are honored to give one-on-one consultations as well as mass presentations.

Daniel and Edith have six children, ranging in age from 12 to 24. Edith is the founder and owner of her own residential cleaning business, Mountain Shine Cleaning. They met

•••



JOINING THE ARMY CHANGED MY LIFE IN SO MANY POSITIVE WAYS. IT ALLOWED ME TO SEE THE WORLD AND BE SURROUNDED BY LEADERS WHO SHAPED ME INTO A BETTER PERSON AND FATHER.

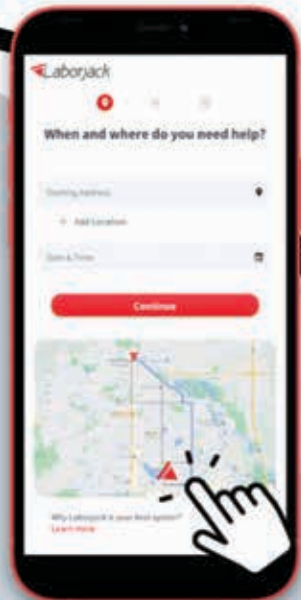
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at the gym and continue to encourage each other to work out and have fun together, as well as serve others and connect with people in the community. The family enjoys outdoor activities and football games.

“Joining the Army changed my life in so many positive ways,” reflected Daniel. “It allowed me to see the world and be surrounded by leaders who shaped me into a better person and father. All the sacrifices I made were for my family, and they have

been worth it. I love real estate because of the continued growth of our community and the relationships created. My passion is helping buyers and sellers make excellent decisions and ultimately earn the most bang for their buck! My wife and my team and I serve people with positivity so light can shed on the community. We are in business to do business; I want to know how my business helps *you* be successful in *your* business.”

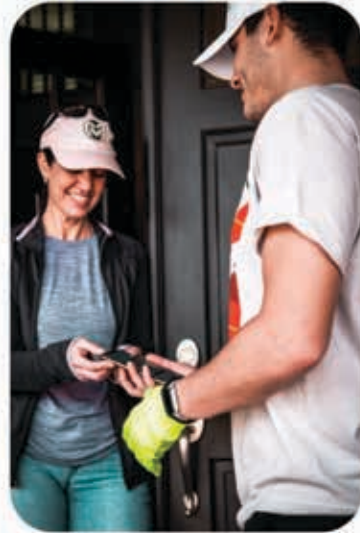
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Written by Brian Gowdy
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Bill

Syddall,

founder of **ALINK**
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(Left to right): Amanda Walter, director of agency services; Bill Syddall, owner; Dawn Box, director of systems and operations



**INSURANCE IS
RISK MITIGATION.
IT IS AN
INVESTMENT
STRATEGY.**

•••

When Bill Syddall had to phase out hundreds of employees at his “corporate America” job, he knew he had had enough.

He was the VP of operations, managing the check distribution and reconciliation functions for a significant amount of the nation’s financial institutions. However, with evolving technology of the 2000s, the ability to earn income on the float life of physical checks was slowly putting them out of business. After dissolving the positions (and reallocating as many as possible to other jobs within their parent company), Bill orchestrated a one-year severance package for himself. He used that time to dream up his next, and hopefully forever, career move.

Bill had always been service oriented. He loved empowering others to make educated decisions. This led to his selection of an industry that he felt lacked in areas where he excelled: insurance.

“The insurance industry as a whole has a negative connotation,” Bill says. “Consumers are conditioned

to make decisions based on the lowest price without looking at what they’re actually getting.”

Isela Owens, one of ALINK’s senior insurance advisors, came up with a clever analogy linking insurance to real estate. Isela says, “As a REALTOR®, imagine advising your buyers to put an offer in for the lowest-priced home without showing the home or sharing a single detail about it other than the cost.” This is how insurance is often sold. Clients purchase whichever policy has the lowest premium; no one is educating them on what the policy coverages protect and, more importantly, what they do not.

Last year, 1,000 homes burned down in the Marshall Fire in Boulder, CO. It’s estimated that 70% of the homes that were lost were underinsured.

Inspired to redefine the insurance industry, Bill created ALINK Insurance Services®.

“I wanted to make a difference,” Bill says. “I don’t want to sell policies for the sake of selling policies. I want our clients making value-based decisions based on the risk factors they are educated on and comfortable with.”

What makes ALINK Insurance stand out as an independent agency is their Pledge of Performance, 10 principals of serving excellence they adhere to with every client. They are:

- We listen for understanding.
- We’re catastrophe navigators.
- We’re problem solvers.
- We’re committed to educate.
- We’re timely and prompt.
- We provide 24/7 services.
- We customize and adapt.
- We stay in school.
- We serve respectfully
- We will always be ethical.

It’s easy to say you provide good service, but how is it documented and measured? At ALINK, we clearly define service by actively asking our clients if we have held up to our performance pledge. If the answer is no, we want to hear about it. We are always looking to improve and

deliver higher levels of servicing excellence.”

Bill’s advice to REALTORS® is to understand that the value of the insurance their clients purchase with their home is a direct reflection of themselves as real estate professionals. “REALTORS® should surround themselves with insurance *advisors*, not just insurance *agents*. Anyone can sell a policy. An advisor educates their clients to make value based purchasing decisions.”

Insurance is risk mitigation. It is an investment strategy.

“The value of a policy is determined by understanding and maintaining the proper blend of coverage, service, relationship and price in a way that maximizes a client’s return on their insurance investments when needed. For example, a client can save \$200

to \$600 or more a year by lowering their liability, not adding higher replacement cost endorsements, excluding utility line services, increasing deductibles, etc. However, in Colorado, where we have the dual threat of fire and large wind/hail catastrophe, saving even \$1200 a year pales in comparison to the cost of not being properly insured, as evidenced by many who were victims of the Marshall Fire.” To Bill, the most important thing you can have clients focus on is insurance value, not price.

Outside insurance, Bill gives back to the community and insurance industry; he currently serves on the Professional Independent Insurance Agents of Colorado (PIIAC) board and has served as a Scoutmaster with the Boy Scouts, in addition to numerous callings within his religious organization. He has been married to his wife for nearly 34 years and, together, they have five children, nine grandchildren and two mini dachshunds.

•••



Isela Owens is an ALINK Senior Insurance Advisor and works closely with their REALTOR® partners. She has also provided 'Ask the Expert' articles to Real Producers regarding the insurance industry. For those of you who haven't met Isela yet, here is an introduction:

Isela Owens is from northern Nevada. Her parents immigrated to the United States from Mexico before she was born to provide a better life for their children. "They sacrificed a lot to give us the opportunity to thrive educationally, professionally and financially. This opportunity, coupled with their perseverance and values, are what I am most thankful for today."

Before insurance, Isela's career was in financial services as well as teaching Immersive Linguistic Spanish Classes, which she still does today. She was drawn to insurance because "it's something that everyone has but few understand. I love being able to educate and inform clients and help de-mystify the complexities of the industry."

Isela is a passionate advocate for her clients. She carries a sincere burden educating them in the potential pitfalls and shortcomings related to insurance. "I am an educator (and a student). Therefore, I bring that perspective when assisting clients in understanding contracts, coverages and the benefits of insurance. I attempt to simplify the complex to help clients best understand what coverages they are purchasing to avoid being shocked or surprised after a loss, only to find out they did not have the insurance they needed."

Isela understands the enormous amount of hard work and sacrifice it takes to get ahead financially. "I have a deep passion for real estate and the wealth-building potential it has to homeowners and investors. I bring this insight and passion to each client with the sole purpose of protecting their hard work through risk mitigation."

What Isela finds most fulfilling professionally is helping clients recognize insurance as an asset-protection tool to avoid financial devastation after a loss.

Isela understands a REALTOR®'s relationship with their clients. "Agents are in a very unique position of trust with their clients. It is important for their clients to feel they can also trust the insurance agent they work with to protect their greatest asset — their home. This collaborative relationship lets a client know that their real estate agent is not simply interested in selling/buying homes but protecting their clients' assets as well. It is important that after the real estate transaction has been completed, the deed has been recorded and the loan has been funded ... the way the client insures their home is the most important factor."

Outside work, Isela is an avid hiker and outdoor enthusiast. She loves travel, doing home remodels and interior design, as well as mentoring, volunteering and teaching. "And sleeping in on the rare occasion is nice as well."



AGENTS ARE IN A VERY UNIQUE POSITION OF TRUST WITH THEIR CLIENTS. IT IS IMPORTANT FOR THEIR CLIENTS TO FEEL THEY CAN ALSO TRUST THE INSURANCE AGENT THEY WORK WITH TO PROTECT THEIR GREATEST ASSET — THEIR HOME.



Senior Insurance Advisors (left to right): Stephanie Starvi, Courtney Zack and Isela Owens





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JEFF & STEPHANIE

Ryder

MULTIPLY

Meet the Ryders, one of the top two-person Keller Williams teams in Colorado. Jeff served his country as an Army flight paramedic before becoming a news anchor, and for the past two decades, he has been serving his community as a REALTOR®. Stephanie, who is from Guam, learned a lot about real estate from many moves as a military child and then spouse prior to becoming a REALTOR®. Her experience in customer service and the insurance and title industries makes her an invaluable asset to clients and fellow agents.

The Ryders flip houses too, but their favorite thing to do now is focus on family, community and education. They love making family memories, connecting with the Pacific Islander community in Colorado Springs and multiplying their success by educating others. Jeff and Stephanie teach classes at KW Premier and serve on the Agent Leadership Committee.

MULTIPLYING THEIR SERVICE

Jeff's father was an Arizona school teacher who owned investment properties and used his "free time" in the summers to earn extra income by

renovating houses. Jeff attended college in Arizona, and after graduation, he joined the Army and was stationed at Fort Carson in Colorado.

After serving as a flight paramedic in the Army, Jeff was honorably discharged and had to transition to civilian life. He tried a few different jobs but finally decided to pursue his *passion*, not money. Jeff served as a news anchor for three years at KKTV, a CBS affiliate in Colorado Springs. It was a good job, but there was no flexibility. He wanted the chance to be an entrepreneur, like his father.

Jeff began investing in real estate in the year 2000. He started making more money investing than he was making in his full-time job in television, so he started pursuing real estate full time in 2001. By 2004 he was running real estate ads on his old CBS affiliate station and leading a team of agents who sold 150 homes per year.

After the market crash, Jeff quickly became an expert in foreclosures and short sales. The team believed in Jeff and his leadership and had stuck with him through the thick and thin,





“
**STEPHANIE’S
TRAINING,
KNOWLEDGE
AND EXPERIENCE
EMPOWER HER
TO HELP CLIENTS
AND EVEN
OTHER AGENTS
UNDERSTAND
THE “WHY”
BEHIND SOME
OF THE CRUCIAL
PROCESSES AND
PROCEDURES
FOR BUYING AND
SELLING A HOME.**

”

but after running a team for 10 years, Jeff decided to go solo and wait for the right person and the right market conditions to build and grow a new team. Less than 24 months later, Jeff met Stephanie.

MULTIPLYING THEIR REACH

Stephanie was from the U.S. territory of Guam and had followed an Air Force family member to Colorado Springs in 1991. She managed a



Colorado travel agency for 15 years, and when she was laid off in 2005, she began working for a builder. Stephanie became a licensed REALTOR® in 2006, but when the market changes started trickling in, the single mother started insuring homes through State Farm in 2009. She soon learned to assist with mortgages as well.

By 2016, Stephanie was working diligently in title insurance, and that is how she and Jeff met. Her diligent, proactive, client-focused service really impressed Jeff, and he challenged her to reconsider a full-time career in real estate. It took her a few months to get used to the idea, but by 2017 she was working full time as a REALTOR®.

•••

Stephanie's training, knowledge and experience empower her to help clients and even other agents understand the "why" behind some of the crucial processes and procedures for buying and selling a home. Because she has worked in almost every aspect of the business, she has a well-rounded perspective and can often help clients take preventative measures to ensure their success. She teases that the only thing she is not licensed in is home inspections ...*yet!*

Jeff and Stephanie's strengths are very complimentary. Jeff has tenure, or "depth" in real estate, while Stephanie has "width" because of her experience in a wide variety of related fields. Jeff has experiential knowledge of contracts and negotiations, and Stephanie is great at building relationships with clients. The combination of their strengths makes their team more effective than either of them could be on their own.

MULTIPLYING THEIR LEGACY

Jeff and Stephanie are two of the original agents at KW Premier and one of its highest-grossing teams. Rather than viewing those facts as a point of pride, it motivates them to serve others. They have both been active participants on the Agent Leadership Committee, and Stephanie still serves in this capacity. She is also more active in teaching classes to fellow KW agents, but Jeff has done his fair share of teaching as well. They both give back through KW Cares, and Stephanie says they love showing love and appreciation to their clients.

One of Jeff and Stephanie's favorite date night spots is the family-owned restaurant Hafa Adai Fiesta Food, where they enjoy food originating from her island home. Their children are 32, 20, 18 and 12. Their youngest plays baseball, and their whole family loves to go mountain biking, have Jeep adventures and experience Colorado. They also enjoy paddleboarding, traveling and attending church together.

Things have come full circle as the Ryders are investors and have bought rentals and flipped homes like Jeff's father used to do. Their boys really enjoyed demolition days.

"Know your value proposition," shared Stephanie, "and share that with clients and even other agents so they can benefit from who you are and what you can bring to the table. Help others be better than they were before your interaction." "It is easy for real estate entrepreneurs to get discouraged," Jeff reflected, "especially if they are comparing themselves to others. Be the best that *you* can be with what you have, celebrate your victories, challenge yourself to continue improving and multiply yourself by celebrating others while you help *them* improve."

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