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# REAL PRODUCERS



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*pino*

**CHECK OUT WHAT'S INSIDE:**

**RISING STAR:** Amanda Lass

**GET TO KNEAUX:** Shelley Simmons

**SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT:** Brooke Stevens List to Close

**WHERE ARE THEY NOW:** Tim Houk

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OCTOBER 2022

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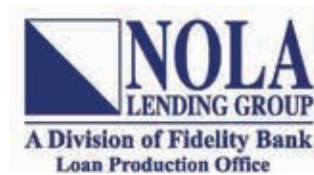


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The September issue feature on Yvette Griffin stated that she was the exclusive listing agent for custom builder Rabalais Homes as well as The Village at Conway.  
CORRECTION: Kasey Barnes and Yvette Griffin represent Rabalais Homes at The Village at Conway. There are 4 other builders represented by other listing agents in the Conway Development.  
Also, Rabalais Homes is represented outside of The Village at Conway by another brokerage firm. Rabalais Homes and The Village at Conway are not affiliated with Baton Rouge Real Producers.



If you are interested in contributing or nominating REALTORS® for certain stories, please email us at [gina.miller@realproducersmag.com](mailto:gina.miller@realproducersmag.com).

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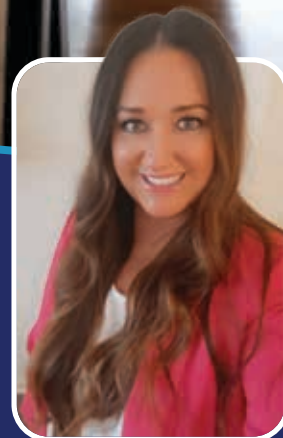
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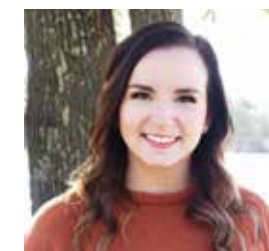
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WHERE ARE THEY

# NOW?



## ▶▶ TIM HOUK

Tim Houk  
Keller Williams Red Stick Partners  
COVER STORY OCTOBER 2020

*"I have had a ROUGH and humbling journey since my story was featured. 2/23/22 I was in a very bad accident which led to another discovery on 3/10/22, and that was cancer. Since then, I have had a very invasive surgery, radiation, and now on the road to recovery. My team, office, and real estate community have been such a blessing! There is no better industry than this one.*

*Learning to lead and operate my business...with me not physically being active was a HUGE challenge. I knew I had an amazing team. The challenge was having them be able to navigate the business in the rapidly changing market that was 2022 real estate.*

*Watching from a 30,000 ft view and learning the levers to toggle while dealing with my recovery was growth. Leading into 2023, I feel better equipped than ever to lead and work with some of the best in the business."*

Tim,  
Thank you for sharing this with us. We admire your courage and want you to know we are cheering you on to full recovery. We pray that you find complete healing and your best days ahead.  
~The Baton Rouge Real Producers Team



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## Making Agents' Lives Easier

# LIST TO CLOSE



### Behind the Scenes

As an agent, Brooke has had a front-row seat to the difficulties they face for over a decade. "An agent's real job is to be out there, making connections and selling, but that can be hard to do when they're bogged down with all the details and paperwork required of them throughout a listing or buying process," she explained. "That's where I come in."

"I kind of started this business by accident. I began helping a few agents out with transaction coordination on the side, and soon the phone was ringing. It just sort of blew up from there," Brooke continued. "I started realizing there was a real need for this type of behind-the-scenes help. I also realized it's what I am best at."

### From List to Close and In-Between

Brooke's offerings include listing input as well as contract-to-close. "With a new listing that needs to go in the MLS, the agent sends me the documents, and I put everything in, including ShowingTime, brokerage systems and any compliance systems they have. I make sure all needed documents are completed, everything is up to compliance, and send a copy of the listing to clients to review," she said.

Contract-to-close is just as all-encompassing. "Once under contract, they'll send the purchase agreement to me, and I stay on top of it until it closes. That includes scheduling inspections, getting signatures on addendums and follow-up with lenders and the title company. I also audit the contract for compliance, update MLS status, ensure deadlines are met and review the ALTA/HUD for discrepancies."

Brooke is also expanding her offerings to include a runner service. "We now have runners that will complete real estate-related errands, like picking up closing documents, opening houses for inspections and attending the inspection, and much more," she expressed. "The goal is to take as much off an agent's plate as possible."

With this as her mission, Brooke strives each day to provide agents more of what they really need: time. "I help with as much in-between as I can so that agents can make more money or have more free time. Some want to spend more time with their family, travel or do volunteer work, but they can't because they're dropping off checks and staying on top of their contracts, which can be extremely time-consuming."

**R** *Real estate agents wear several hats and juggle countless responsibilities on a daily basis. As an agent herself, Brooke Stevens at List to Close understands this better than anyone. From the prep work behind a new listing all the way to the post-closing checklist, Brooke has made it her mission to make fellow agents' lives easier. With 300 contracts worked last year, List to Close's services have proven invaluable in the Baton Rouge real estate community.*





...

### A League Above

Brooke's unique background and skills have allowed her to truly master the multifaceted work of a transaction coordinator. She has degrees in psychology and interior design from LSU and describes herself as an extremely detail-oriented person. "I am way more detail-focused than the average person, which is why I think I am best at this. I genuinely enjoy the behind-the-scenes, detail-driven paperwork. It's my happy place."

Being a seasoned agent herself also gives Brooke a unique edge. "Most transaction coordinators are not licensed and insured like we are. As an agent, I can look at a contract and tell you which documents need to be included or not. Many properties have septic systems that require a septic disclosure, and sometimes agents don't catch that. I am often able to catch mistakes before they become an issue."

"I make sure agents have all the items they are legally supposed to have in case their files were ever audited by the Real Estate Commission," she continued. "I can even look at how something is worded and advise better wording to align with compliance. There's a T-shirt for TCs that says 'Keeping Agents Out of Jail,'" she laughed. "That's kind of what we do! We are keeping agents out of lawsuits and minimizing liability."

### Additional Benefits

There are several ways in which utilizing List to Close's services makes more sense for agents than hiring an admin. "We are pay-as-you-go, so you're not hiring a full-time employee who will go on vacation or take sick days or that you have to pay even when you're having a slow month," Brooke mentioned.

Working with List to Close also means not having to train an employee and deal with turnover. "We have all of our own systems and tools, so there's no need to spend money or time on training," she added. "We are totally plug-and-play." Using List to Close also saves agents money. "Your only cost is our fee per transaction. We cover all training, vacations, taxes and programs for our transaction coordinators."

When not working, Brooke loves spending time with her daughters, Hadley (16) and Harper (7), along with their family dog and two rabbits. She also enjoys her Peloton bike and has a penchant for shopping. At the end of the day, work doesn't truly feel like "work" for Brooke. "I am passionate about helping agents maximize their time and taking as much off their plate as possible. I love being able to help make their lives easier."



I genuinely enjoy the behind-the-scenes, detail-driven paperwork.



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# BRITTNEY PINO

## CLEAR MISSION

**“I take pride in operating at maximum capacity.”** *This declaration from Brittney Pino refers not only to giving white-glove concierge service to her real estate clients and associates but also to caring for her two daughters and intentional care of her own well-being and health.*

*Four days a week, Brittney wakes up before dawn to meet her personal trainer in order to go through the paces of an intense, curated workout. “I believe all your cups have to be full,” she shares. “People can get burnt out in any capacity of their life, and in order to operate at our best, we have to be sure to fill the cups in all areas of our life, not just one.”*

*Her two girls, Lola, age 10, and Presley, age 8, are an inspiration in that Brittney wants to model for them the art of working hard, enjoying life and being successful. She travels with them often and exemplifies that the hard work required to build and run a business can be invigorating and rewarding. **“In order for my business to function at a high level, I must function at a high level.”***

...

▶▶ cover story

By **Brian Amend**  
Photos by **Aaron Hogan**





...

Brittney begins her day early by getting centered and thinking about how she wants her day to go. "Starting my day earlier, with quiet coffee time followed by a gym session, changed everything for me." She says she feels accomplished after the gym and not rushed. "I have time to practice gratitude, I have more energy, I sleep better and I'm less stressed." With so much on her plate, she says these habits help to ease anxiety and give her clarity to stay focused. One more thing she adds: "It makes me make better eating decisions."

“  
WHATEVER IT IS, I COMMIT, AND  
I FOLLOW THROUGH. IF I SAY I’M  
GOING TO DO SOMETHING, I DO  
IT AND I ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO  
LOOK FOR WAYS TO CONTRIBUTE  
TO THOSE AROUND THEM.”

#### EXPECTATIONS AND CONSISTENCY

Brittney got her start in real estate at age 20 while in college. Having worked in retail, she knew she had a knack for sales, but also found interest in law, marketing, teaching and entrepreneurship. Brittney found it difficult to commit herself to one major, then recognized that real estate would allow her to pursue all of her interests.

"All these things were pulling at me," she explains. "I researched a career in real estate and realized this would let me do everything!"

So Brittney went to real estate school and, shortly after graduating, started doing on-site sales for a developer of a golf-course community. "This was an invaluable experience," she continues. "A kind of boot camp that taught me as much in two years as I could have learned in 10 years working as a solo agent."

Brittney transitioned to being an agent for RE/MAX first. She worked there until 2020, when she opened her own brokerage, Brittney Pino & Associates Real Estate Firm. At RE/MAX, Brittney was a top-10 solo agent in the state of Louisiana, and she formed a team that was consistently in the top 10 for Louisiana, with 80% repeat/referral business.

In opening her own firm, Brittney has found herself specializing in residential real estate that focuses on "high-end marketing, regardless of the price point." Brittney Pino & Associates has built a reputation for selling homes that previously had trouble gaining momentum. In addition to offering "that luxury feel" with the customer experience, Brittney delivers consumer education in the form of real-time video updates about the state of the market, how to win in a multiple-offer situation, and other topics from which real estate buyers and sellers could benefit.

The white-glove aspect of Brittney's firm comes from an emphasis on consistent customer experience, which she likens to Ruth's Chris Steak House. "There's a certain level of expectation that you have when you dine at Ruth's Chris, regardless of which server waits on you that night." She continues, "And so here, we run it like a team, so that we have a very specific system and process,

in the way that we handle everything from start to finish with our clients." This requires care in the process of hiring agents who will have to learn the styles and practices of the firm so that a client gets the same experience from that agent that they would get from Brittney Pino or any other agent at the firm. This consistent level of service is matched to the unique, individual needs of the client. **"We will come up with a very customized plan for each client's needs, so when they go to market, they are going to maximize their return."**

#### COMMITTED AND CONNECTED

In terms of helping others, Brittney does not stop at real estate services. Capital City's Finest awarded Brittney Top Fundraiser in 2016 for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. She has supported numerous other charitable organizations, such as the Bella Bowman Foundation, the American Cancer Society, the Dream Hunt Foundation, the Muscular Dystrophy Association, the Louisiana Pediatric Cardiology Association, the Children's Miracle Network, Trafficking Hope, HP Serve and The Christmas Give.

"Giving back gives meaning to what I do," Brittney shares. "If we don't share our gifts, what good are they?"

...





•••

If Brittney is clear on a choice to do something, it becomes a mission.

“Whatever it is, I commit, and I follow through. If I say I’m going to do something, I do it and I encourage others to look for ways to contribute to those around them.”

Brittney believes we grow when we give.

“Giving expands my heart and keeps me connected and sensitive to the needs of others.”

#### TIME AND INTENT

People often ask Brittney how she does it all. “As far as time ... it’s a choice.” Brittney continues, “To accomplish anything, we must be intentional with our time.” She believes wholeheartedly that choice management is greater than time management.

In addition to working out, Brittney is an avid reader, having completed books such as Angela Duckworth’s *Grit* and Brendon Burchard’s *Motivation Manifesto*. Not only does her personal trainer hold her accountable for maintaining physical fitness, but she has long had a business coach. Brittney speaks to audiences

## “GIVING BACK GIVES MEANING TO WHAT I DO... IF WE DON’T SHARE OUR GIFTS, WHAT GOOD ARE THEY?”

on how to operate at a high level, avoid burn-out and live a life by design. She speaks from her own experience and offers encouragement to others.

“I have been a single mom for several years while running a successful business, tending to my health and wellness, and enjoying lots of traveling!”



#### A DAY IN THE LIFE OF BRITTNEY

**4:10-4:40** Wake and coffee time

**5-6** One-hour gym session with trainer

**6:20-7** Make breakfast, pack lunch boxes, help girls get ready for school

**7:45** More coffee and get myself ready for the day. A hot shower, sometimes followed by an ice bath! The health benefits are tremendous!

**8-8:30** First time I’ll pick up my work phone to check emails and messages

**9-5** Meetings — team meeting, Zoom meetings, coaching agents one-on-one, phone calls, emails, business operations, listing appointments, negotiations, closings, videos, leading my team, working with and meeting clients, etc.

**5:30-8** Start making dinner, prepare for the next day and help my girls with their evening routine — dinner, bath time, laundry, etc.

**9** I’m in bed ... hopefully

*\*I also use time during the workday hours for brief personal time if needed — like a parent/teacher conference, nail appointment, massage or important personal errands. The key is to put it in the schedule and work around it.*

Weekends are for fun, rest, creating, business strategy, watching a movie, reading, church, quick travels, booking trips, managing and preparing for the week ahead and catching up with things around the house.





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### WHAT ARE YOUR HOBBIES?

Favorite hobbies are spending time with family, working out, and helping anyone I can buy a home!

### WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE LOCAL RESTAURANT?

It's so hard to pick just one, but I'd say Phil's Oyster Bar or BRQ.

### WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE PART ABOUT BEING A MORTGAGE CONSULTANT?

Definitely being part of one of the largest purchases someone will ever make.

### TELL ME ABOUT YOUR KIDS/MARRIAGE/FAMILY.

I've been married to my wife Erica now for 17 years. We have one daughter, Emily, who is 8 years old. And from the big town of Walker!

### WHAT MAKES YOU UNIQUE?

I think many loan officers are just transactional and move from one deal to the next. I try to be more of a relational loan officer that has your best interest at heart. I hope to make each person I work with feel cared about and more of a friend than a client.

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William "Billy" Leach



# SHELLEY SIMMONS

Shelley Simmons has been an active part of the Baton Rouge community for almost three decades, and has been in real estate for almost two. This spring she launched her own brokerage, Elevate Real Estate, which is founded on the belief that elevated agents will give clients an elevated experience that creates an elevated result.

For her last three years of high school in Covington, LA, Shelley gained valuable insight about the real estate processes as she dug through the giant parish record books. She worked for her friend's father, an attorney, and his wife, the in-house abstractor. After attending Southeastern Louisiana University, Shelley managed the office of a thriving bankruptcy practice and gained experience in foreclosures, successions, and divorce.

In 1993, Shelley, her husband David, and their daughter moved to Baton Rouge to be live-in caregivers for her husband's sick father who had been sent home on hospice. Top Livingston Parish REALTOR® Kayla Johnson sold them their new house. Neither women knew that it was the beginning of a life-changing friendship.

Shelley started her Baton Rouge career with United Companies Lending Corp and was soon the VP, overseeing the Bankruptcy and Loss Mitigation Departments. After many years, Shelley confided in Kayla that she wanted to be rewarded for her contributions and Kayla suggested considering a career in real estate.

## REAL ESTATE

In 2003 Shelley became a licensed REALTOR® and assisted Kayla with weekly new construction open houses every Sunday, to connect with potential clients. Shelley's hard work paid off as she was awarded Rookie of the Year. After several years she knew she had hit the ceiling. "I already had skills, and business intellect," Shelley reflected, "and I understood profit and loss, but when I joined KW, they really taught me how to run my real estate business like a







“  
find the most knowledgeable and inspiring people in our industry and never stop learning from them.”

...

business. Gary Keller is the most brilliant person in our industry. He and Jay Papasan have inspired thinking. Regardless of an agent's experience level or brokerage of choice, find the most knowledgeable and inspiring people in our industry and never stop learning from them.”

In 2011, she joined Lisa Landers as RE/MAX Professional original member number 12. Lisa taught her the importance of culture in an organization, and she appreciated Lisa's leadership style and mission of attracting high minded, high performing agents.

In 2015, Shelley accepted the invitation to lead the Latter & Blum Livingston-based Denham Springs office as Managing Broker for that office, and the Top 10 performing office in Lake Sherwood. While there she received the training and tools to hone her love of interpreting the market. She loved serving as a trainer because it allowed her to impact new agents' careers.

**ELEVATE**

Covid helped give Shelley perspective, and it reinforced her determination to recognize value not only in her clients, but in each agent. Relationships cannot be taken for granted. For Shelley, agents are the most valuable asset of a real estate organization. She began mentally laying the plans to create a company focused on “Associates,” but didn't take much action on her dreams until her mother's illness earlier this year. Her mother passed away in March. Being faced with her own limited time on Earth forced her to get real about what she wanted to achieve in life and the people she wanted to spend her time with.

With the guidance of Angi Bell, her long-time friend, mentor, and coach, Shelley launched Elevate Real Estate at the beginning of May. The mission and vision are based on authenticity, heart-centered service, a culture of collaboration, high reward for Associate productivity, and as Shelley says, “the easy button for agents.”

Elevate Real Estate provides the resources to make a transition to their company seamless. For example, the professional profile is updated internally for the Associate. With the guidance and trusted input of Founding Member Marie Brock, Shelley's intention is to continue to listen to what Associates need and want, and put their feedback into action.

**EDUCATE**

One of her goals at Elevate is to teach clients and associates how to create a great life. As a mentor, trainer, and expert communicator, Shelley inspires people to achieve what they never thought they could be capable

of by helping them identify, and move past, limiting beliefs and uninspired thinking.

Shelley considers herself a student of the market. She holds herself and her team accountable to stay relevant and informed because it's a differentiator in the quality of service agents can provide to clients. She shared that a core value at Elevate is dedication to market and industry intelligence.

Shelley has presented her market insights at events, such as “Forecast Livingston” and “Trends” and has been a contributor to the Baton Rouge Business Report and Rock It Right TV. Shelley also hosts a monthly Market Talk at Elevate's Perkins Rowe location. Market Talks are open to anyone in the industry who wants to understand the latest market trends. Inspired by Jeff Henderson's book, *Know What You're For*, Shelley offers this event to all agents regardless of their brokerage of choice. Shelley is FOR agents, and she knows that the more elevated an agent's knowledge and market intelligence, the more elevated the experience will be for the consumer. For more information about Monthly Market Talks email [info@elevatere.agency](mailto:info@elevatere.agency)

**APPRECIATE**

Shelley is also FOR her community. She has a long-time relationship with the Chamber of Commerce, is a current Livingston Leadership collaborator, and has actively participated in the #LoveLP campaign. Shelley and Marie Brock have both been personal supporters and are proud to partner with Livingston Parish Assessor Jeff Taylor in gathering school supplies through the program Assess the Need ([assessthe Need.com](http://assessthe Need.com)).

Elevate will continue to identify community needs because Elevate Real Estate's success is measured by the impact they make on communities they serve. With an office already in Perkins Rowe, she is scouting a Denham Springs location to serve the needs of Elevate's Associates in their main markets. They are excited to launch their state-of-the-art website and marketing campaign in November.

Shelley and David enjoy running, hiking, traveling, and taking their grandchildren on bi-weekly adventures during the summers. She is blessed to have her professional “tribe” of Marie Brock, Kayla Johnson, Patricia Odom, and Angi Bell. These women, and Shelley's wonderful husband David, have inspired and empowered Shelley to be who she is and accomplish what she has.

“I am FOR my Team and FOR my clients,” noted Shelley. “I am excited about this new opportunity to help others turn their hopes and dreams into a reality. I want to model and teach the mindset of serving others, bringing peace, and building a legacy-company with the highest-respected real estate professionals. Associates who have an elevated experience with the company will provide an elevated experience to their clients.”



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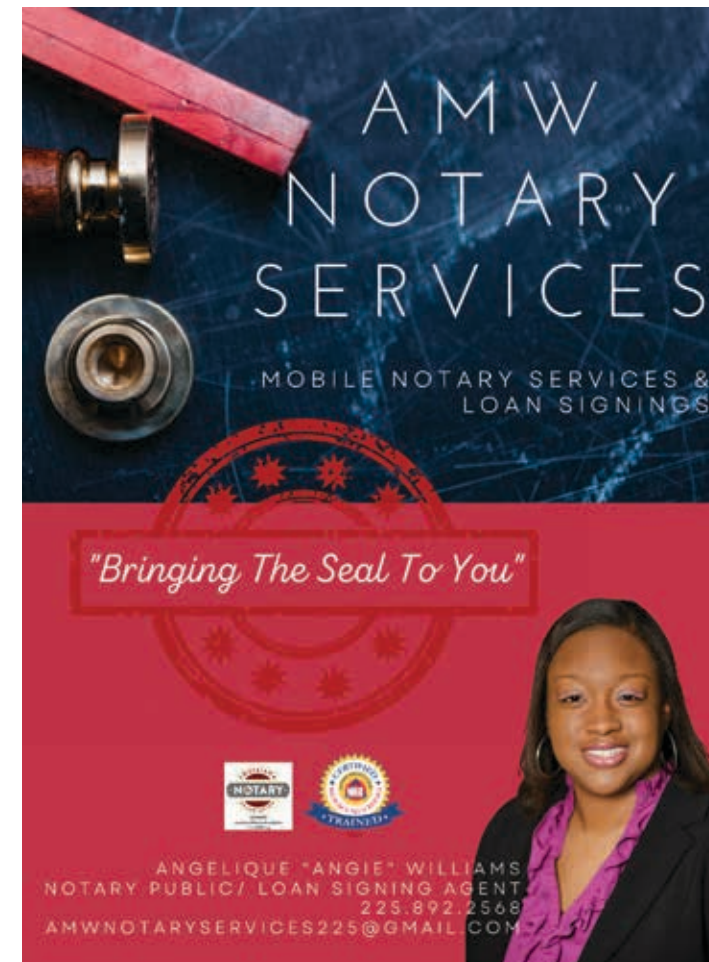


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# AMANDA LASS

▶▶ rising star

By Molly Cobane  
Photos by Ace Sylvester

## taking the leap

***She isn't afraid to roll up her sleeves and do what needs to be done in the face of a challenge. She certainly has had her fair share of mountains to climb. ...***

But 2021 Keller Williams Rookie of the Year Amanda Lass has worked hard to rise above and refuses to let anything stand in the way of her continued success.

Amanda was born and raised in the Covington area. She met her husband, Jacob, in college through mutual friends. "Actually, *he* claims we met in college, but I really don't remember him!" She laughed. The pair started dating in 2011, got married in 2014 and in 2016, they welcomed their son, Jayden.

### **Prior Career**

Amanda has never been a stranger to hard work. "I've had multiple jobs since age 15. I had two to three part-time jobs in high school and always had multiple jobs in college. I just like to work," she shared. "I don't like to be bored! If you have time to sit, you have time to make money." Her dream was to become a detective, and in 2014, she earned a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Northwestern State University.

Upon graduating, Amanda first took a job at the Department of Children and Family



Services for the state of Louisiana in 2014. "I started as a child protection investigator for the abuse and neglect reports in Livingston Parish and eventually accepted a position as a foster care supervisor in Baton Rouge a few years later," Amanda shared.

"It was very emotionally draining. You see a lot of things most people could never imagine. How people treat their children and the lack of resources in the community to help people was super frustrating." Amanda began feeling the emotional strain and started pursuing her real estate license with the intention of selling real estate part-time.

### **Challenges and Changes**

Around this same time, Jacob had been furloughed and ultimately laid off from his job due to the pandemic and the changes in the oil and gas industry. "We had also just bought a new house at the end of 2020, so it was a scary time to go commission-only," Amanda reflected. Jacob had a part-time auto and marine detailing business that became his full-time job as a result of his layoff, so he was also now newly self-employed.

"After I came to the realization I needed a career change, I told him I wanted to quit working for the state and become an agent full-time," she recalled. "I had my state health benefits, retirement, paid time off and a steady paycheck, so it was truly the worst timing for us with him being newly self-employed, but he trusted me. He knew I wouldn't let myself fail."

### **Leap of Faith**

With a new mortgage and bills to pay, Amanda jumped in and got to work. "I was licensed in March 2021, left my state job in late April and had my first closing on April 27," she shared. "My first client was a referral from my old neighbor. After that deal closed, I was on a wing and a prayer looking for my next client. I just had to figure it out and keep pushing forward!"



...

It wasn't long before business was pouring in. "I really put myself out there," Amanda stated. "I networked and stayed really active on social media, and made sure friends and family knew I was an agent."

**Rising Above**

In March of this year, Amanda realized just how much her hard work had paid off when she was awarded 2021 Rookie of the Year at her brokerage. "I sold over \$2 million in volume in less than eight months in 2021 and hit the ground running right out the gate," she noted.

"Was it easy? Absolutely not. Was it stressful? Absolutely! In real estate, you could have 20 deals under contract, but that doesn't mean they will close. You definitely can't count your chickens before they hatch and don't know when your next paycheck will be. That is still the hardest part for me but I just kept pushing forward and getting up if I got knocked down."

"I burst into tears at that awards ceremony when they called my name for Rookie of the Year because it summed up to me that my hard work and willingness to dive in head first and figure it out was recognized," she continued. "I did it during my first eight months in real estate, which also happened to be one of the hardest years of my life."

**Giving Back and Not Giving Up**

When not working, Amanda is usually cheering her son on at the baseball or soccer fields. She and Jacob also enjoy hunting and fishing together when they have downtime. Due to her social service background and love for helping others, Amanda is a mentor at Keller Williams for new agents and currently oversees three mentees. She will also be one of the REALTOR® mentors for the 2022-2023 Walker High School Real Estate class.

Amanda feels it's paramount to keep pushing when the going gets tough. "When it's not going well, don't step back and be discouraged; step forward and keep going. Don't get discouraged and give up. Don't be scared to invest time and money into your business, because that's how you are going to see the return."



**“ I BURST INTO TEARS AT THAT AWARDS CEREMONY WHEN THEY CALLED MY NAME FOR ROOKIE OF THE YEAR BECAUSE IT SUMMED UP TO ME THAT MY HARD WORK AND WILLINGNESS TO DIVE IN HEAD FIRST AND FIGURE IT OUT WAS RECOGNIZED ”**



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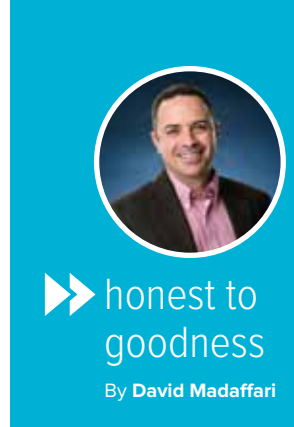
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honest to goodness

By David Madaffari

# MAKING HOT DOGS

Since March 24, my wife and I have been living in our 6-year-old's room as we embarked on a renovation of our master bedroom and bathroom area. The scope of the work is immense — if you could see it, it is either going to be ripped out, covered, painted or replaced. My wife's vision is coming together in a beautifully functional way, and it is going to be very rewarding when the work is complete and we get to enjoy it.

Anyone who has been through renovations knows the excitement of getting started and the contentment of completion. But in between, I started to liken the process to that of watching a hot dog get made — you really don't want to see how messy it is; you just know in the end, it will be tasty. This analogy is appropriate for many facets of our industry as well. It may get messy for a while, but the finished product will be worth it. It is how we handle the “messy” that makes the difference in what our customers experience with us, and taking pride of ownership in our roles is essential to doing so.

Taking pride in our work requires a thoughtful understanding of our role in multi-part processes. When we realize others are putting effort into their work prior to our part of the job (and subsequently after), the pride and expectation of our work should also include consideration to be given to theirs as well. If complications arise at any point, our pride is best suited in the wisdom to stop and consult all parties to form a solution together rather than flex our position within the situation. If indeed the only solution requires some backtracking or rework on someone's part, at least it can be done with the acceptance of everyone, thereby reducing any friction and maintaining decorum to achieve the goal.

Taking pride in your work is also an excellent opportunity to educate those for whom you work as well. A customer may describe what they want accomplished, and indeed it can be done as they wish. However, if you believe there are other factors that need to be considered, it is much better to take the time with your customer to give them the options your experience has afforded you. An educated customer may

make a different decision, take your advice and make your job easier. They will also be more likely to refer business your way because of it.

Working for others is very rewarding when approached with this idea of doing work of which you are proud. And when it is done in a team setting where multiple roles are in play, it may still get a little messy to achieve a satisfactory goal — kind of like the hot dog. And yet, we can control and limit the effects of the messiness of coordinated efforts if we each take pride not only in our work but the work of those with us and educating our customers along the way. By doing so, we might just make any task or job a more harmonious experience.

Have something you would like to say? Email David, and let's keep the conversation going: david@davidmadaffari.com.

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**Katie Causey**  
Attorney



**Shelby Dunbar**  
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