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Dear Real Producers of Naples,

As the summer season unfolds, I want to personally wish you a happy and refreshing June ... and a Happy Father's Day to all the hardworking dads out there! This month marks the start of warmer weather, longer days, and a slowdown in the selling season. Whether you're planning on taking a vacation, spending time with friends and family, or just enjoying some much-needed downtime, I hope that you make the most of this time of the year.

As you're in the process of assisting clients with buying or selling a property, you may be working with a number of other parties, like our preferred partners, who are responsible for getting that deal to the closing table. It's important to remember that these professionals are people who also deserve a break to recharge and refresh, too, and may be out of the office for chunks of time.

Top agents and industry affiliates, alike, should understand the importance of maintaining communication with their clients, especially when they're unavailable for more than 24 hours. That's why you should leave a designated, reliable agent who can assist with any urgent matters or concerns that may arise with a client while you're unplugging. This way, you can be assured that your clients are being taken care of, even if you are not personally available.

This practice demonstrates a high level of professionalism and responsibility and also shows your clients that you care about their needs and are committed to providing the best possible service. Nothing is more frustrating than trying to reach an agent who is on vacation and has not left a backup contact... As top 500 real estate agents, you probably already understand this and strive to meet those expectations!



So as you embark on your summer adventures, I encourage you to communicate clearly with your clients about your schedule. By doing so, you build a strong and trusting relationship with your clients that will help you achieve your real estate goals.



With this in mind, I hope that you can relax and enjoy your summer! We look forward to seeing you all again at our next big event in the fall.

Very respectfully yours,

**Andrew Regenhard**

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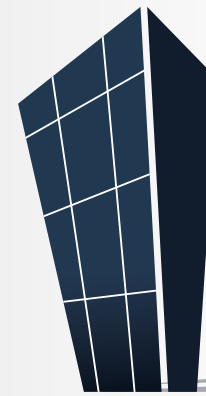
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Catch new episodes of *The RP Experience* on YouTube and Spotify every Wednesday!

## RECAP OF EPISODES 67-70

### EPISODE 67 | MATTHEW FLORES



A Southwest Florida resident since childhood, Matt Flores is a practicing real estate attorney and, now, owner of Brookside Market, a local bar in Naples specializing in self-serve and draft craft beers. In this episode, listeners can learn Matt's insights about contracts and assessments

post Hurricane Ian, as well as hear about his philanthropic efforts with local organizations over the years.

### EPISODE 69 | WENDY MILLER



Wendy Miller has been in real estate for over 20 years, spending most of that time as an administrator and transaction coordinator. A licensed real estate broker in Florida and New York (with plans to add many additional states), today, Wendy is the owner of Virtual Real Estate Solutions,

a virtual real estate assistance company. In this episode, Wendy explains her background, her services, and how she loves supporting agents and brokerages who need her help.

### EPISODE 68 | LINA AYERS



Lina Ayers, *Naples Real Producers'* rising star in January 2023, is an up-and-coming top producer with John R. Wood Properties | Christie's International Real Estate. After nearly 20 years as a flight attendant, Lina transitioned to real estate in Washington, D.C., and relocated to Southwest

Florida in 2019. In this episode, Linda discusses her real estate goals, her passion for painting, and her role as an ambassador for the Blue Zones Project.

### EPISODE 70 | ADAM SHEETS



Adam moved to Florida in 2001 from Texas, and in this episode, he discusses his journey to getting his real estate license. Adam also talks about his experience with video creation and how using social media has helped his business grow throughout the years. Tune in to this podcast to

hear what Adam has to say about the importance of branding yourself, both personally and for business.



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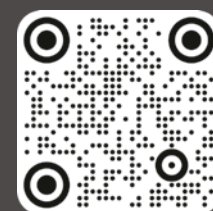
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WORDS OF WISDOM FROM THIS MONTH'S FEATURES

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William Raveis Real Estate

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## From the Desk of the PRESIDENT



### RENT CONTROL IS NO LONGER AN OPTION IN FLORIDA!

As community advocates, REALTORS® are on the front lines every day as municipalities propose ordinances and regulations that impact our local economies. In recent years, several communities in Florida began discussing how rising rents negatively impacted their citizens. Unfortunately, in their haste to enact solutions, they failed to properly educate themselves and their citizens on the proposed changes they were considering. In this case, those changes focused entirely on new “rent stabilization” measures.

Make no mistake, rent stabilization is just the lipstick on the rent-control pig. It’s a rebrand of a failed policy that has caused serious economic harm in the places it has been tried. Less affordable housing inventory, lost jobs, lost local GDP... The list of negatives from this “solution” goes on and on. Here in Florida, the municipalities in question believed that preventing a landlord from raising rents more than they think appropriate would solve their affordable-housing woes. This is quite possibly the worst thing a community can do to help address a shortage of workforce housing.

What is even worse is that Orange County ultimately decided to go further than just discussing the matter and actually voted to put a rent-control measure on their November 2022 ballot. This decision was made

against the advice of their own consultant that they hired to study whether rent control would help with their affordable-housing situation. Despite the conclusions of their consultant, despite their proposal not meeting the strict requirements in Florida law to enact rent control, and despite their ballot language for the ordinance being flawed and misleading, they still pushed forward.

Orange County’s antics even drew the attention of the Wall Street Journal, which published an editorial called “Florida Toys with Housing Suicide.” In this column, the author explained that “The problem is that restricting prices would distort rental markets without providing much relief. Price controls on rent discourage builders from adding supply and deprive landlords of any benefit from refurbishing their properties. Existing tenants often see their neighborhoods deteriorate.” This is the same conclusion just about every study on rent control finds. It is just the wrong answer.

Thankfully, Florida Realtors® and the Orlando Regional Realtor® Association, in partnership with the Florida Apartment Association, filed a lawsuit challenging the legality of the ordinance. Ultimately, the appeals court agreed that this ordinance was not lawful and struck it down. But even the intervention of the courts didn’t

stop other local governments from continuing to discuss rent-control proposals.

Florida Realtors® said enough is enough and brought the issue to the attention of state lawmakers. After educating them on the issue, they quickly realized that the current laws did not go far enough to protect private property owners. In response, they passed a state-wide ban on rent control this year as part of a ground-breaking affordable-housing package that has already been signed by the governor.

All of this incredible work to end rent control in Florida is a direct result of the decades of Realtor® advocacy and your participation in the process. The 2023 legislative session ended the first week in May, and Realtors® saw so much support for our industry from the legislature.

We invite you to visit [www.floridarealtors.org](http://www.floridarealtors.org) to read the full recap. Reduction of harmful taxes, protection of property owners’ rights, historic funding for housing, and much more came out of this session. There are over 225,000 Realtors® in Florida, and we stand together and speak with one voice as the Realtor® party.

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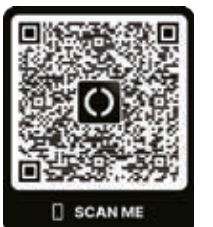


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# The Art & Importance of Building Rapport

Building rapport is one of the most important aspects of successfully connecting and serving clients in any industry, and as a real estate agent, your rapport-building skills are absolutely essential to your success. Rapport is defined as a close and harmonious relationship in which people or groups understand each other’s feelings and ideas and communicate well. Rapport refers to the connection and trust that you build with your

clients over time and is an essential part of creating positive and long-lasting relationships. Building rapport is essential to establish a foundation of trust needed to facilitate one of the most significant financial decisions of your clients’ lives. Rapport helps to understand the client’s needs and preferences in order to provide them with a more personalized and tailored service which can lead to referrals and repeat business.

The human brain is wired to respond positively to relationships that foster trust, understanding, and mutual respect. When we positively interact with others, the brain releases a hormone called oxytocin, which is sometimes referred to as the “love hormone.” Oxytocin is associated with feelings of social bonding, trust, and empathy. It plays a crucial role in creating a sense of connection between two people. When we

interact with others, our brains are constantly processing information and making judgments based on a wide range of factors, including body language, tone of voice, and facial expressions. Building rapport with clients requires a deep understanding of how the brain responds to these cues and how to use them for good to create a sense of connection and trust.

One effective approach to building rapport is based on the work of the renowned psychologist and hypnotist Milton Erickson. Erickson’s methods emphasized the importance of connecting with clients on a deep and personal level by actively listening to their needs, understanding their communication styles, and matching their pace and tone. Applying Erickson’s principles can build stronger relationships with clients and ultimately hone your skills for success.

Actively listening to clients and demonstrating empathy can develop trust and credibility, leading to more effective communication and a higher likelihood of successful transactions. Agents who understand their clients’ communication styles and adjust their own accordingly can create a more comfortable and productive working relationship. Erickson believed that rapport was essential for creating an alliance between a therapist and client which applies to any relationship-building effort to facilitate trust and connection. He used various techniques to build rapport with his clients, including mirroring, matching, pacing, and leading.

Mirroring, matching, pacing, and leading are effective techniques to build rapport. Mirroring involves subtly imitating the body language, tone of voice, and other nonverbal cues of the person with whom you are speaking. This technique creates a sense of familiarity and builds rapport more quickly. Matching takes mirroring a step further by copying or matching specific behaviors or phrases used by the other person. Pacing involves matching the speed, rhythm, and tone of the other person’s voice, speech and movements, creating a sense of harmony and synchronicity between two people. Leading is gradually guiding the conversation in a particular direction, creating a sense of trust and confidence in you and your ability to help your clients achieve their goals.

Another effective way to build rapport is to use positive language and focus on solutions. When we hear positive language and focus on solutions, the brain is more likely to release oxytocin, which can help to create a sense of connection and trust. Showing empathy and understanding is key. When we feel understood and validated, the brain releases oxytocin, which can help to create a sense of connection. By paying close attention to nonverbal cues and other subtle signals, you can gain a deeper understanding of your client’s motivations and goals. This can help tailor your approaches and recommendations to better meet the needs of your clients.

Milton Erickson’s techniques of mirroring, matching, pacing, and leading can be powerful tools to build rapport with clients, however, keep in mind that *your authenticity is crucial*. It is essential to be oneself and show genuine interest in the client’s needs and preferences. Scripted language or appearing overly rehearsed, can translate as disingenuous. Clients can sense insincerity which can damage a relationship and a reputation. Authenticity establishes trust, credibility, and openness. Clients want to work with agents who are genuine, approachable, and who have their best interests in mind.

These rapport-building techniques require practice and sensitivity to be effective. When they are used correctly — in the spirit of genuine service — they can greatly help establish lasting relationships and positive outcomes. Using positive language, focusing on solutions, showing empathy, understanding and following up with clients can all help to establish trust, understanding, and mutual respect that ultimately determines a successful experience serving your clients while elevating your own skills and success as well.



Carlene Murray is a Mindpower Coach, a Certified Health/Wellness & Life Coach, a PFC3 Nutrition Health Pro/Coach, and

owner of Board30 Naples. Carlene offers private, group, corporate/team coaching, workshops and speaking engagements.

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►► featured agent

By Zachary Cohen  
Photos by New Frame Photography



# BARRY HOEY

## ACROSS AN OCEAN

Barry Hoey's professional journey has taken him from his homeland of Ireland across the Atlantic Ocean, where he's found a new home and career. Now the leader of the Hoey Team and the broker/owner of 239RealEstateDeals.com LLC, Barry has made a name for himself as one of Naples' premier real estate agents.

Barry is a mechanical engineer by trade, holding qualifications in mechanical engineering and instrument technology. Back in Ireland, he built a successful career as an engineer and started several businesses. His primary business was a company that designed and manufactured

equipment for the food, medical, and agricultural industries. He also ran companies that provided agricultural contracting and imported boats.

Then, love brought Barry to the U.S. He began dating an American woman in 2006 and got married in Ireland in 2007. In 2009, he moved to the Alabama Panhandle, then to Arizona, before landing in Florida in mid-2013.

### **A New Vocation**

Barry continued working in the engineering field during his first few years in the U.S. During this time, he also





Barry Hoey and Kimberly Zuponcic are partners in life and business.



began flipping homes, his first step into the real estate business.

“My father was a cabinetmaker, and I’m very good with my hands, so I always had an interest in real estate. I had built a house in Ireland and flipped some homes during my three years in Arizona. When I moved to Florida in 2013, I decided to get my real estate license, but at the time I got my license, I still didn’t know what I’d do with it.”

Upon arriving in Naples, Barry set out to find the brokerage where he could hang his license. He interviewed 13 different brokerages, finally selecting Downing-Frye Realty as his first real estate home. Although he was in a new city and a new line of business, he hit the ground running, closing nine transitions in his first year. He’s been a top producer ever since.

#### **Genuine Service**

Barry credits much of his success to his willingness to engage with others, his



“

A MOTTO I HAVE ALWAYS GONE BY ALL MY LIFE IS, ‘IF A JOB IS WORTH DOING AT ALL, IT'S WORTH DOING RIGHT.



Barry Hoey founded his brokerage, 239RealEstateDeals.com LLC, in mid-2021.

strong desire to do the job well, and his commitment to education.

“A motto I have always gone by all my life is, ‘If a job is worth doing at all, it’s worth doing right,’” Barry explains. “For me, education is important. I’ve done a lot of training and have many designations and certifications. It’s important to learn. One of the reasons for my success has been that I talk to people that I meet. One of the things Mike Ferry teaches agents is to talk to people. It’s something that’s quite simple, and something you need to do to be successful in real estate. You need to talk to people and do the job right.”

In mid-2021, Barry founded the brokerage 239RealEstateDeals.com LLC, allowing him to control his own destiny and serve his clients best. He works alongside his partner and 23-year real estate veteran Kim Zuponic, who has been an integral part of his business and life.

“It’s going very well, in the direction I want to go,” Barry says proudly. “At some point, I will take on some agents, but I want to keep it as a boutique brokerage. We just listed a \$9 million waterfront property. That’s the direction we want to go.”

#### **Paying It Forward**

Barry’s primary goal as an agent is to provide genuine service and give back to his community. He values integrity, authenticity, and being a REALTOR® his clients can count on.

“Just be yourself when you’re helping others. Just do the right thing. There’s no need to put on a facade. Buyers and sellers want genuine people helping them,” he says. “I’m also a firm believer in paying it forward. I’d like to be remembered as the person who has always done the right thing. I started working at a local hotel when I was 11 years old. It was my first official job, and here I am in America now. I feel that I’ve already left a few legacies along the way. Here in the United States, I want my legacy to be about doing what is right and paying it forward. I want to do more giving back.”



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# INSURANCE CAN MAKE OR BREAK A DEAL

By Jamin Eastman

I'm in the insurance business, writing this to readers who are (mostly) REALTORS®. One thing our industries have in common, aside from an insane amount of volatility these days, is that we're in sales. The best of us will operate as salesmen and women with an advisory function, but at the end of the day, we don't get paid for advice; we get paid when we close the deal.

Being in sales, we know that you win some deals and you lose some, and we understand that's part of the job. However, what we all want to avoid is spending an unnecessary amount of money and time on a deal that isn't going to work out. Too often these days, insurance plays a part in the reasons some deals can't come together.

## Tip 1: Advise clients to start early in obtaining insurance quotes.

Realtors and lenders often tell me they like quick quotes. But what they don't like are quick, inaccurate quotes that torpedo a deal after investing weeks or months, only to realize the quick quote was nowhere close. Three or four years ago, we could confidently tell Realtors that if they needed a quick quote, we could get it done for them and would have multiple markets all ready to accept the business at reasonable premiums. We can still do same-day quotes in many cases, but eligibility/availability, rising costs, inspection requirements, and slower underwriting reviews mean that extra time is often needed for agents to really give you and your client an accurate indication of what insurance will cost. If you are working with a buyer with cost/DTI concerns or higher-risk properties (older roofs, coastal exposure, or short-term rental), you will save your client and yourself time and money by starting the process early.

## Tip 2: Find an agent who does more than just sell a policy.

Work with an independent agent who has extensive access to markets and the expertise to advise your clients on the complexities of our local insurance landscape. As a successful agent, you've seen a client go with an inexperienced Realtor and then watched the deal fall apart as soon as the inevitable snag pops up. In today's market,

you need to expect the same from your insurance agent. Find a qualified professional who can advise on short-term options while helping you set your client up for long-term solutions.

## Tip 3: Be prepared for flood insurance.

With the changes brought by FEMA's new program (as of 10/2021), the cost and availability of flood insurance have become major considerations. The impact of flooding from Hurricane Ian has caused several private flood markets to withdraw from the state, putting further pressure on flood prices. The most recent change will have significant impacts on our coastal market as homeowners will require flood insurance to be carried for any property in an SFHA (higher-risk flood zone), regardless of whether there is a lender requiring flood insurance. Additionally, in the coming years, that same requirement will be required for policyholders in X flood zones as well. Make obtaining elevation certificates and current flood policies a part of your standard records request to save your client time and money.

I've taught classes and lead lunch-and-learns at brokerage firms from Marco Island to Tampa, and there is always more to learn about changing insurance-underwriting guidelines, claims, insurance inspections, and a dozen other topics. (I would be happy to schedule something with your team to serve you.) The demands of this market call for more than a knowledge of how old a roof can be or how to address a missing wind-mitigation credit. It calls for proactive work on

behalf of a client's entire real estate team to help them find, finance, and insure their piece of paradise.

Jamin Eastman grew up in Naples, Florida, and obtained his BA from Liberty University



and an MA from the University of Central Florida. He has a broad background in business development and insurance/financial advising, and holds a Certified Insurance Counselor designation with the National Alliance. Jamin's family lived in Istanbul, Turkey, for several years serving his church, where he worked in strategic planning and development in both the private/NGO sectors and government before returning to Naples in 2015. He is an agent and part owner of Chapman Insurance Group, where he enjoys the challenge of solving complex problems facing clients in the personal insurance market today. Jamin is a husband and father of five, and outside of work, he enjoys spending time with his family and at Covenant Church of Naples, where he is part of the worship team and serves as an elder.

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# MATT GOODWIN

## GOODWIN LAW, P.A.

### Your Real Estate Expert

By Zachary Cohen | Photos by New Frame Photography

Since the founding of Goodwin Law in 2015, Matt Goodwin has become well known for the real estate closing services he and his team provide. While he understands the need to streamline the closing process, Matt and his team offer a customized approach to the closing process. As an attorney, not a title company, he's able to provide expert legal advice, implement custom contract terms and conditions, and offer guidance on estates and probate administration. The result is a law firm that has

quickly developed a solid reputation for helping real estate deals close.

"When an issue arises, members of my team will listen to what that issue is and find a resolution. We help keep deals together or prevent them from falling apart," Matt says proudly.

#### Finding Home

Matt was born and raised in West Palm Beach, Florida. His first career was as a FOREX trader and commodities broker, trading futures and options on

the New York and Chicago Boards of Trade. He went on to work as a mortgage broker and loan officer — first in Florida and later in New York City.

Matt found success in his career, but his lack of a college degree hindered his growth. So at 26, he decided to head back to school to level up his credentials. "There was always something missing for me. I felt like I couldn't stack up to the other professionals without those credentials. And my wife said I'd make a hot lawyer," Matt laughs.



Goodwin Law has offices in Naples, Palm Beach Gardens, and Tampa. (Matt Goodwin shown here at his new office at 9955 Tamiami Trail North in Naples.)

Matt got an undergraduate degree from the University of Michigan and then a law degree from the University of Florida. All told, he spent seven years back in school on a non-traditional path.

After graduating, Matt spent a short period with another law firm in Central Florida. Ultimately, it wasn't a good fit, and he was let go. "It was one of the best things that could have happened because I had too many of my own ideas to apply — cost-effective legal services, eliminating waste, and running a law firm as a business. I saw a lot of time and clients' money wasted, and I knew I could improve upon that," Matt explains.

In 2015, Matt decided to move down to Naples and launch a law firm focused on real estate services, estate planning, and probate administration. Why Naples? To him, it's the ideal location.

"After law school, we lived in The Villages, Florida. It was landlocked. My wife and I were craving that coastal living again. I was born and raised 10 minutes from the beach and was accustomed to that ocean breeze. My wife suggested Naples, so we drove down for a weekend. As soon as we drove in, I saw the palm trees and the cleanliness. We went out to eat, took the trolley ride



## FUN FACTS

Matt Goodwin is an avid percussionist and will play any set of drums — any time, any place. He's played in reggae bands, nightclubs, and house parties across the country. Matt also runs a podcast, *Goodwin Law Unplugged*, focused on educating the public, investors, and real estate professionals on different aspects of buying and selling real estate.

Subscribe via your preferred podcast platform, or scan the QR code to follow Goodwin Law on Instagram and be one of the first to hear about new episodes.



around, and explored, and the decision was made. It felt right from the moment we arrived."

### The Real Estate Expert

Over the past eight years, Matt has come to be known as a real estate expert. Ninety percent of his business is in real estate, with the other 10 percent a combination of estate planning and probate administration. Goodwin Law has offices in Naples, Palm Beach Gardens, and Tampa, with most of their business coming from Collier, Lee, and Palm Beach counties.

Matt leads his company with a well-articulated mission statement, a solid set of core values, and vision for the future. His company's mission is to "Serve our stakeholders with honesty and excellence for a greater purpose." Their core values are relationships, excellence, accountability, and listening.

"Relationships are everything in this business," Matt emphasizes. "Goodwin Law values the quality, not the quantity, of organic relationships and seeks like-minded people to do business with. If we can't do something with excellence, we won't do it. We hold ourselves accountable to clients and referral partners by doing what we say and admitting when we're wrong. We diligently listen to each other, our clients, and our referral partners by seeking first to understand, then to be understood. It's a more genuine experience."

"Goodwin Law's vision is to be the leading law firm that inspires and improves the lives of our team, clients, and referral partners in a manner that pleases God."



As an attorney, Matt can offer services that title companies simply cannot. He and his team can analyze things from a legal perspective, advise agents on contract language, and assist with negotiations.

"There are a variety of legal issues intertwined in a real estate transaction. When a legal question is presented, there is someone on the team that can answer it."

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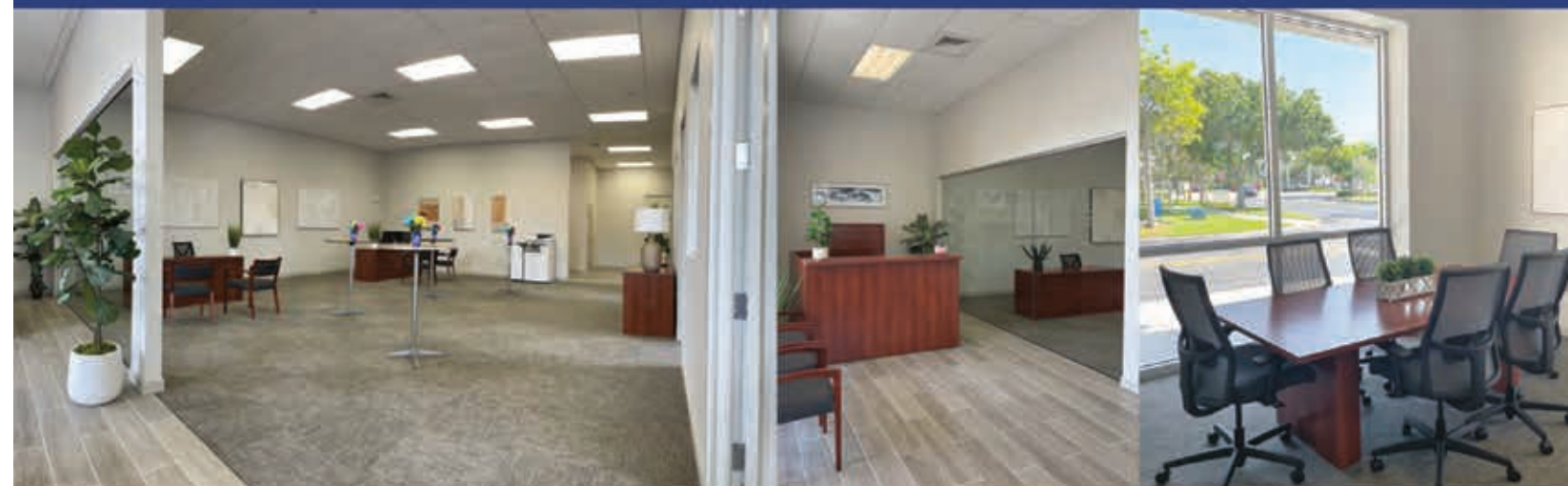
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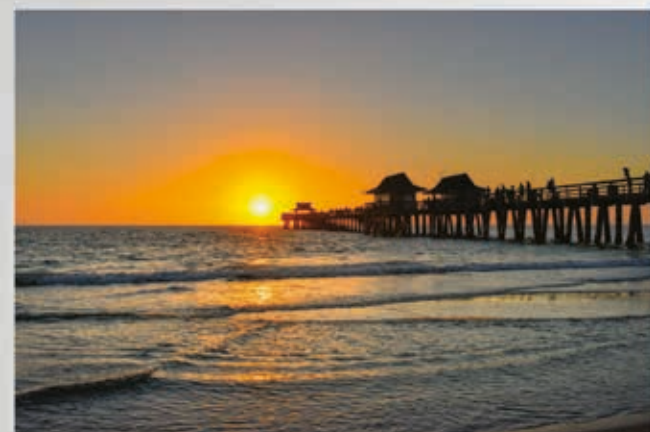


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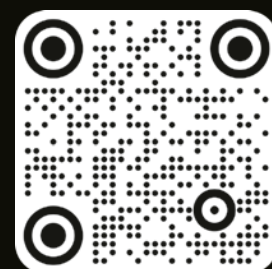


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# It's All About *the* Culture

Over the last couple of years, the hiring environment's been a little interesting. It seems like the leverage was with the employee versus the employer, however, I truly believe there's a shift going on. Today, I'm going to talk about something I believe to be happening. Recently, I talked about the fact that 75 percent of businesses are not in a position to sell. However, the ones that are, some of them are selling to hedge funds for the big money. These hedge funds are in the process of accumulating small- to mid-sized, well-run companies. And once that happens, sometimes the culture goes amiss and it's all about the bottom line.

What's potentially happening here? Let's say a hedge fund comes in and buys this nice mom-and-pop organization — an organization that has a great culture and where the employees have been there for a long time and are very loyal... They really like being part of the organization. Now, many hedge funds are composed of some very smart people. They'll see that a company's doing well and it just needs a little tweaking, but they don't mess with the culture, they don't mess with the people. In those cases, everything runs smoothly with very little interruption in the transition.

However, some big money comes in, and they're looking at the bottom line and the bottom line only. They're not necessarily looking at the culture. This also happens when you have visionaries start an organization — and a great organization, at that — and then a board of directors is created. And that board of directors starts looking too closely at the numbers, they make it all about the numbers, and eventually, they just vote that original owner out. They run the show and the entire culture of the organization shifts the wrong way.

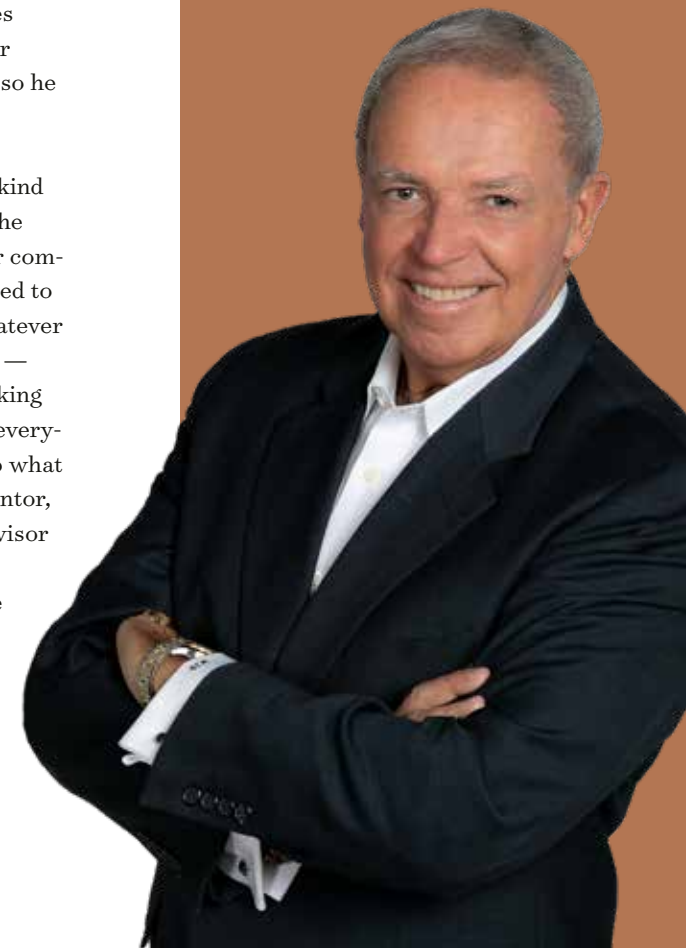
So what's the opportunity? There are a lot of employees out there that like that nice culture, that environment where they're praised for what they're doing. They work hard, they have a piece of the pie, they're helping grow the company, and they feel

appreciated. But when somebody comes in and makes it all about the money and not the people, those people are going to leave. And what does that mean for you? If you're one of those organizations, one of those moms-and-pops, one of those partnerships that has worked really hard building an organization with a great culture and a great team, you, as long as you've done the work to put yourself in that position, will attract those quality people.

It's happening. I'll share a story of a great employee that worked for another organization that had a great culture. A hedge fund came in, took it over, and the culture changed. He left, found one of my clients, and liked the way they ran their business and organization. Sat down and had a conversation. Liked the fact they were investing in themselves and investing in the team for everyone to become better, so he joined them.

To reap the benefits of this kind of opportunity and attract the right people who value your company and its culture, you need to have your act together. Whatever you need to do to get better — systematization, culture, taking care of the team, involving everyone and aligning them — do what needs to be done. Find a mentor, find a coach, and find an advisor to help you get there. And when those good people are looking for the right environment, you'll be the one they're looking at.

Coach Michael Dill is an award-winning certified business coach, global speaker, and published author. He is a proud ActionCOACH® 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.





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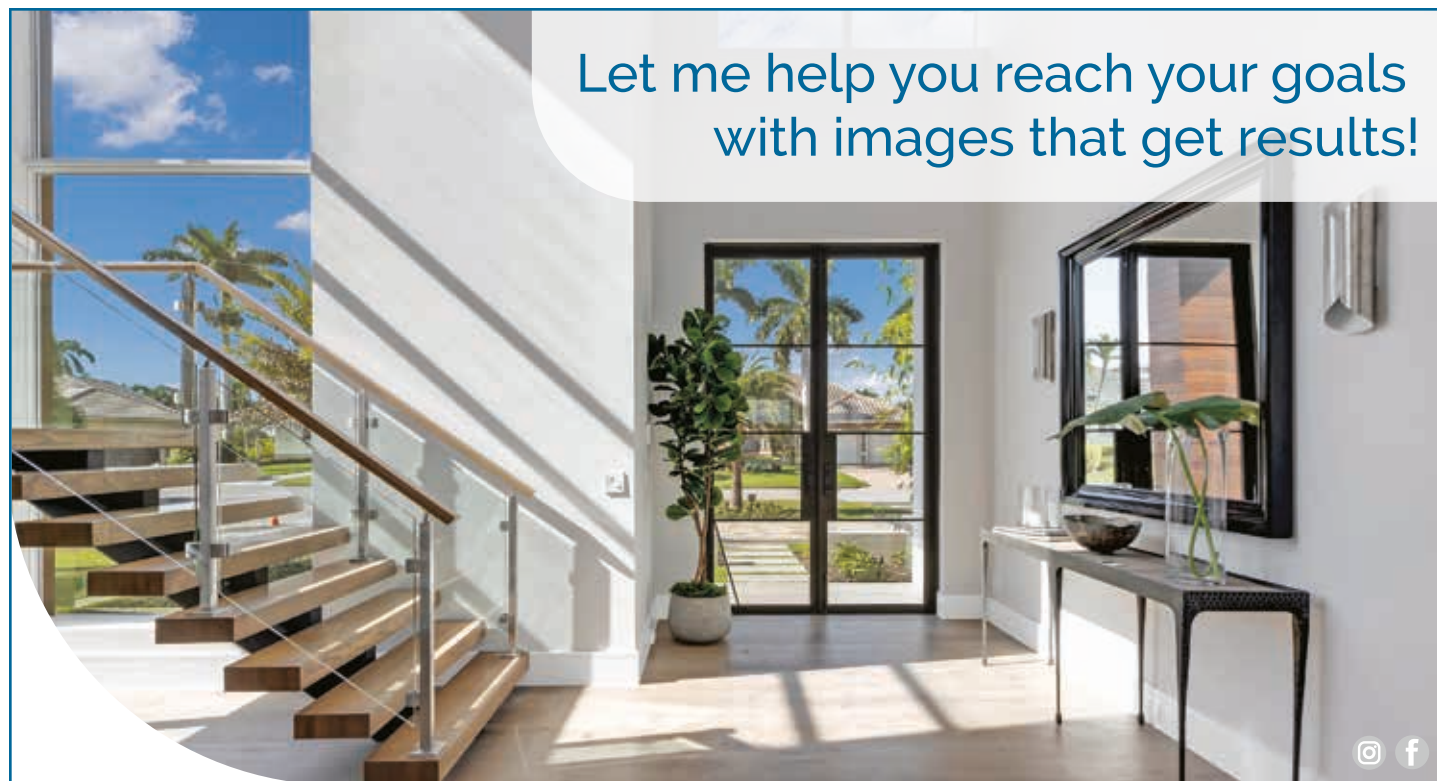
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► featured agent

By Zachary Cohen | Photos by LaCasaTour

# LAURA Georgelos

SERVING HER COMMUNITY

**L**aura Georgelos has been interested in homes for as long as she can remember. Even as a child, she recalls spending rainy days drawing houses on her own. By the time she became a teenager, she landed her first job in real estate, answering phones and relaying messages for top agents in her hometown of Glenview, Illinois.

“It all seemed very exciting to me,” Laura reflects. “The pull was there.”

Laura soon got married and moved to Naperville, Illinois, where she stayed home and cared for her daughter, Tori, for the next six years. When her daughter entered school full-time in 2004, Laura decided to get her license and begin her real estate career.

Laura built powerful relationships with local executives that would carry her to success early in her career. She became the preferred REALTOR® for the executives of a

major company, allowing her to step into the luxury market. She’s been a luxury specialist ever since.

## Coming Home

The connection between Chicagoland and Naples is well-known. In the early 2000s, Laura had a few friends who purchased vacation homes in Southwest Florida, and she became inspired to take a trip to Naples with her husband.





Top producer Laura Georgeolos is a luxury specialist with Coldwell Banker Realty.

“I heard some nice things about Naples, so my husband and I took a trip down here and then to Orlando to take Tori to Disney World. We said we’d just see what it was like. The minute we got to town, we drove through 5th Avenue and said, ‘Oh yeah, we can live here.’”

That day, Laura and her husband had a vacation home commissioned to be built for them. Over the next decade-plus, they vacationed in Naples regularly, building a community and a love for all Southwest Florida has to offer.

“That went on until 2017, when my husband nudged me and said, ‘Why aren’t we living in Florida full-time?’”

Laura’s main hesitation was her daughter; Tori has an intellectual disability, and her support programs were strong in Illinois. But once Laura came upon the STARability

Foundation, she was convinced a move to Naples could work.

“It was a great fit. So in 2017, we sold the Naperville house and moved into our vacation home.”

#### **The Luxury Specialist**

Laura has successfully transitioned her business to Florida over the past six years. As a luxury specialist with Coldwell Banker Realty, she closed \$18 million in 2022 with an average sale of over \$5 million.

“I tout myself as a concierge-style agent,” Laura says. “I enjoy the luxury market because I recognize how intricate and detailed those clients can be. I enjoy being very focused on them. I’m not one who takes a lot of clients at a time.”

Laura’s love for Naples shines through in her work too.

“I want people to know and love Naples in the way I fell in love with it. I gave up a lot in Chicago for this lifestyle. I believe in it.”

#### **Passion Project: Serving the Community**

Alongside her work in real estate, Laura has another passion project: supporting the intellectually and developmentally disabled (IDD) community. Her daughter, Tori, now 28, still needs the support of programs like the ones the STARability Foundation ([STARability.org](https://STARability.org)) offers.

“I am passionate about the work I do in the luxury market, and working with STARability and the IDD community is another one of my passions,” Laura says. “I am the one who is curating and composing a housing solution for them in our region because there’s nothing available to them.”





Laura Georgelos is vice president of the STARability Foundation, supporting the intellectually and developmentally disabled (IDD) community in Naples.

The STARability Foundation currently offers day programming but lacks housing resources. As the vice president of the STARability Foundation, Laura is spearheading the housing component of their work alongside a committee that has worked diligently to bring the vision of a sustainable housing solution to life.

“Housing — that’s my platform. We have been working on that for three years now,” Laura explains. “Our kids will need more than the brick and mortar of a home. That’s the easy part. The more challenging part is finding caregiving services that are reliable, caring, loving, and

responsible. We need to be able to hand off the responsibility as we age and make sure our loved ones are okay. It will be a self-sustaining solution for our kids and young adults to feel they are living their best life — that we are fulfilling their wishes.”

Laura feels grateful her real estate career has afforded her the means and resources to devote her energy and skills to STARability and the IDD community. Affordable housing is a challenge in Naples, as is support for the IDD community, but there’s no one more prepared to take on that challenge.

“

I enjoy the luxury market because I recognize how intricate and detailed those clients can be. I enjoy being very focused on them. I’m not one who takes a lot of clients at a time.



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cover story

# JOE CAVENEY

## LESSONS LEARNED ON THE ICE

By Zachary Cohen



Photo by Michelle Reed

At first glance, real estate may not seem to have much in common with ice hockey. But ask any professional athlete turned entrepreneur, and they'll tell you that their athletic career helped them develop the skills and perseverance to run a successful business.

Such is the case for Joe Caveney. During his five years as a professional hockey player, Joe did more than sharpen his skates; he sharpened the skills that would help him thrive later in life.

As a professional athlete, Joe learned time management, dedication, work ethic, and perseverance.

"Perhaps most importantly, I've learned how to not get too high or too low," he says. "In hockey, you can go through tough stretches, and the same thing in real estate. But if you keep working hard and stay patient and persistent, good things always happen. You have to have the patience and persistence in both."

### Naples Bound

Joe was born and raised in Fitchburg, Massachusetts, about an hour outside of Boston. He fell in love with hockey during his youth and eventually went pro. During his five years as a professional, he lived in cities around the country: Boise, Wichita, Cincinnati, Pensacola, and Fort Myers. To Joe, Southwest Florida stood above the rest. He relocated to Naples in 2016, where a few friends had settled, to begin his life anew.



Photo by Michelle Reed

“

**I'M NOT A SELL, SELL, SELL GUY.** I'm more of a relationship person. I'm low-key and relaxed, but when it comes time to negotiate, I know the market like the back of my hand. People appreciate my laid-back attitude. I'm not pushy. I let the client lead.



Photo by Michelle Reed

“The weather is great. My wife and kids and I love going to the beach for sunset and living a low-key lifestyle. It’s clean. There’s a relaxed atmosphere. The energy in Naples is different from a lot of other places,” Joe says.

Joe launched his real estate career the same year he moved to Florida, taking on the challenge of building a business head-on. While the first few years were slow, his determination carried him to success.

Joe began his career by sitting as many open houses as he could. His goal was to meet as many people as he could face-to-face, giving him a chance to prove to them he knew the market and was a capable consultant.

He was fortunate to meet two local developers at open houses, too, who became critical business partners.

“Meeting people face-to-face, showing them you know the numbers, that’s how you get serious clients,” he expresses.

In 2022, Joe had a career year, closing 42 sales for \$68 million as a solo agent with William Raveis. He relies on a relationship-heavy approach, preferring to develop meaningful connections to hard-line sales tactics.

“I’m more of a listener than a talker,” he says. “I’m not a sell, sell, sell guy. I’m more of a relationship person. I’m low-key and relaxed, but when it comes time

to negotiate, I know the market like the back of my hand. People appreciate my laid-back attitude. I’m not pushy. I let the client lead.”

#### **The Simple Life**

Outside of work, Joe is a husband, father, and family man. He and his wife, Shea, have two daughters, Kelte (5) and Rosie (3).

“Those two little girls are the most important things in our lives,” Joe beams. “This job ... as relaxed as I want to be, it’s a stressful job. People have high expectations. It’s comforting to come home, put my phone away, and hang out with them, bring them to dance, play in the pool. Family is definitely number one in my book.”



Top producer Joey Caveney is a Realtor with William Raveis Real Estate. (Photo by Michelle Reed)

“

**I JUST TRY TO TREAT PEOPLE THE RIGHT WAY AND WORK HARD.**

**I live a simple life. I hang out with my family. And for work, I've been at the right place at the right time, and I've been successful because I've worked hard and treated people the right way.**

Joe's biggest goals for the future are qualitative, not quantitative. He aspires to continue growing the business, treating people well, and carving out time for his family.

“I just try to treat people the right way and work hard. I live a simple life. I hang out with my family. And for work, I've been at the right place at the right time, and I've been successful because I've worked hard and treated people the right way. It's that simple. I'm here for the right reasons, and I'm lucky to live a great life.”



Joe Caveney and his wife, Shea, with their daughters, Kelte and Rosie  
(Photo by Valerie Fyke)

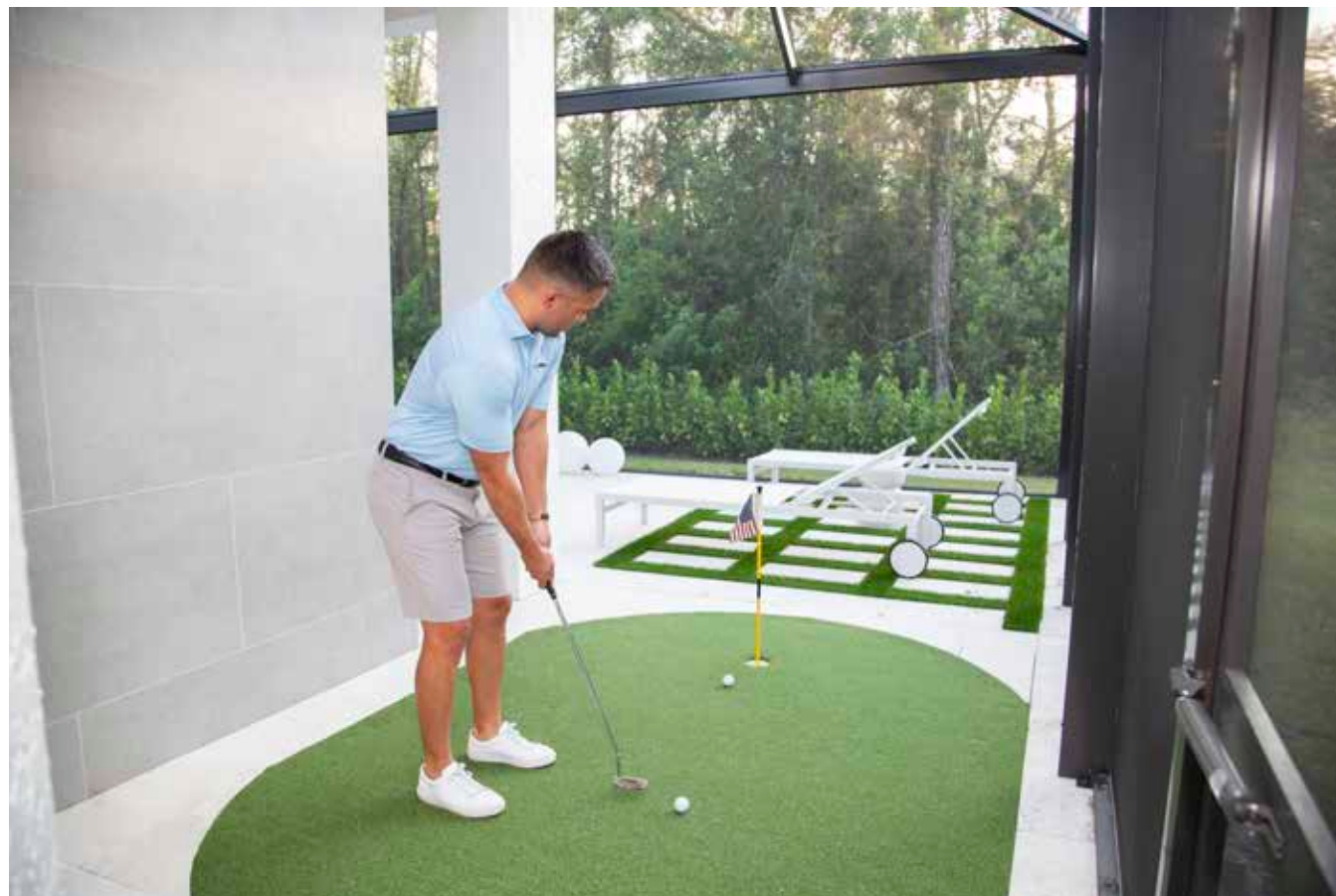


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