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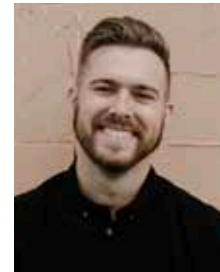
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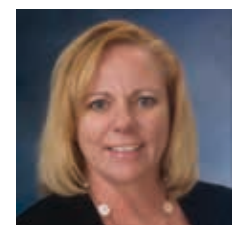
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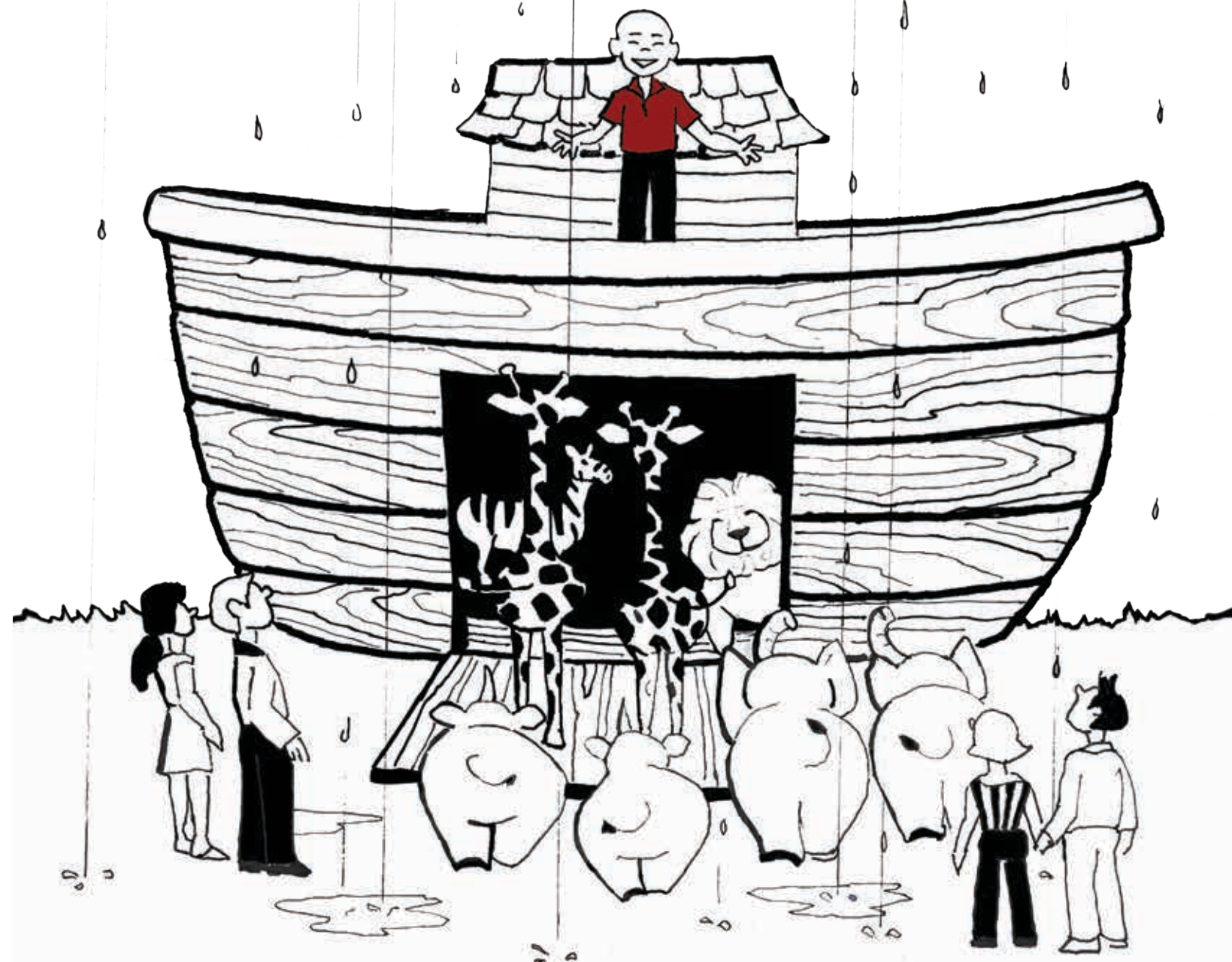


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Written by **Dave Danielson**
Photography by **Marissa Menezes**

Allison GELBRICH

There's a special bond that arises between yourself and those you work with each day. Likely, it's one of the most rewarding parts of your work with your clients.

That's the way Allison Gelbrich feels, as well.

As founder/REALTOR® of Dreamscape Real Estate, Allison takes pride in the bond she shares with those around her ... it's a feeling like family.

"The way I've always looked at my real estate business is that I'm working with families and not thinking of them as just clients. I treat them the same as I would my mom, dad or family member," she says with a smile. "When you have that focus of doing the right thing and providing amazing service rather than focusing on the commission, it always results in a positive outcome."

One of those positive outcomes is the fact that the bonds don't end. Allison truly enjoys building relationships that last.

"Around 95% of my business is repeat clients and referrals. I'm really proud of the referral base and loyalty," she says. "That really fulfills me in a big way."

That family feeling is something that means the world to Allison.

Born in Seoul, South Korea, Allison was adopted at 5 years old and then raised in Ketchikan, Alaska. She cherishes her adoptive parents, who raised her with love and the lessons of hard work.

Through time, she met James, the man who is now her fiancé. Recently, James surprised Allison and her parents on her 40th birthday with a special gift ... going back to South Korea for the first time. It was a momentous time in many ways.

"In our conversations about planning the trip, we thought it would be a great idea to visit the orphanage where I had been. During this process of working with the adoption agency, Holt, the opportunity to meet my birth mom fell in my lap, and I also discovered I have a half-sister," Allison says.

"The Holt Agency performed a birth family search and located an address for my birth mom and sent her a certified letter, to which she responded the very next day. This news was a complete shock, and it didn't seem plausible that I was being given the opportunity to meet my birth mom and half-sister on our upcoming trip to Korea."

Allison and her birth mother made arrangements to meet at the agency. It was unforgettable.

"We spent six hours together. It was a very surreal experience. I went in cautiously optimistic and guarded. She was very open and shared many stories that filled in the holes of my past. I learned fairly quickly that my birth mom is a good person who went through many life struggles, including having to make the difficult decision to give me up for adoption 36 years ago with the hopes for a better life for me."

...



“
My favorite moment was seeing my birth mom and my forever mom embrace and share a moment of sincere gratitude for each other. It was an incredibly powerful moment.”



“ When you have that focus of doing the right thing and providing amazing service rather than focusing on the commission, it always results in a positive outcome. ”



It was an emotional yet beautiful visit. Allison’s mother, her oldest brother and her fiancé were all there.

“My favorite moment was seeing my birth mom and my forever mom embrace and share a moment of sincere gratitude for each other. It was an incredibly powerful moment.”

The day was also marked by the sadness of Allison’s father passing away back in the states. He had planned on joining his family for the trip to South Korea, but made the decision to not attend for health reasons just days before the trip.

“My dad wanted so badly to be there was us. He was not there physically, but we felt he was there with us spiritually,” she says. “The very next day, James proposed. My dad had already known about James’ plans for many months. His last words to James were to take care of me. Within 36 hours, I lost my dad, I met my birth mom, and I got engaged. This was the happiest and saddest time.” Allison says.

“I’m still mourning the loss of my dad and processing the meeting with my birth family. The trip itself was very eye-opening to be able to reconnect with my heritage and history. There are always ebbs and flows in life, and I feel this experience has brought me some closure. I feel that everything has happened the way it was supposed to in order to bring me where I am today and that is something that gives me a sense of calm and peace.”

Today, Allison operates her successful real estate business. The business has been very meaningful for her in a number of ways.

“I had an opportunity given to me by my family to move from Korea to America to build the American dream for myself and my family. I love helping other families achieve the American dream through homeownership.”

In her free time, Allison loves travel, being outdoors, and staying active with trips to the beach, exercise, wine tasting and spending time with family and friends.

She also has a heart for helping and giving back to the community in different ways. One of her favorite groups to support is Walden Family Services, where she serves on the organization’s board of directors.

“It is the second-largest foster care organization in California. They were established in 1976 and have made a tremendous impact in foster care and adoption,” she points out. “In honor of my adoption in May 1986, I created the Annual May for Giving Hearts Fundraiser, where myself and five other real estate professionals donate 10% of our commissions during the month of May to help the children of Walden Family Services. 2022 was our most successful year yet, raising \$20,000. As an adoptee and advocate for the cause, it’s important to me to bring awareness to adoption in a positive way. There are some misconceptions about adoption, and I’m living proof that it can be a pretty amazing thing.”

Through her remarkable journey and continued growth in life and business, Allison makes a lasting, vital impact on the lives of those she touches ... creating in each person a true feeling like family.

“ I had an opportunity given to me by my family to move from Korea to America to build the American dream for myself and my family. I love helping other families achieve the American dream through homeownership. ”



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That same spirit is alive and well with owner John Ruff of Ruff & Ready Moving.

As those who have the opportunity to work with the company know, Ruff & Ready Moving gives them an unmatched edge when it comes to getting from point A to point B in life.

“What we do really begins with the fact that we take pride in our work, which can be very rare in our line of work,” John points out.

He and his team go above and beyond to deliver a turnkey, easy process for their real estate partners and clients. In turn, they have completed more than 15,000 moves. In the process, they have earned Business of the Year honors three out of the last four years in multiple cities.

They also go the extra mile to provide tangible value for clients who are looking to make their dollars go as far as they can during the costly process of getting to the closing table.

“One of the things that we are very proud to offer is billing for our services through escrow,” he points out. “We feel very good about offering that because we know it can make a huge difference for clients who can be facing a lot of expenses during their moving process. We also offer free in-home estimates., which is a huge benefit for our REALTOR® partners and their clients.”

The pride that John has for his work begins with his team.

“

WHAT WE DO REALLY BEGINS WITH THE FACT THAT WE TAKE PRIDE IN OUR WORK, WHICH CAN BE VERY RARE IN OUR LINE OF WORK.



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THAT’S REALLY AT THE HEART OF IT. THE PEOPLE THAT WE HAVE ON THE TEAM ARE TRULY MY FAVORITE PART OF WHAT I DO EACH DAY.



“That’s really at the heart of it,” he says. “The people that we have on the team are truly my favorite part of what I do each day.”

Today, the Ruff & Ready team includes 35 employees and seven owner-operators.

“My drive for what we do really centers on our people,” John emphasizes. “My primary focus is making sure that our people do well and that they prosper. I keep my focus on them and on their success in our industry.”

In 2022, John celebrated the fact that Ruff & Ready Moving has been around for 10 years. Today, the scope of what the company does continues to grow through time.

“While we focus our work on Southern California, we can also take people anywhere in the nation,” he says. “As part of that, we are an agent for Mayflower van lines — the biggest moving company in the world.”

Family is at the heart of John’s life. In fact, his parents, Lynn and Paul, are part of the team at Ruff & Ready Moving.

Away from work, John enjoys what the Temecula region has to offer. One of his favorite pursuits is visiting wineries in the area.

When it comes to giving back to his community, John definitely has a heart for helping. In fact, he sits on the board of directors for the Boys & Girls Club.

When you talk with John, it’s easy to see why those who have the chance to work with Ruff & Ready Moving call them the best in the business.

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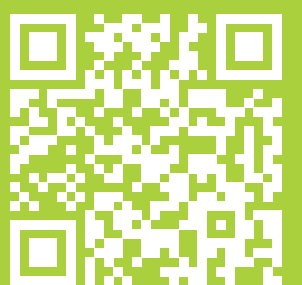
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Going the distance in real estate requires perseverance, hard work, dedication, and professionalism. It takes thousands of hours of practice and of studying market trends through an entire career's worth of data. Mary Baez-Wagner, a REALTOR® in the Riverside area, knows and demonstrates these practices in every way that she does business.

As a REALTOR® and broker associate with Keller Williams Riverside, Mary goes the distance to welcome her clients home.

"I really love helping our clients during a very stressful time. We try to make sure that they have a good experience throughout the process ... especially with first-time homebuyers and making sure that they get their offers accepted," Mary says.



►► REALTOR® life

Written by Dave Danielson
Photography by Marissa Menezes

...



Our mission is to provide excellent service and build long-lasting relationships with our clients.



Mary's team prides itself on its educational approach with clients to make sure that they feel secure during this journey. Her team is versatile and also works with sellers in this shifting market to help navigate them to whatever next step they are trying to achieve, whether that's downsizing now that the nest is empty or trying to move into a bigger space because the family is growing. As she says, "It's a very rewarding experience being able to help sellers market their houses and get top dollar for their homes."

Mary had a distinguished career in a number of ways even before she entered real estate. Early on, she served in the U.S. Army in Germany, where she lived for a few years. She was also deployed to Kosovo for a few months as part of Operation Joint Guardian. In time, she came back to the U.S. and finished her master's degree at the Rochester Institute of Technology.

After her military career was complete, she moved to Washington, D.C. area and lived in Alexandria and Fairfax, VA. In August 2005, she moved to California.

Mary came to California to visit a former military friend who had started a career in real estate. The visit enticed Mary to want to move to California a few months later and begin her own career in real estate, where she has excelled.

Mary started with RE/MAX Partners, where she learned and grew in the business for the next 14 years. Along the way, she earned Rookie of the Year honors in 2006. Mary thrived during the uncertainty of the mortgage meltdown of the late 2000s and has been through her share of shifting markets. In every market, she has guided clients to the finish line of their real estate goals.

Today, Mary has a small team ... The Baez Team at Keller Williams Riverside.

"Our mission is to provide excellent service and build long-lasting relationships with our clients," she says. Her team consists of two buyers agents and a virtual assistant,

along with an office admin. Christina Raddish, who is the lead buyer's agent on the team, as well as new bilingual buyer's agent Cesia Gonzalez, were both former students of Mary's at Riverside City College, where she is an adjunct professor teaching real estate courses.

Family is at the center of life for Mary; she's happily married to her husband, Joe Wagner.

"Joe is an amazing husband. He is very loving and supportive," Mary says with a smile. "He and my daughter are my biggest fans." Mary cherishes spending time with her daughter, Catherine, who lives in Atlanta.

Mary and Joe's love story started when coincidently, one of the agents on her team sold him a house two doors down from the house where she lived. They both feel that God put them together to find the love of their lives. They were married in 2019.

In their free time, Mary and Joe have a passion for staying active and in shape. They are both triathletes and take part in Ironman competitions and also run marathons and half-marathons. Other favorite pursuits include traveling, wine tasting and spending time with family and friends.

When it comes to supporting her community, Mary has been a member of the Rotary Club of Riverside for 10 years, where she has served as past president.

"I love Rotary and the fellowship that comes with it around the world. Everyone shares the same common interest in helping the community or any projects that clubs are working on," she says. "Rotary is dear to my heart."

In addition, Mary prizes her participation as part of the Riverside Road Runners running club.

As she says, "My running community is very close to my heart. They have always been super supportive of me."

With a positive outlook and a desire to keep learning and growing, Mary is equipped to deliver an unforgettable experience to those around her. With the knowledge and hard work of a professional, and the compassion to truly care about each and every client, she is always going the distance to meet and exceed their needs.



Veronica & Susana URIARTE

▶▶ giving back
Written by Dave Danielson



The results your clients seek don't automatically happen. It takes dedication, consistency and expertise to make it all unfold the way it should. That's where you come in with a level of care that makes a lasting impact.

Veronica Uriarte and Susana Uriarte have the same effect on those they serve each day.

As sisters-in-law and REALTORS® with eXp Realty, Veronica and Susana represent a winning combination and rewarding connections for their clients across the area.

"We love the interaction with people. I love making those connections," Veronica says. "Being in front of the client is my favorite. I like the human part of it."

"Real estate is my passion, and I enjoy meeting new personalities and knowing I am making a difference in their life by aiding them in achieving the American dream and ultimately cultivating long-lasting relationships with my clients," Susana points out. "I take pride in sharing that 95% of my business is referral-based."

Veronica began her career in real estate in 2005, with Susana joining her in the business later.

Veronica, who was born in California, moved to Mexico with her parents to their hometown when she was 6 years old.

"My father always had a dream to go back and open a business. He did. He opened up a market for produce. We had to do well at school and then come home, do homework and help at the store," Veronica says. "There was always interaction there. I wasn't shy. I saw my dad interact with people. At the same time, I learned that you have to work for the things you want."

In time, violence in the region started escalating, many residents moved out, and the store wasn't doing as well. So, the family moved back to California when Veronica was in her early 20s. Soon she was



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in the U.S. It was challenging because she didn't speak any English. But she went on undaunted ... going to school to learn the language.

In time, she took on a series of jobs and kept learning the language and growing. At one point, she even considered becoming a police officer. But she decided against it. That's when she talked with a family member who encouraged her to talk with a friend who was opening a RE/MAX franchise to be an agent. Within a few months, she was licensed and starting her career.

For the next 12 years, Veronica worked with RE/MAX. In 2019, she joined eXp Realty.

In the meantime, Veronica had come into the picture. She was originally

from Los Angeles. When Susana married Veronica's brother, she moved to the area and talked with Veronica, learning about her role in real estate. It wasn't long before Susana moved from banking to work as a transaction coordinator and assistant with Veronica. In time, Susana earned her license.

Susana has definitely enjoyed the process of working with her sister-in-law.

"She's the best aunty my babies could ever have ... and my very first real estate teacher. She taught me all the fundamentals of the business," Susana says with a smile. "I enjoy sharing my passion for the business with her, sharing new business ideas

and helping each other grow. We often encourage each other to just keep going."

Veronica agrees, enjoying the way they combine their strengths.

"We do some things similarly and others differently. I love to teach and motivate. I had so much training throughout my career. I have been to many courses to be better with leadership and the way to make others feel good. I worked on using my strengths in a positive way," Veronica says. "When working together, we have the same goal in mind, which is to be the very best for our clients. We also



have very similar personalities. We are givers, we're hard-working and inspired to grow, and we support and love each other very much. We work together, but we are also family, and it's the No. 1 thing. She is the sister I never had."

Family is at the heart of life for both women.

Veronica gives credit to her parents, Rodrigo and Francisca, for making what she calls a huge impact on her life when it comes to learning a strong work ethic, people skills and organization. In her free time, Veronica likes hiking, meditation, reading, spending time with her four nieces, actively practicing her faith and belief in God, journaling and spending time with her dogs.

Susana and her husband, Rodrigo, treasure time with their daughters ... Yulianni, Brisset, Victoria and Fernanda. They are also very involved in supporting non-profits. In her free time, she also enjoys hiking and looking for ways to help the less fortunate ... including supporting Prosperity Homes.

As Susana says, "The foundation of Prosperity Homes is built on empowering real estate professionals to serve their local and global communities. Prosperity Homes is a movement, platform and vehicle where professionals can realize themselves through true service for their communities."

As Veronica and Susana share their passion for making an impact on the lives of those they serve, they continue to grow through their teamwork. In turn, their winning combination creates rewarding connections — and results — for residents that extend through time.

ROBERT BARKSDALE

► REALTOR® spotlight

Written by **Dave Danielson** • Photography by **Marissa Menezes**



Reaching the top of the mountain and surpassing key milestones are truly rewarding. But real fulfillment occurs when you know that those goals have happened by your commitment to working for all the right reasons.

That's a trait that Robert Barksdale exhibits in supreme fashion each day.

As a REALTOR®/investor with Realty One Group West, Robert continues to build his business with a true sense of integrity and passion. "I put my clients' best interests at heart, and I work hard to make sure they are well taken care of. I also work quite a bit helping homeowners through the foreclosure process," Robert says. "Along the way, I won't just help them sell their house. I also help them find other options such as a rental."

Before getting into real estate, Robert served the best interests of his community through his 24-year career as an educator.

He taught English for 10 years and then served for 14 years as a school administrator. In the process, he started working part-time in real estate. In 2013, Robert made the leap and went full-time in real estate.

One of the driving forces in Robert's career has been helping people experience the joy of the American dream. As mentioned earlier, Robert takes great pride in helping area residents through the foreclosure process.

His approach and ability in that area have earned far-reaching acclaim. In fact, he teaches a class on the subject locally, and has even conducted nationwide eight-week training through the channel that his coach, Debbie DeGrote, has.

Robert earned his license on Feb. 7, 2001. Since then, he has been on a steady rise through time, demonstrating the relentless pursuit he has to find results for his clients.

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I put my clients' best interests at heart, and I work hard to make sure they are well taken care of. I also work quite a bit helping homeowners through the foreclosure process. Along the way, I won't just help them sell their house. I also help them find other options such as a rental.

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Real estate is constantly changing, and you have to be in front of the curve. The agents who don't change get lost in the dust.

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Family makes life much richer for Robert each day. He looks forward to time spent with his wife, Stephanie (who is a teacher).

He also feels extremely blessed by the opportunity to serve as a father to his sons Robby and Shaun, and daughter, Zoe.

In his free time, Robert enjoys watching sports, working out and spending time with his family. A few years ago, Robert and his family lost his oldest son, Robby, to a late-night traffic accident while he was serving in the U.S. Navy. Before they lost him, Robby had taken time to provide a very special, lasting gift.

“Before Robby passed, he had taken part in one of the nationally advertised DNA/genealogy testing programs — 23 and Me. I was adopted when I was little, which is something that I always knew. As a result of the 23 and Me program, a woman from Boston contacted me,” Robert says.

“She had done the 23 and Me program also, and her results showed that she was related to Robby. It turned out that the lady was my cousin ... my mom's niece, Kristi. She contacted me first, and then I got in contact with my mom in Boston through her and

my family. It turns out that my mom was pregnant with me when she was 14 years old. Today she is also involved in the real estate industry. It has been special being reunited with her, and I like visiting her in Boston.”

When it comes to being involved in his community, Robert enjoys attending Our City Church

and contributing to fundraising efforts and community projects, including canned food drives, toy drives and providing Thanksgiving dinners to those who are less fortunate.

As Robert reflects on his career, he offers helpful tips for others who are looking to make their own steps forward in the business. “One thing I would say is to keep learning new strategies and techniques to attract

clients because the market changes. You have to keep evolving and look at the newest apps and keep marketing to your sphere of influence,” Robert says.

“Real estate is constantly changing, and you have to be in front of the curve. The agents who don't change get lost in the dust.” When you talk with Robert, it's easy to see the passion he has and the impact he makes in a positive way on residents across the area by taking care of them for all the right reasons.





**YOU CAN
SAVE A LIFE
FROM HUMAN
TRAFFICKING**

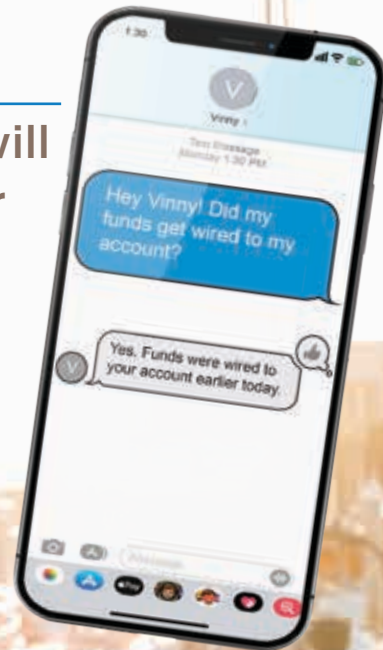


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MEET VINNY!

Vinny, our intelligent messaging agent will provide live updates and answer all your escrow questions via text messaging.



Connect
with us to elevate
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