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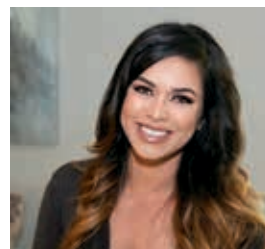
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» publisher's note

LEADERSHIP

If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.

—John Quincy Adams

Dear REALTORS® and Preferred Partners,

In the past two-plus years, I've had the privilege of launching not one but two *Real Producers* magazines in SWFL, and my life has changed dramatically because of it. I've made the most incredible connections with this area's best-of-the-best, and have learned so much from every one of you.

As my business grew here, so did my support needs... I started *Real Producers* working by myself, and today, I have a fantastic and growing group of professionals behind me. So lately, I've been reflecting on what leadership is, what it means, and how I can best exemplify it for myself and the people on my team.

To me, leadership is a blessing and also a huge responsibility that entails continuous learning, practicing, and refining of our decision-making and people skills. It matches up with the core values of what we stand for here at *Naples Real Producers* — masterminding and learning from each other to become even better versions of ourselves so we are able to improve our own lives and the lives of others.

Growing up, I was fortunate to have two tremendous models of leadership. My father owned a small manufacturing company in Minnesota with employees he had to manage. And my mother was a senior human resources professional working for big corporations,

responsible, at times, for thousands of people in the organizations she worked for. So I got to see different types of leadership, and their examples, in addition to those of the military personnel and church leaders I've been fortunate enough to know throughout my life, have inspired me and given me templates from which to form my own brand of leadership.

Whether it's in an army, a business, or a family ... leadership takes courage. It requires that you be able to look at yourself humbly, without ego, on a continuous basis so you can truly see what needs improvement and what needs to be done. And then it calls for bold action to make course corrections and forge ahead with vision and fortitude. When others see these qualities in you, hopefully, it inspires them. Hopefully, if they work for you, you've done a good job of creating a vision of what your organization aspires to ... and your team gets behind you and makes that vision a reality. When you're all pulling together in sync and in the same direction, miracles can happen. This is what I hope for not only for myself but for all of you reading this publication. Go out there and be great leaders, and watch the miracles happen in your life and your business!

Very respectfully yours,

ANDREW REGENHARD

Owner/Publisher

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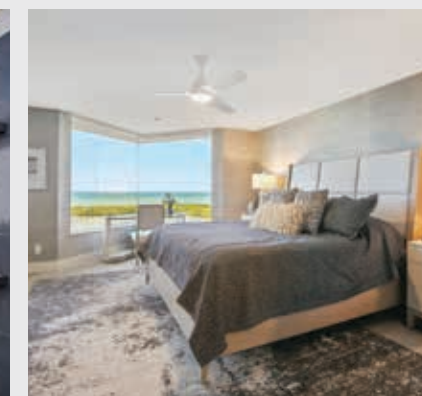
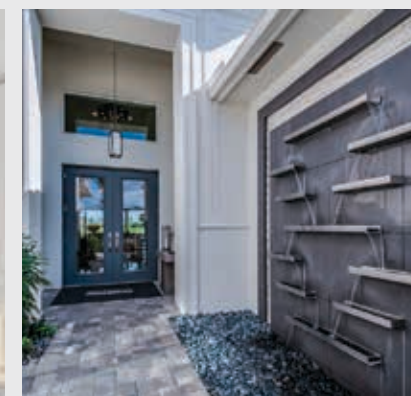
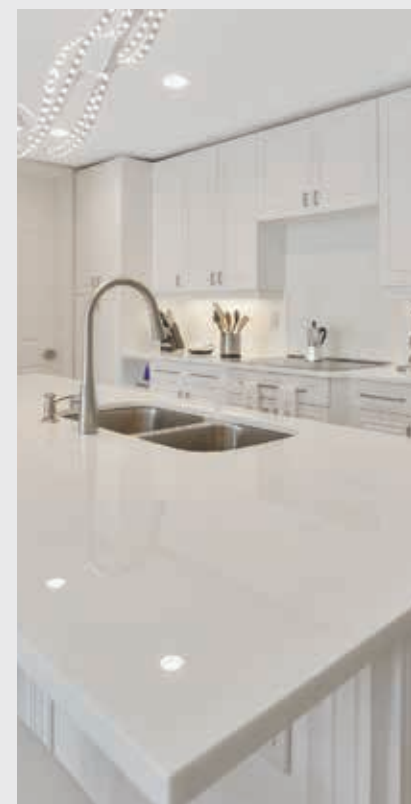
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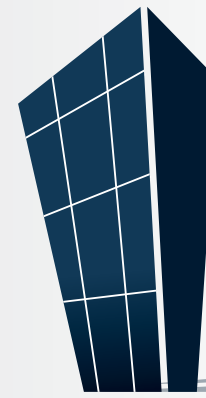


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"Something that sets us apart is our brand, our marketing. Everything from a social media post to a conversation, we always stay true to our brand. A lot of agents don't have consistent branding... That's what carries your business today and into the future."



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3 Listing Tips For Our Changing Market

As Southwest Florida heads into a heavier listing market, a strategic “refresh” may be in order. Newer agents on our teams need to quickly recognize buyers won’t be showing up forever, panting over properties like dogs for bones. Listings have been, and always will be, the cornerstone of this business, and relationships are still the No. 1 most profitable listing lead-generation technique. Sorry, Zillow!



1. Give the Seller Control. We want the seller to have a sense of control, yet move away from deciding WHO will list the property. The assumption is WE will list the property; the seller gets control over deciding price. When we enter a listing consult with one list price, we are likely not selected when another agent’s suggested price is higher. This is especially true in a shifting market, as sellers go into denial and list with those saying what the seller wants to hear. Although there are ways to handle this, I make it a practice to eclipse objections before they appear. Top agents go in with A, B, C list-price options, having asked the seller ahead of time what they want to net. Each list price, A, B and C, is tied to a time frame, and the seller’s ideal price always appears (usually as plan C). The lower the price, the faster the time frame to sell. A is 0-30 days anticipated to contract. B is 30-90 days, and C is 90+ days. When we show up as their agent, and they have guided control over time and price, listings are taken.

2. Convert Stats to Dollars. As the MLS adjusts, pay close attention weekly. Inventory drives. When inventory increases, sales eventually stabilize. Right now, migration is continuing to bolster our market. At some point — and we’re on our way — building catches up. When prices begin to adjust, calculate the average monthly rate. For example, if prices begin to fall 1% per month on average, we can share with the seller that “In 120 days, you may likely be another 4% down. That’s \$40K on your \$1M property. Are we waiting for something important enough to lose \$40K, Mr. and Mrs. Seller? If so, ok. If not, let’s go.”

3. Watch the Buyer Pool. Over the last 5 years, the SWFL market has become more mortgage-driven than I can remember. When I ran Keller Williams, at one point 78% of our sales were cash. Sellers have to understand that buyers are leveraging more and that banks — in preparation for potential recession — are becoming less flexible on appraisal. As mortgage rates increase, both of these factors may likely shrink the buyer pool. Pricing will have to fall more in line, eventually. These are market facts, not our opinions. Consult with the seller on this in order to obtain a more realistic list price. If 63% of buyers are obtaining mortgages and we over-price the listing, we narrow our target market all the way down to 37%.

“With a 59% increase in inventory and a 36% decrease in sales, year over year, local industry changes are now visible. Many agents won’t survive the upcoming transition.”

—Coach Kerri

Coach Kerri is an award-winning entrepreneur and coach who develops real estate industry leaders in SWFL and Nashville.

She’s the business strategist behind many agents, teams, and brokerages, coaching more than 1,100 business owners throughout her career.



Pro Tip: When agents leave real estate because the market shifts, which they will, pay attention. It’s an opportunity to become their referral agent. Don’t let agents go “inactive.” Instead, inform them about referral companies and pick up their databases through a referral agreement. Your CRM could dramatically increase in decent leads quickly.

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Haven Group: A Collective Vision



JOEY REMINGTON & KATIE EDMONDS PETERS

Joey Remington and Katie Edmonds Peters have been friends for over 20 years. Over that time, they've lived their lives in parallel; they found themselves in New York City at the same time, and both eventually returned to Florida, where they grew up.

In recent years, Joey and Katie have taken their friendship to another level, becoming business partners in real estate. Today, Joey and Katie are the team leaders of Haven Group, one of Southwest Florida's up-and-coming real estate teams.

Beginnings: Joey Remington

Joey got into the real estate business in 2013. At the time, he was living in

Manhattan. After years in the hospitality industry, he was looking for a change, and a career in real estate intrigued him.

"I loved hospitality. However, it was the late nights that were the hardest. It's a hustle. You can only make so much money waiting tables, and the opportunity for growth just wasn't there for me. I wanted to change my lifestyle, and I've always had an affinity for real estate," Joey reflects.

Joey began in the rental space and soon transitioned onto a luxury team. In 2015, his father's illness brought him back to Fort Myers, where he was raised. Joey landed on another luxury real estate team as a manager and





administrative assistant. After five years in real estate, he moved into a sales role in 2018.

“After five years in the industry, with a wealth of education, I felt it was time to go out on my own. I was fortunate enough to learn and work alongside many top producers, and I knew I had what it takes.”

Joey closed over 30 homes his first year and over 50 his second year. In his first three years, he broke the

100-transaction mark. With his experience as an administrative assistant and vast sphere of influence, he quickly rose through the real estate rankings.

Beginnings: Katie Edmonds Peters

Katie’s first career was in retail and fashion. Inspired by her father, the former CEO of Chico’s, she headed to New York City to attend The Fashion Institute of Technology in 2005. After graduating, she stuck around New York, working for a casting director and traveling the world. She enjoyed

parts of the fashion industry, but the work was also thankless.

“I learned important skill sets in fashion, but the industry is not for me. I will always be grateful for that time in my life, but I can’t imagine my life today if I had stayed on that path,” Katie reflects. “So I moved out of New York in 2012.”

Katie returned to Florida, where she started a family. Over the next six years, she was a stay-at-home mom for her three young children.

“At that time, my husband and I were buying a house and used Joey as our agent. During the process of purchasing a home with Joey, I found I was really interested in real estate. I felt like I had the skill set to be successful.”

Katie decided to get her real estate license, and did so in 12 days, before even closing on her home.

“

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—JOEY”



Joey Remington.



Katie Edmonds Peters.





“I knew I didn’t want to be a stay-at-home mom forever. I have three kids and am very grateful for the time I had at home with them. I also knew I didn’t want to get back into retail or fashion. My mindset changed after I moved out of the city and became a mom. I was so hungry to work after being a stay-at-home mom for six years. I was ready to be back in a professional space.”

With Joey as a mentor, Katie’s business took off.

Coming Together

From 2019 to 2021, Joey and Katie worked side by side as individual agents with their own books of business. In 2021, they decided to move to Local Real Estate together.

“At that time, we started talking about being business partners. We’re very aligned professionally and personally. It’s crazy how aligned we are with our business. From marketing to our business plan, we always are on the

same page. It just felt like the right fit,” Joey says.

Once Joey and Katie told their former brokerage they planned to move, a handful of agents decided to follow them. While they didn’t initially intend to start a team, one formed organically, and Haven Group was born.

Taking Haven Group Into the Future

Today, Haven Group is a team of six agents, including Joey and Katie. The team closed over \$48 million in 2021, \$37 million of which was done by Joey and Katie. Joey and Katie pride themselves on their service, their commitment to their clients, and their marketing.

“We are dedicated to providing world-class service and expertise to our clients. We stand out with our customer service,” Joey says. “We obsess about the details and want to always do the right thing for the client’s long-term vision.”

“Something that sets us apart is our brand, our marketing. Everything from a social media post to a conversation ... we always stay true to our brand,” Katie adds. “A lot of agents don’t have consistent branding. To me, that’s what carries your business today and into the future.”

Joey and Katie are now in the second year of their journey with Haven Group. They hope to build the team to around 15 agents. Along the way, they intend to keep serving clients with the same high level of customer service they have become known for.

“A lot of team leads start a team and their focus is building the team, but they want to get out of production. Joey and I don’t want to get out of production. While we love helping agents learn, grow, and build their business, our other passion is selling real estate. Staying in production makes us stronger team leads as it keeps us current on market trends and helps us better guide our agents and clients,” Katie says. “We are just at the beginning. We are very excited about the future of Haven Group, and we are confident that, for years to come, we will be one of Southwest Florida’s top teams.”

Friends for over 20 years, Joey Remington and Katie Edmonds Peters teamed up at Local Real Estate in 2021.



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Win the Morning, Win the Day!

There's an old phrase, "Win the morning, win the day." I always share that if you're a business owner and you're waking up in the morning, brushing your teeth, having that cup of coffee, and dashing out to the business world, you're like a warrior going out to battle with no armor. At some point, adversity might hit, and those arrows might come flying and pierce you if you're not prepared.

Success is about leveraging the morning to get right so we can show up correctly. Prior to mastering your morning, make sure you have your annual plans, your 90-day plans, your monthly plans, your weekly plans, and your daily

plans. Be sure to plan on Friday for Monday, plan for Wednesday on Tuesday night, and so on.

Don't come into the office in the morning and think, "Okay, what do I need to do today?" Be crystal clear

on the lineup of your action steps for the day when you step into the office. When all that is in place, you can really get your mind right in the morning so when you get to work, you'll be better prepared to be productive and efficient.

What are some of the things that I do in the morning?

The first thing I do when I wake up is read for about 10 minutes. I have certain books I like to read. I might read the highlights portions of certain books. It might be a certain book that I'm in the middle of reading and I'll read 10 minutes a day progressively. Once I do a little reading, I go and meditate for about 20 minutes. I just sit on the couch, get calm, close my eyes, get focused on my breathing, bring my heart rate down, and think about everything I'm grateful for. I also focus on how I'm going to show up for the day. Once my meditation is done, I do some stretching to get the knots out. This gets my body moving and the blood flowing. Sometimes, however, I just might go straight to the gym in the morning and get a good workout with some music. If not, I'll save that for later in the afternoon or the early evening.

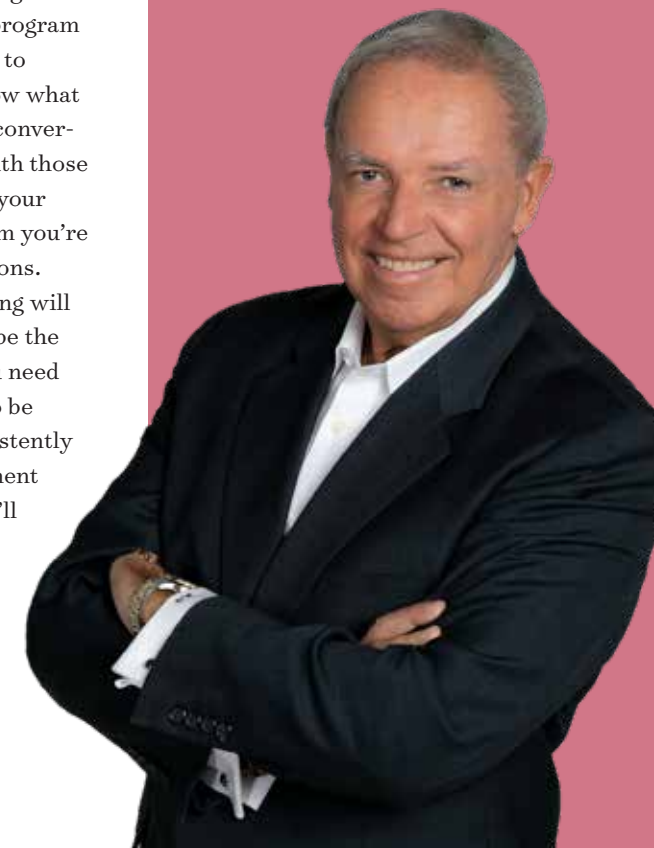
After stretching, I'm outside by the pool. I have a certain booklet with all the affirmations I read. However, before I read my affirmations, I have a series of questions I ask myself. What am I excited about? What about that makes me feel excited? How does that make me feel? What am I proud of? What am I grateful for? What am I happy about? These questions get me in the right mindset. By asking these quality questions, I come up with quality answers and I can actually program myself for how I'm going to show up that day. After these questions, I have certain affirmations I read. I go through my 'I am' statements. I read the success formula from *Think and*

Grow Rich, one of the principles we need to master and apply. Once I'm done with my affirmations, I'm set. I've taken time for my mind with some reading and affirmations, my body with some stretching, and my spirit with a little meditation. Now, my mind's right and I'm ready to go.

Once I get to the office, I already have my plans for exactly what needs to be done. However, I have three more steps before I get started on those plans. I have two composition books, one in which I write five things I am grateful for, followed by documenting my biggest win from the prior day, and a second composition book in which I write one idea on how to grow my business today. Once completed, I am officially ready to go.

These are certain rituals I do. I encourage you to find some morning rituals that work for you. A long time ago, Tony Robbins created what he calls your "Hour of Power." Win the morning, win the day, and create some rituals to get your mind right because you can actually pre-program yourself for how you are going to show up for the day. You'll know what appointments you have, what conversations you're going to have with those appointments, as well as with your team, and you'll know how calm you're going to be in those conversations. This investment in your morning will prepare you to be on point, to be the leader and business owner you need to be and, most importantly, to be successful in this world. Consistently make your morning an investment in yourself, and I promise, you'll be happy with the return.

Coach Michael Dill is an award-winning certified business coach, global speaker and published author. He is a proud Action Coach Franchise partner, as well as the president of Power & Ice Wealth Creation, a strategic leadership company that works with business owners, leaders, teams and entrepreneurs to develop a systematized and structured organization while accelerating their mindset, efficiencies and effectiveness to grow, both personally and professionally, to achieve extraordinary results. He brings more than 40 years of business and entrepreneurial experience in his leadership, team training and mentoring practice. BusinessCoachMichaelDill.com





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▶ partner spotlight

JONATHAN T. POLK

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CONNECTOR

POLK INDUSTRIES

By Zachary Cohen | Photos by LaCasaTour

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NEED EACH OTHER, AND

I REPRESENT GREAT

COMPANIES, SO YOU GET

EXACTLY WHAT YOU NEED

TO CLOSE FASTER.

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FUN FACT

JONATHAN'S CURRENT
BUSINESS CARD IS A NAIL
FILE — ANOTHER NOD TO
HIS CREATIVE APPROACH TO
MARKETING AND BUSINESS.



Jonathan T. Polk is owner/CEO of Polk Industries, a marketing arm of Landtech Surveying. (Photo taken at the Luminary Hotel in Fort Myers.)

• • •

In addition to being the CEO and owner of Polk Industries, Jonathan T. Polk runs a client-appreciation cactus farm. This little side venture perfectly encapsulates the way in which he approaches his business.

“One day, I randomly replanted a cactus cutting from this cactus I had in my backyard. I planted it and gave it to a client without thinking much of it. The client was so moved and said she loved plants, so then I started growing more and more cactuses.”

Jonathan has now given out hundreds of cactuses to clients. He hangs a little flag on each that says, “Let’s grow together.”

Jonathan’s cactus farm represents creative marketing, but it’s also a nod to his personable, lighthearted way of being. He’s able to effectively balance his more serious, professional side with a more charismatic, personal side. His vision has always been to grow alongside his clients — as both business partners and friends.

An Industry Connector

Jonathan was born and raised in New Jersey but has been in Florida since he moved to the state at 16. As an adult, Jonathan set down roots in Southwest Florida. After graduating from Florida Southern College with a degree in hospitality management, he landed a job in wine sales.

Jonathan sold wine for three and a half years, becoming the number one salesperson in the state, but wine sales wasn’t his passion, so he moved on. That’s when he first entered the surveying industry.

“They paid me to go around to every title company and real estate lawyer I could possibly go to in southern Florida — marketing, cold calling, letting people know what I do,” Jonathan reflects.

Jonathan discovered that not only was he good at his new job, he loved it. He’s now been in the surveying business for an impressive 25 years.

Jonathan continues to serve title companies and real estate lawyers throughout

Florida. He offers lien searches and land surveys (including boundary and site surveys, mortgage surveys, FEMA elevation certificates, construction surveys, and pool surveys).

“My next business card is going to have ‘Connector’ as my title. I connect people to my offices for the best services they can possibly receive ordering these products. I connect people that need each other, and I represent great companies, so you get exactly what you need to close faster.”

Most of Jonathan’s work days begin with visiting or checking in on title companies in the area to ensure they are satisfied with their service. If there is an issue, he makes it his job to find a solution. It’s this willingness to dive into challenges and find creative solutions that makes Jonathan so good at what he does.

Stepping into the Future

Outside work, Jonathan enjoys going to the gym and spending downtime with his wife, Monica. Back in New Jersey, he worked as a sailing instructor on the Delaware River, and he continues to sail in his free time. His wife, Monica, is also the CFO of Polk Industries.

As Jonathan looks ahead, he plans to take Polk Industries nationwide; he intends to expand to Texas, Maryland, and more states in the next year. Regardless of where he’s doing business, one thing will remain steady: his commitment to his clients.

“I’m loyal, caring, and will do anything for them... I love working with people. I literally love what I do.”



Polk Industries is a marketing arm of Landtech Surveying. The company operates on the belief that no job is too small and no project is too large. Polk Industries connects a highly trained staff of land surveyors and mapping professionals who are

licensed and accredited with the State of Florida with local title companies and real estate lawyers. Their highest priority is the delivery of high-quality professional services which meet clients’ needs and maintaining close and clear communication throughout the project. For more information, please visit www.polkindustries.net.



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Monthly Prin. & Interest (Start)	\$2,995	\$2,725	\$2,820
Total Monthly Expenses	\$3,515	\$3,245	\$3,340
Total Annual Expenses	\$42,175	\$38,945	\$40,079
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► pro tips
By Alessia Marcin



As a Realtor, your time is extremely valuable and is usually geared towards finding new business and the next deal. Connecting and keeping in contact with previous clients is essential if you want to ensure future business with them, however following up and keeping in contact is much easier said than done.

One way to stay top of mind with previous clients is with a closing gift that stands out from the rest. Everybody loves a nice gift basket with wine and chocolate ... but that may only last a month or two. It's now two years since they closed on their house, the gift basket disappeared a month after closing, and you haven't had contact with them in over six months. Do you think you will be the agent they call, or will they go with another one of the thousand agents in town? By giving your client a unique, long-lasting and personalized gift, you not only separate yourself from the rest of the crowd but you also give them

a beautiful and constant reminder of who helped them with their previous real estate transaction and who they should call to assist them with their next one.

Balanced Images, a preferred partner of *Naples Real Producers*, is an interior design aesthetic and concept that creates custom wall art that is infused into high-grade aluminum. The company strives to capture specific images and moments in time that resonate with clients' particular interests. Balanced Images' passion and specialty are working with individuals one on one, exploring their intended space and visions for it, as normal or crazy as they can be, and ultimately bringing their ideas to life through one-of-a-kind photographs infused into high-grade aluminum that will last a lifetime.

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Born in Germany and raised Italian and Polish, Alessia Marcin, owner of Balanced Images, has always

felt passionate about bringing cultures together through art and travel. She began her journey with photography capturing the famous SWFL sunsets, and later expanded her repertoire and specialization to big cats and exotic cars. Her art is now exclusively presented in the form of "Balanced Images," through a process where her creative, high-resolution images are infused into aluminum for unique, lasting pieces of art to adorn clients' homes and office spaces. Alessia can be found online at www.balancedimages.com.

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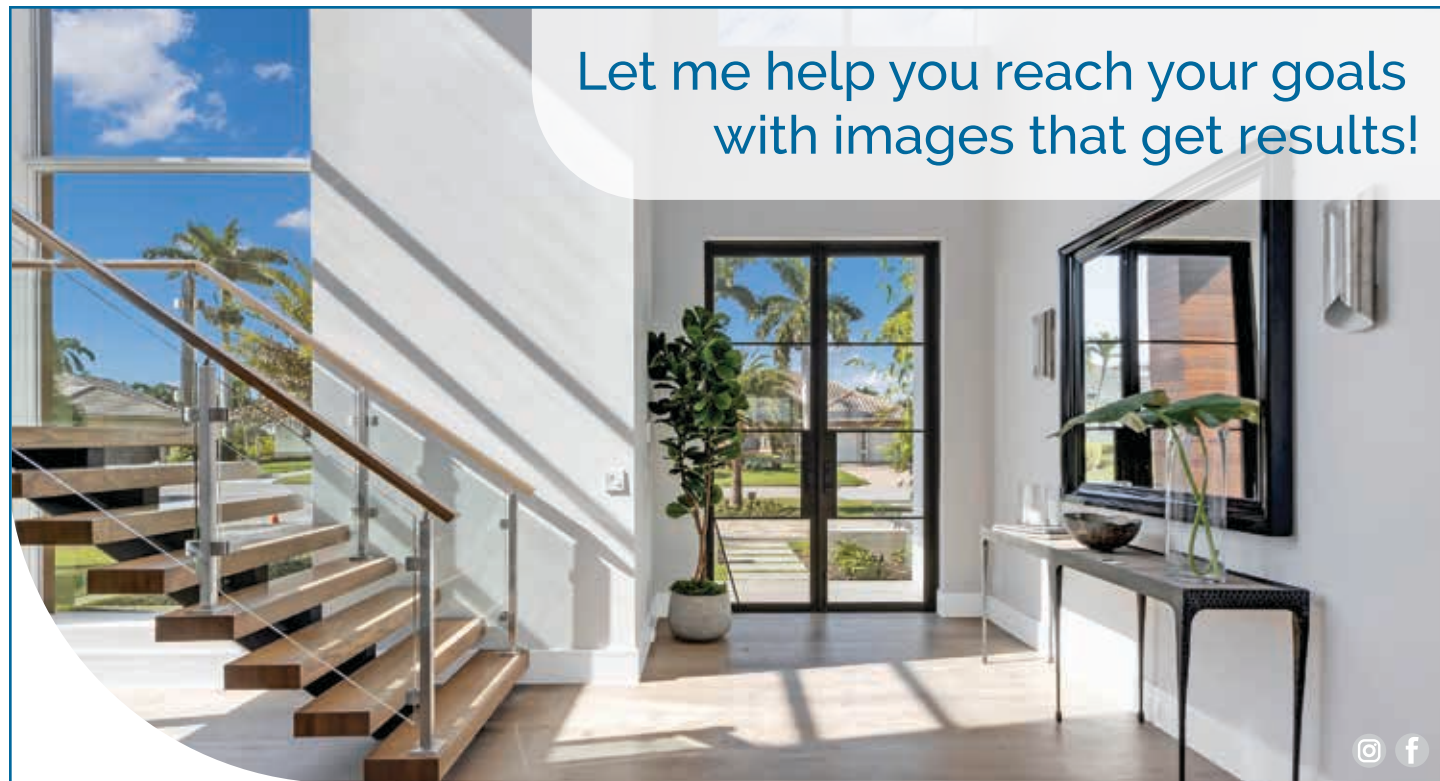
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LIZ BISMURM

Building a Culture





Liz Biswurm (center) with members of her team at Anchor Real Estate Brokers (from left to right: Clay Will, Carla Worth, Tessa Cooper, Kyler Pacyga, John Lopez).

In 2008, Liz Biswurm landed in Florida with hopes of new beginnings. Born and raised in Memphis, Liz started her professional life in kitchen design. Over the years, she bought and sold several homes, falling in love with real estate. So when her husband accepted a job transfer to the Orlando area, Liz took the opportunity to begin a career as a REALTOR®.

“I had a fresh starting point. I really liked the industry, so when I had the opportunity to change careers, I did.”

The Early Years

Liz began her real estate career amid a historic housing crisis.

“It was a crazy time,” she reflects. “All of Orlando was a short sale.”

Liz floundered during her first year, which she spent at a large brokerage. In year two, she moved to a boutique brokerage, where she began to flourish. The hands-on environment and broker’s accessibility helped her get her career off the ground.

“He took me under his wing, and I got to learn everything he was doing on a day-to-day basis. That was better training than I had at a large brokerage. That really informed my career,” Liz explains.

Liz steadily built her business over the next several years, successfully implementing the experience in business management, construction, and customer service she gained while working in kitchen remodeling.

“I enjoy the ins and outs of working with people. I love how real estate is a different day, every day,” Liz says. “It was quick learning.”

Finding Home

In 2012, Liz and her family relocated again, this time to Naples. They had family in the area, had vacationed to Naples previously, and in 2012, finally

I enjoy the ins and outs of working with people. I love how real estate is a different day, every day.

transitioned homes. Liz landed at another boutique brokerage, where she began to rebuild her business.

“In Naples, I looked for a small brokerage to work with here. I wanted that hands-on approach,” she explains.

Liz worked for that brokerage for seven years. In 2019, she founded her brokerage, Anchor Real Estate Brokers. She started as a one-woman team working out of her home office.

“It was a time when real estate was slow in 2019. I had the extra time and the drive, and I thought the timing was right. So I broke off and opened it in my home office. Then, of course, everything got busy. It drove me to need help, and that’s where the brokerage started.”

Liz’s first teammate was her sister, Carla Worth, who relocated from Memphis to become her assistant.

The sisters were a team of two through mid-2021 when Liz began filling out the team with more agents and assistants. Today, Anchor Real Estate Brokers is a team of 10. Liz continues to produce as the owner/broker, and Carla is now the manager of the property management division.

A Culture of Teamwork

Liz’s vision is to create a small boutique brokerage with a team atmosphere, and she’s well on her way to achieving that goal. Anchor Real Estate Brokers’ property management division allows them to offer investors services far exceeding those provided by other agents.

“We are a personal service. That’s a benefit of a small brokerage,” Liz explains. “We can take care of everything turnkey. A lot of customers are investors, so they can do everything without coming here. From

Liz’s sister, Carla (right), was her first teammate and is now manager of the property management division.



...

the time they purchase to the time money shows up in their bank, we do everything. We can furnish it, design it, get a renter, manage the rental, pay the bills, and get their profit to their bank account... It's all about the personal touch."

Liz is excited about what the future may hold. She hopes to grow the team to 40 agents but is mindful of growing too quickly. Culture will always take precedent.

"It's about quality and the compatibility of working together on a team. It's about doing things the right way."

BEYOND REAL ESTATE

When Liz Biswurm is not working, she enjoys spending time with her husband and two daughters or cheering on the Chicago Cubs and the Memphis Tigers (her alma mater). She runs in races nationwide as a St. Jude Hero, raising money for the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee.

Liz is also the associate publisher of *Build Magazine* of Naples and Palm Beach, a publication showcasing custom builders and architects.



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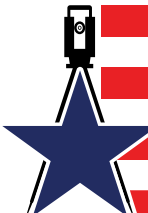
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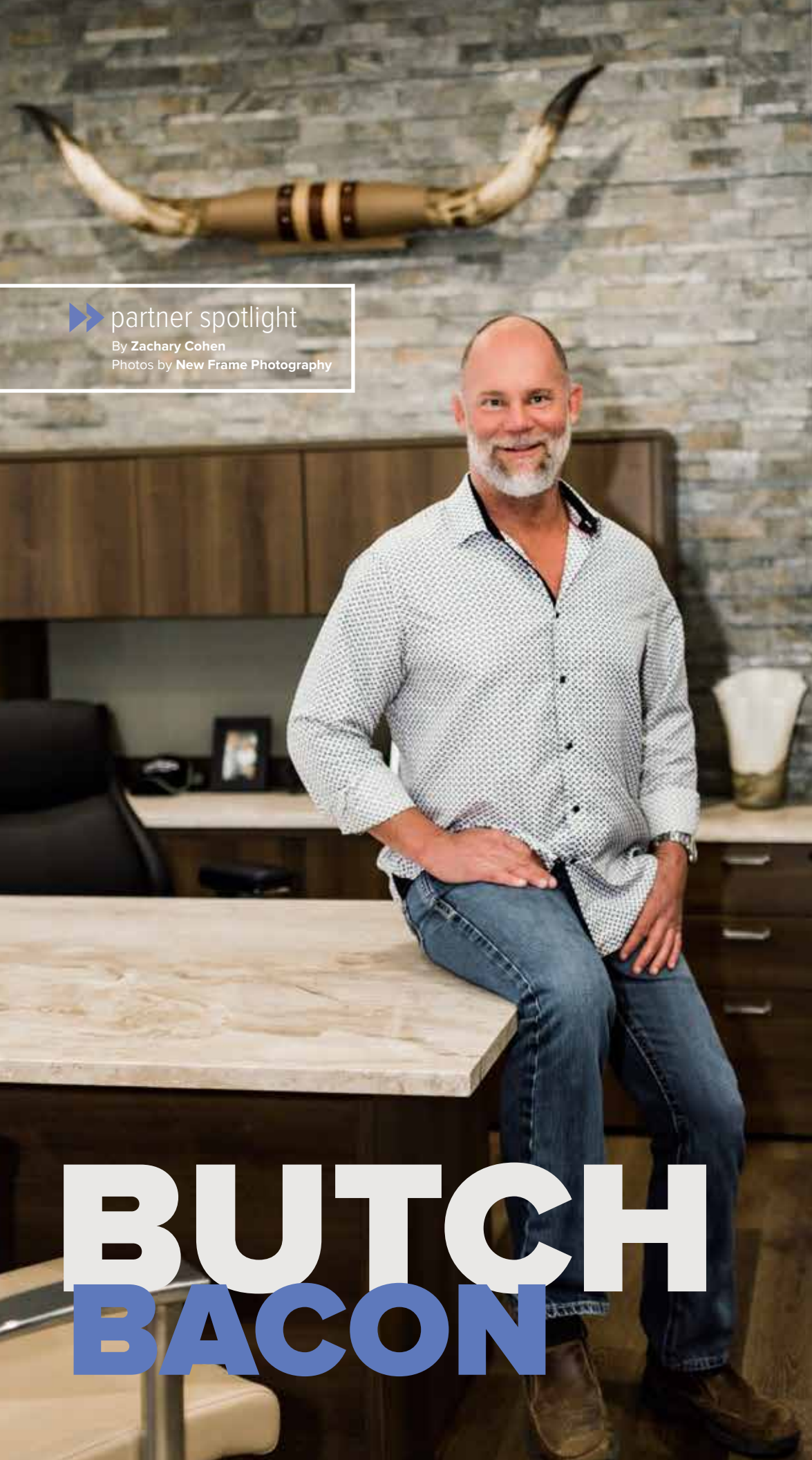
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▶ partner spotlight
By Zachary Cohen
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BUTCH BACON

DOMINION CONTRACTING GROUP



THE DRIVE TO CREATE

Growing up, Butch Bacon was surrounded by dedicated tradespeople. His father was an electrical contractor, and many of his father's friends were builders, framing contractors, plumbers, and HVAC experts.

"By the time I was in high school, I would spend the summer working with one contractor and the next working with another," Butch recalls.

As a young man, Butch was quickly gaining experience in many aspects of the construction business. He didn't know it then, but his skills were being primed for his future role leading one of Florida's most well-respected general contractors.

Self-Discovery

In 1986, Butch enlisted in the Marine Corps, and when he left in 1990, he swore he'd never get back into construction. Instead, he landed work as a technician with Eastern Airlines. But when Eastern Airlines went out of business, Butch was again left at a crossroads. He was hired to work at the local post office, but he wasn't fulfilled there.

"It just wasn't for me. I wasn't building things. I wasn't creating anything."

Butch realized then that his passion lay in building and repairing things with his own hands. With this newfound self-discovery in hand, he returned to the construction industry.

"I have this drive to make things better," he explains.

...



Butch Bacon is owner and founder of Dominion Contracting Group, specializing in kitchens, baths, flooring, and commercial renovations.

The Path to Dominion Contracting Group

Butch helped start Gulf Stream Homes in 1998, and he stayed with the builder through 2005. That's when he noticed the market shifting and decided the time was ripe to start his own company.

"In late 2005, I saw a trend where things were starting to drop off. In

the first quarter of 2006, we saw the new-home-building market tank. In the rest of the country, they didn't see it until 2008, but Naples was the first to see that trend. So I left Gulf Stream Homes to start a remodeling business."

Butch understood that while home building may slow to a halt, there would always be some need for remodels. The knowledge he gained

at Gulf Stream put him in a good position to succeed in his new venture with Dominion Contracting Group.

The first few years were understandably slow. Butch focused on rehabs and flips while the market was struggling. In 2012, when the real estate market began to regain its footing, Dominion began to prosper.

Into the Present

Today, Dominion Contracting Group does everything from kitchens, baths, and flooring to commercial renovations. Butch and his team continue to be driven by the desire to build, create, and grow.

"We are constantly building new things, making things better, and that's the satisfaction for me," Butch says. "If you want a fresh-looking house, give us a call."

As Butch looks ahead, he remains grounded in his desire to create, as well as his desire to serve God.

"I've got a lot of visions. Our goals are fluid. With the business, it's always been and always will be to make things around us better, to improve. Personally, it's all about family, to give them the tools they need to be successful in life," Butch explains.

Butch and his wife have three children: Jake (15), Emma (14), and Asher (11), all of whom are standout athletes (Emma took first place in women's freestyle wrestling at the 2021 USA Nationals and won a gold medal at the Pan American Games in October). To further the children's academic and athletic pursuits, Butch's wife moved

to Pennsylvania with them, where they attend a top private school, and Butch splits his time between Pennsylvania and Naples.

"The 'end game' for me, as a husband, father, and a business owner, is to nurture the gifts God has given us."

For more information about Dominion Contracting Group, please visit www.dcgswfl.com.



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Photo by David Corban Architects

▶▶ making a difference | Grace Place for Children & Families

▶ **Pathways Out of Poverty through Literacy** By Ellen Buchanan

The Naples community is fortunate to have Grace Place for Children & Families in their midst, working to improve the lives of disadvantaged children and families. Founded by a Methodist minister as an afterschool homework-help program on a shoe-string budget, today, Grace Place is a full-service literacy campus situated on a \$16 million, four-acre property in Golden Gate City serving over 1,000 students from cradle to career, with students 0-5 in family literacy pre-school programs, students from seven local schools, and adult education.

While still retaining its original values of faith and inclusiveness, Grace Place is no longer affiliated with the Methodist Church and welcomes and serves all in need, regardless of their beliefs.

In fact, inclusiveness is a hallmark of Grace Place. Approximately 80% of the students and families enrolled in their programs are Spanish-speaking, of Mexican, Central and South American descent, or are from the Caribbean, Haiti, and Eastern Europe. “Most families are coming from places around the world facing crises

of drugs, war, and poverty,” Lära Fisher, CEO of Grace Place, explains.

In Collier County, the families Grace Place serves continue to face the challenges of poverty; the median per capita income in Golden Gate City is just under \$17,000 per year, and over 90% of Golden Gate City elementary students are determined as economically needy. Grace Place aims to bridge the gap and provide a viable way for these families out of poverty through education.

“We have a program for the youngest learners that is similar to pre-school, but we require parental involvement onsite



Photo by Joshua Colt Fisher

in educational programming, learning English at the same time as their pre-school student. The goal is that our 4-years-olds are kindergarten-ready at same level as students that are native born,” Lära says.

Grace Place also has an afterschool program for students in kindergarten through high school that complements their traditional, public-school learning. For graduating seniors, they offer four full-ride scholarships to Florida Gulf Coast University in Fort Myers, which the students compete for.

The model appears to be incredibly successful; in 2021, 92% of Grace Place’s pre-K students tested as school-ready at year-end; 100% of the high school seniors graduated (those who attended their programs for three years or more graduated with a 3.0+ GPA); and 62% of adult ESOL learners improved their reading comprehension.

“And there are no fees for any of our programs,” Lära says proudly.

“We also have a food pantry on campus,” adds Kim Regenhard, Grace Place’s Chief Human Resources Officer.

The Grace Place Food Pantry is a wonderful added bonus and vital service for Golden Gate City families facing food insecurity. Although education is the core focus and mission of Grace Place, their food pantry serves over 2,500 families a year. Grace Place ensures that the preschool children and their parents receive breakfast and a snack at the morning program and the afterschool program students each receive a meal and a snack as well.

Grace Place employs almost 125 staff, a good portion of whom work in the Collier County Public Schools with these same students in their traditional school settings as well. “In addition,” says Kim, “we rely heavily on volunteers and hire high school students for a variety of different programs. Some of them have benefited from the programs themselves and are now turning around and being mentors to others.”



Grace Place’s preschool program requires parents to enroll in educational programming, learning English at the same time as their child.



In order to be able to offer such a robust menu of academic services, Grace Place relies heavily on fund-raising, along with a few grants from the Department of Education. Their chief fundraising activity is a golf tournament in the spring.

Grace Place encourages people who would like to learn about the organization, the programs, and how they can help to come to see them for a tour.

“Our main goal is to get people onto campus because we believe if they see



the impacts of what we do, it helps them understand the population that we help and the high quality of the programs that we deliver,” Lära says. “Any type of group can make an arrangement and we can give them a tour. We do individual tours, as well, and do some fun things where we can have 5th graders give tours of the campus and visitors can hear how much our students have learned.”



One hundred percent of Grace Place’s high school seniors graduated from their public schools, many with greater than 3.0 averages.



Kim points out that for those inspired to give back to the community, Grace Place is a wonderful way to do that.

“We’re always looking for new donors and volunteers, and for people to get to know more about Grace Place,” Kim says. “This is a great way for people who want to invest right here in their own backyard. It doesn’t need to be money either... It can be to volunteer, to help with some of our classes that we offer to people, such as financial literacy, or it could be helping with an event, with our food pantry, or to move mulch around on our playground. So there’s a lot of opportunity here for people to give back and make a difference in our community.”

“Something important for our Realtor friends to keep in mind,” adds Lära, “is that many of the families we help aspire to be homeowners, and many of them are homeowners, as are our staff. They’re here year-round and are part of the Naples community. When they buy or sell, it’s going to be here; this is their home.”

[Several members of the SWFL real estate community actively support Grace Place: Nita Rapp, with Levitan Realty; Premier Sotheby’s International

Realty; John R. Wood Properties; The Lutgert Companies; and *Naples Real Producers* magazine.]

“People find a place to give that speaks to their heart,” Lära says.



Grace Place’s food pantry serves up to 2,500 families per year.

...

“There are a lot of great organizations in Naples for people to support. But when you think about the families we help, Grace Place really is supporting the future of Naples.”

Grace Place believes that an investment in the literacy and language skills of the families of Golden Gate City is an investment in the workforce of Collier County, and that, together with the caring and generous individuals and organizations in Greater Naples, they are helping build a stronger community, now and for future generations.

To learn more about Grace Place for Children & Families or to make arrangements to tour the campus, call Lära Fisher at 239-255-7201 or visit www.graceplacenaples.org.



LÄRA FISHER

Lära Fisher, CEO, has been with Grace Place since October 2020. Originally in higher education at a private liberal arts college, Lära later worked in youth development and then for South County Outreach, a family-based hunger and homeless nonprofit in Orange County, California. Intending to retire when she moved to Florida, Lära found herself bored, she says, and was happy when she saw the CEO of Grace Place position in her email — a culmination of everything she had done to that point in her career and a perfect opportunity to utilize her talents to make a difference in her new community. Lära takes tremendous pride in the dignity and high quality of the academic programming that Grace Place provides.



KIM REGENHARD

Kim Regenhart, CHRO (Chief Human Resources Officer), has been with Grace Place since January 2021. Kim previously held many senior human resources positions in private industry and with Fortune 500 companies around the country. Having moved to Naples in 2018, also intending to retire, Kim was recruited by a Grace Place board member and fellow human resources professional and happily went back to work. What Kim loves about working for a nonprofit like Grace Place is the satisfaction of knowing that her time and effort is going to benefit others and the broader society overall. She is passionate about finding and hiring the right people, who are truly motivated to give back and help make a better life for others.

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Stress. Maybe you feel it when you're running late, stuck in traffic, before an important meeting, waiting for that counter, in a conversation or listening to the news. Stress, our body's response to pressure can be triggered by feelings of overwhelm, loss of control, unexpected events or anything that threatens our sense of self and well-being. Stress can be healthy, even motivating, spurring us to accomplish and achieve great things or simply tackle our to-do list. Yet, unmanaged and chronic stress can interfere with our overall health and our ability to do our best work.

Consciously, we often rationalize our stress with our thoughts like, "I got this," while our brain reacts quite differently. Our brain overrides "I got this" with the response, "Tiger! Run!" as it perceives our stress as fight or flight. Suddenly, our body shifts our energy resources toward fighting off a life threat or frantically fleeing from a perceived enemy.

Our brain does not differentiate between that lucrative deal going south or a tiger attack as it begins to protect our body, flooding our system with the stress hormone cortisol. Too much cortisol elevates our heart rate, increases our blood pressure, tenses our muscles, quickens and shallows our breath, and increases the energy required to deal with the stress at hand. Continuous activation of our nervous system this way can greatly affect not only our bodies, our ability to sleep, and our metabolism, but can also greatly affect our thinking, our work, our relationships, and our lives.

Life happens, and stressors abound. So sans time on Bali in a tiki hut (insert your dream escape from it all here), one simple, science-backed technique can not only help gain mastery over our thoughts of stress but also alter our body's very response to it.

Most think, when stressed, the solution is to work on our MIND. But in fact, the fastest, easiest, and most powerful way to de-stress is through our BREATH. Altering our breathing can be a game changer in how our body perceives stress while reducing the detrimental effects of stress on our overall well-being.

One method I utilize in my coaching is the '5-5-7 Breath'. This method is an inhale through the nose for five seconds, holding the breath for five seconds, and slowly exhaling through the nose for seven seconds. This conscious breathing method ignites our body's relaxation response, tuning into a heightened awareness, lowering our heart rate and blood pressure, and reducing stress hormones in the blood.

When we consciously alter our breathing pattern, we improve the oxygen capacity in our blood and begin to feel more energy, stamina, and a sense of well-being. As we change the rhythm of our breath, our body naturally relaxes. As we relax and breathe with an intentional rhythm, we then can control our body's responses from "fight or flight" to "rest and digest," creating a sense of calm, and thus thinking more rationally. By altering our breathing, we can actually trick our central nervous system, turn off stress, and activate a psychological and

physical relaxation response. The brain says something like, "Hey, I thought I was a nervous wreck, but I'm breathing like a relaxed person so I must be relaxed." The result is a real shift and can be done anywhere — in the car, in a meeting or a conversation, before bed, or anytime you begin to feel the onset of stress.

There are many various breathing methods to explore and try. The next time you find yourself feeling panicky, uptight, stressed, anxious, or even weary, try changing your breathing pattern and instantly ignite relaxation, calm, peace, and tranquility into your mind, body, and the very situation at hand. It's fast, easy, free, and literally right under your nose.



Carlene Murray
is a Certified
Health/
Wellness &
Life Coach and
the owner of
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unique full-body approach to fitness, specializing in Resistance Band Training. Also a Florida REALTOR®, Carlene brings her passion for serving her clients and community to *Real Producers* to help others achieve optimal health and wellness of mind, body, and spirit. She is the proud mother of two young adults: son, Connor, and daughter, Shannon, who resides in NYC. A Boston native, Carlene makes her full-time home in Naples with her partner, Eric, and their Belgian Malinois, Lyra. CarleneMurray.com | www.board30naples.com 239.260.5653

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DAWN MCKENNA GROUP

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE

By Zachary Cohen | Photo by Piper Arielle

“There is no ceiling for this team,” Dawn McKenna begins boldly.

Over the past five years, Dawn McKenna has grown her real estate team into a national powerhouse. Today, they are the number eight team among all brokerages in the nation, as ranked by RealTrends The Thousand in the The Wall Street Journal.

The Secret Sauce

While Dawn suggests that “there was a lot of luck involved” in her rise to success, her track record suggests

otherwise. Dawn started her real estate career in 2003 and became one of the Midwest’s top solo agents. By the time she founded the Dawn McKenna Group, she was already closing \$150 million to \$175 million a year.

Dawn achieved success by creating what she refers to as “The Dawn McKenna Experience.”

“We tell a story about the house. To me, luxury is all

about how you make people feel. My secret sauce is I love entertaining. I love setting up the house, providing good food, fresh flowers, and making it look nice. I like helping people feel at peace and comfortable. From the moment we take a listing, we treat it like our own house... We want to make sure that everyone can look at the house and say, ‘I think I’d love to live here.’”

Coming to Naples

Dawn’s drive and design aesthetic helped her become a standout solo agent, and she’s proven herself just as capable as a leader. She’s had incredible success with



Dawn McKenna, team lead of the Dawn McKenna Group at Coldwell Banker Realty. (Photo by Piper Arielle)

recruiting and retention, allowing her to build successful real estate teams that span two markets — Naples, Florida, and the Greater Chicago area — and five offices.

Dawn founded her group in Naples in 2017, expanding to a location she had fallen in love with during prior trips to the area. Dawn’s clients fueled the expansion into Naples.

“When you are a REALTOR® and a client needs help outside of your territory, you usually refer business to a local expert. But what would happen was, because of the experience clients had with me as their agent in Chicago, they were not satisfied with the agents I was sending them. So they were constantly pulling me back in for advice.

“I thought, ‘Gosh, these people are craving The Dawn McKenna Experience in Naples, and that led me to identify my own local experts in Naples and give my clients in Florida what they have come to expect from the Dawn McKenna Group.’”

Dawn’s Naples team is now seven agents deep. The group is made of agents from all walks of life. Each one brings their experiences and talents to the table, expanding what is possible for this powerhouse team. The results are staggering. The Dawn McKenna Group closed over \$600 million in 2021 and is tracking to close nearly \$1 billion in 2022.

“My team are very tenacious people. They lean in and thrive in a competitive atmosphere. They are the true experts.”

MEET THE TEAM

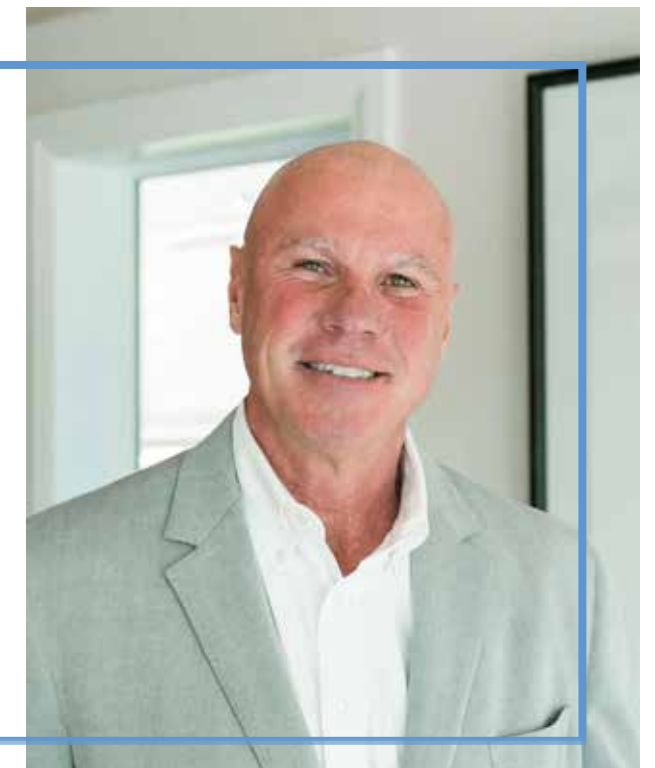
Ardel McKenna

Dawn’s brother-in-law, Ardel McKenna, started his real estate career in 2017. After 30-plus years trading on the Chicago Board of Trade, he transitioned to real estate as a second career.

“After seeing Dawn create her group and take over the western suburbs of Chicago, I was excited to work with her and transition from trader to Realtor,” Ardel reflects.

In 2017, Ardel decided to make the jump, and he’s grateful he did. The past five years have been a welcome change, and he loves his new home in Naples.

Outside work, you’ll find Ardel on the golf course.





Victoria Clarke-Payton

Born in the UK, Victoria comes from a family of real estate agents. Her father owned a brokerage, and she remembers going to his office on Saturdays, where she'd sit, listen, and learn. Upon moving to the U.S. 23 years ago, Victoria worked for a property appraiser. In 2012, she transitioned to general real estate sales.

"Dawn was looking to start the Dawn McKenna Group in Naples in 2017. She needed an anchor person for the new Naples office, someone with experience and knowledge of the local area and multimillion-dollar sales. I was the logical choice, having lived in Collier and Lee counties for almost 20 years at that time," Victoria recalls.

In Florida, Victoria feels right at home. While there are some aspects of English life that she misses — like the humor and the pub scene — she has no regrets about spending the last 23 years in Florida.

Victoria is a huge animal lover; when she's not working, you'll find her at the beach or park with her dog, Ziggy. Travel is also a big part of her life.



Wendy Garber

Wendy began her real estate career in Illinois in 2000. She always knew she wanted to move to Naples, and the pandemic helped her make the leap a few years earlier than expected.

By that time, Wendy had already been working with Dawn for years. She was licensed in Florida and was able to help expand the Naples team.

"We know how to sell the Naples lifestyle because we live and breathe it," Wendy says. "We are all here full-time and back each other up on everything, so our clients' needs never fall through the cracks. Many of our customers come to us from the Midwest, and we are experts at showing them everything that Naples has to offer."

Wendy has three children, her oldest 24, and twins aged 21. When she's not working, she enjoys playing tennis and pickleball.



Ashley Baird

Ashley began her real estate journey in 2016. An Illinois native, Ashley is licensed in both Illinois and Florida. She relocated to Naples full-time to become part of the Dawn McKenna Group in 2019.

"My family has been wintering in Naples for years, so I was very familiar with the area and the lifestyle. A few months later, I was on the plane moving to Naples to start with the Dawn McKenna Group," Ashley reflects.

Ashley had long dreamed of becoming a Realtor, and she feels the Dawn McKenna Group is a perfect fit for her personality.

"We are a team of seven that truly gets along like family," Ashley says. "Each person on our team has a specialty, and we can call one another at any minute... We truly are a one-stop shop for all things real estate."

You'll find Ashley riding her horse or spending time on the boat with her fiancé and dog outside work.



Kathleen Thanas

Kathleen was pursuing a real estate license as part of her consulting work in the golf/private club industry when she crossed paths with Dawn.

"Learning more about her background, how she built the Dawn McKenna Group, and the existing team was compelling and something that piqued my interest."

Kathleen was licensed in 2020. She has parlayed her experience in the golf and private club world into a successful real estate career.

"Our team was built with a purpose — meaning that each team member was brought onto the team for different reasons, bringing a certain area of expertise to help create a well-rounded group."

Kathleen is also an Illinois native. She moved to Florida several years before getting her real estate license. When she's not working, you'll find Kathleen playing golf or pickleball, at the beach, or hanging out on the water.



Jocelyn Lujen

Jocelyn has always had the drive to serve others in a professional capacity. She was licensed in 2018 and joined the Dawn McKenna Group in 2021.

"It was clear that my ideals and goals were perfectly aligned with what Dawn and the group had built. Along with also being a Chicago native, I knew this is where I belonged, and I would do anything to be a part of it."

Jocelyn helped create the group's rental division alongside building her own real estate sales business.



The Dawn McKenna Group's Naples, Florida, team. (Photo by Piper Arielle)

"What makes us different is that we operate as a cohesive unit. When a client hires one of us, they genuinely get the effort and network of all of us. We help one another without hesitation because that means our clients get a 360-degree, concierge-level experience."

When she's not working, you'll find Jocelyn volunteering, hanging out at the beach, roller skating, or exercising.



Maureen Fitzgibbon Runzel

Maureen is a former personal trainer who started her real estate career in 2020. With her children grown, she was looking for a new professional adventure.

"Being a Realtor is a very intimate process, where you get to know the person very well. I love meeting new people and making connections and new lifelong friends," Maureen says.

Maureen and Ardel have been close friends for over 30 years. Ardel encouraged her to get her real estate license, and she listened. Maureen found an immediate connection with the rest of the group.

"Also, Dawn McKenna is a powerhouse rock star, and I knew from the start this was the team I wanted to be affiliated with!"

Maureen has three children, six step-children, and is married. Naples has been her full-time home for the past decade. Her favorite pastimes are golfing, boating, and spending time with family.

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To Nuke or Not to Nuke: Microwave Matters

My home has been microwave-free for over 15 years ... a shock to some visitors who are accustomed to this commonplace kitchen convenience. It started accidentally, when we moved into a house that didn't come with one, and although we cook multiple times daily, we've found the counter space more valuable than the appliance over the years. For some, the ease and simplicity of microwave cooking are incredibly appealing; worries about lost nutrients and radiation keep others away. So, to nuke or not to nuke? That is the question.

Currently, over 90% of U.S. homes have a microwave, deeming it a safe, effective, and highly convenient cooking method. The appeal is obvious: Microwaves heat food much more quickly



and efficiently than other methods — while consuming less energy (and not heating up the entire kitchen in the process!). Microwaves work via radiation by “jiggling” fats, sugars, and water molecules in food so vigorously that they collide, producing a lot of heat very rapidly. Quicker heating with less liquid means foods retain more nutrients, too. Also, compared to old-fashioned sink or fridge thawing, the microwave's speedy “defrost” function is the clear winner.

On the other hand, some home chefs have legitimate concerns about this ubiquitous kitchen tool. While science now bears out that the electromagnetic radiation emitted by microwaves is not harmful — provided your appliance is in safe, working condition — the way in which they are calibrated to heat food (quickly and all over rather than slowly and from the inside out) can lead to issues with uneven heating. Since microwaves concentrate on heating water molecules (and protein, fat, and starch molecules heat much more slowly), foods cooked in them warm disproportionately, introducing the potential for burns ... and food poisoning. Food must reach a consistent temperature of 165 F throughout to kill off all harmful bacteria, which is harder to accomplish through microwave cooking.

To be on the safe side, experts agree it's a good idea to keep your face at least 1 foot from the microwave while working, avoid using plastics in the microwave, and use the microwave as a tool for reheating rather than cooking as often as possible. With these precautions in mind, happy cooking!



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