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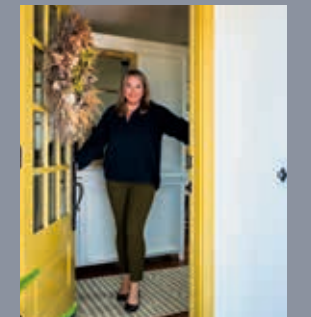
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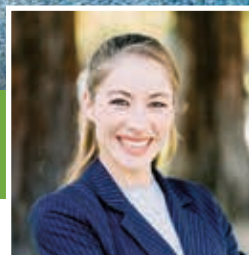
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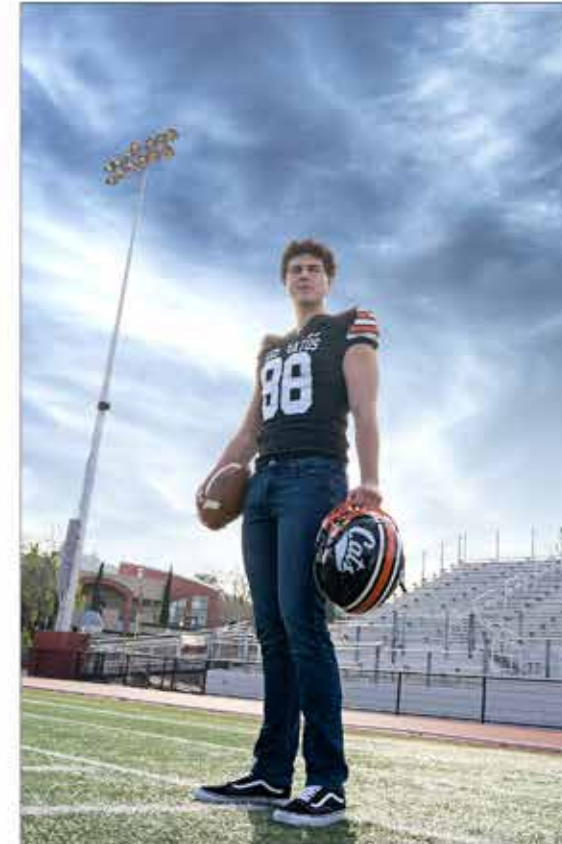
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CALLING CLASS OF 2023



▶▶ rising star
By Zachary Cohen

WESLEY CRAIG, JR.

Rising
Through the
Storm



It was early 2020, and Wesley Craig, Jr. was ready to launch his real estate career. He had spent the years prior working for the local elevator union, one of the toughest trades out there, and selling cars. During this time, Wesley discovered his true gifts – relating with people, serving his community, and problem-solving. This realization led him to real estate, and by March 2020, he was ready to dive in. And then, the world stopped. COVID-19 halted economic activity around the globe. Suddenly, his plan for building a business, which was primarily centered on hosting open houses, evaporated. “When I got my license, I was so excited. I planned to hold open houses every weekend. I was stoked to meet people. Two weeks later, before I even got my license in the mail, the lockdown happened. No open houses. No office time. Everything was appointment only,” Wesley reflects. “I had no idea what I was doing. How was I even going to meet people? How do I get appointments?” By leaning into his creative problem-solving skills, Wesley quickly turned his bafflement into a plan. He began hosting open houses for a fellow agent, booking every attendee as an individual appointment.

“One person at a time, they’d come with masks and hand sanitizer, and I booked them as an appointment right then and there,” Wesley recalls. “It took me six months before I even got the ball rolling, and I finished 2020 with one transaction. But I stuck with it, and there was a snowball effect.” 2020 was a challenging year,

“Don’t give up, and don’t get discouraged, because it will be discouraging starting off, especially in a tough time. It could be months before getting your first transaction. If you’re mentally prepared for that, it’s going to be a very rewarding business.”



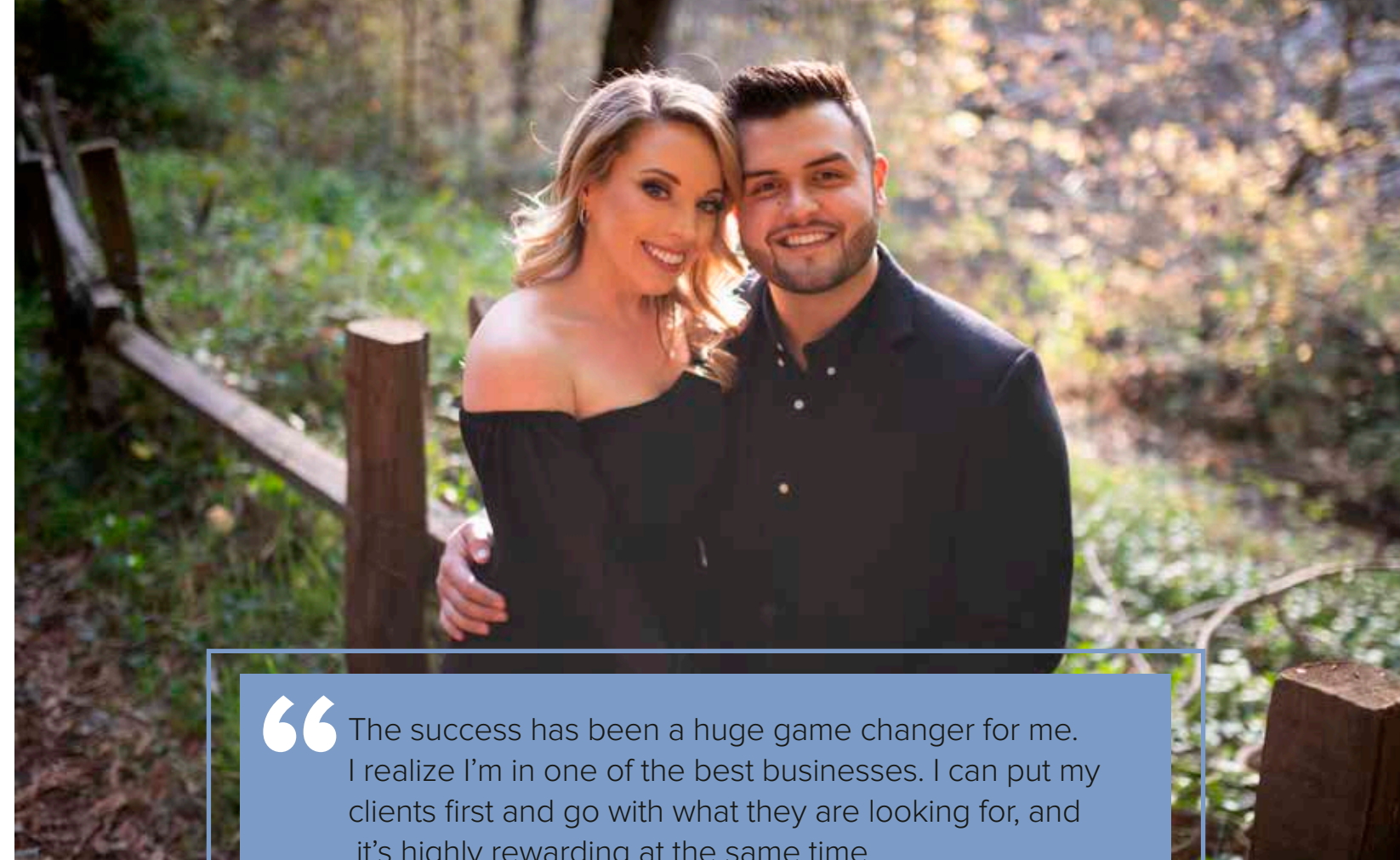
but it was instrumental in the growth of Wesley's business. In 2021, he closed 10 transactions, making a six-figure income in the process – a huge accomplishment for him. In 2022, he tripled his sales, closing 19 transactions and eclipsing \$300,000 in commissions. "The success has been a huge game changer for me. I realize I'm in one of the best businesses. I can put my clients first and go with what they are looking for, and it's highly rewarding at the same time," Wesley smiles. Leading with Friendliness A Morgan Hill native, Wesley is committed to doing right by those he serves. He's now building his own team, the Montage Group with Westbrook Realty. "The main thing I look for in teammates is friendliness, and I have to get a good vibe from them. I know some people who are hardworking and get transactions however don't have positivity. Positivity is important because it can bring us all up," Wesley explains. Wesley plans to keep his team small for the time being, allowing him to devote ample energy into developing each agent. While he eventually intends to grow a larger group, he's starting with a strong foundation. "I also want to give credit to Vladimir Westbrook, my broker, who took me under my wing and helped me grow my business. He put a lot of time into me, up on late-night Zoom calls and coaching me. That's also been a big piece of my success."

Don't give up, and don't get discouraged, because it will be discouraging starting off, especially in a tough time. It could be months before getting your first transaction. If you're mentally prepared for that, it's going to be a very rewarding business."

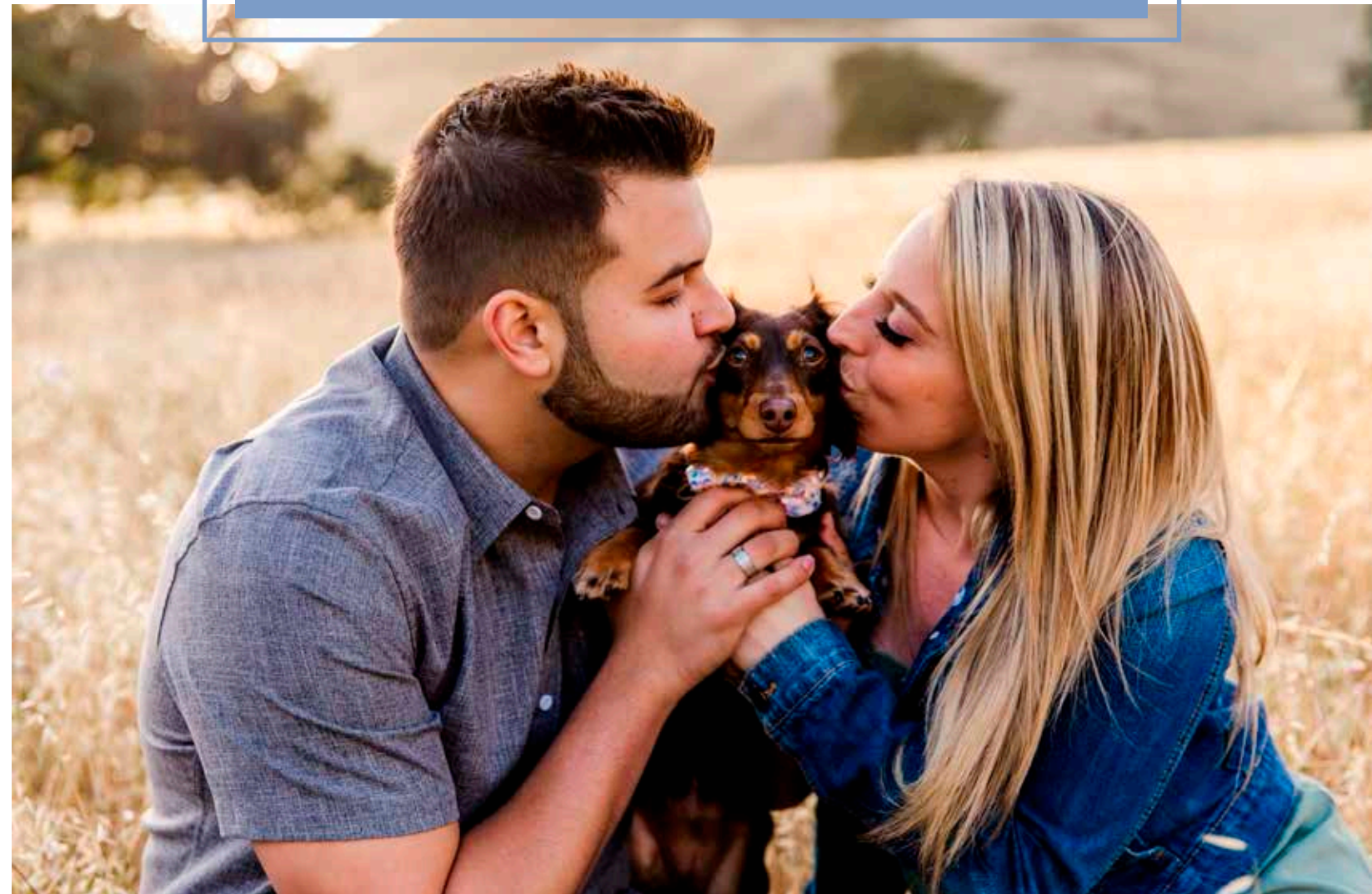
Integrity Matters Outside work, Wesley's life is budding as well. He and his wife, Kelsi, were married in March 2023. When he's not hanging

out with his wife or their dog, Cleo, Wesley can be found spending time with friends or attending Morgan Hill Bible Church. "Faith – that's a big piece of who I am today. Honesty and integrity are so important. I can ask myself, 'What would God want me to do in this situation?'

and that helps me with decision-making. Sometimes I stop in my car before a showing and say a quick prayer, and that helps serve my success today." Whether working in real estate, serving at church, or hanging out with friends, Wesley wants to be known as a man of faith and integrity. "More than anything, I want to be someone you can trust."



“The success has been a huge game changer for me. I realize I'm in one of the best businesses. I can put my clients first and go with what they are looking for, and it's highly rewarding at the same time.”



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Maureen Davis

Finding her Way

Hiker. Baker. Dealmaker. Lover of wildflowers and the outdoors. Former geographer with the US Forest Service. Maureen Davis has worn many hats in her lifetime. In the last five years, she's added top real estate agent to the list, as she begins to solidify her place amongst the top real estate agents on the Peninsula.

As a real estate agent, Maureen gets her greatest joy from helping clients find a perfect fit in a home. With quite the varied background, interests, and a delightful sense of humor, Maureen brings fresh energy to the local real estate market.

Home is Where the Heart is

Maureen grew up in Millbrae and still makes her home there. After graduating from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, Maureen began to build a career as a geographer for the US Forest Service. She worked on various projects in the research department, from a multi-disciplinary inventory of the Sierra Nevada ecosystem to urban forestry, studying canopy cover and how it affects heat, carbon dioxide, runoff, and pollution.

"I'm a geographer, so I bring the physical sciences and social sciences and mesh them together," Maureen explains. "It's the patterns that matter the most."

Maureen eventually moved on to work for a research consultant in Palo Alto and Menlo Park, helping companies vision out their long-term future. "Most companies can't think more than a quarter out," Maureen laughs. "My specialties were general strategic planning, emerging technologies, and healthcare... We helped them anticipate and see what likely changes are. No one has a crystal ball.

But when you start looking at trends, you can gear up for that and be ahead of the curve." Maureen worked with corporations, non-profits, and the government at the thinktank from the late 90s through 2007.

Real Estate Calls

In 2007, everything changed. With the recession looming, companies began to scramble, and the consulting industry took a devastating hit.

"I suffered greatly for a long time," Maureen states candidly. Maureen did some independent consulting before picking up work for local political campaigns.

"I had dabbled in politics my whole life," Maureen explains. But getting into real estate? "It was an accident. Totally and completely."

Maureen was hired to work for a political campaign -- and as it turned out, she was running a campaign for one of the owners of OMARSHALL, the daughter of the founder of the brokerage.

"So I ran the campaign from her real estate office. When it was over, I figured I would clean up the campaign and walk out... But she had more work for me. I started doing marketing work for her. Then she suggested that I get my [real estate] license."

"I ignored her for a long time, insisting I was not a salesperson," Maureen continues with a smile. "At some point, she put the books on my desk... Eventually, I took the courses, passed the test. By then I saw that it's not a sales job. It's something much different."

Maureen reflects on the similarities between running a political campaign and running a transaction. "You have to

meet a lot of people, get the word out -- marketing, marketing, marketing."

"I've been able to take my entire background -- all my skills and knowledge fit somewhere. It all translates nicely."

Finding her Way

Since getting licensed in 2014, Maureen admits that her progression hasn't been without hiccups.

"I was pretty good in my first year," she explains. "I got a few deals, then there was a lull."

After several years of riding the ups and downs of real estate, Maureen had her best year ever in 2018. "2018 was the best year yet, but I'm sort of still a rookie," Maureen reflects. "I work a lot. And I try a lot of different things. You have to touch people where they are. Meet people face to face, where it really matters. At the end of the day, it's the face to face [that makes the difference]. It's about getting out in front of people."

As a single woman with no children, Maureen is blessed to be able to socialize and get in front of her customers early and often. She regularly holds "appreciation parties" -- events that are put on just to touch base with clients and share in a good time together. "It's just fun. We're not talking real estate. There's painting, music, food. Everyone has a blast."

"Work just blends into all kinds of events and community stuff. I have a totally wonderful life. All that community stuff isn't work... But I'm out all day long," Maureen explains. "Although, I do wish I would put more hikes on my calendar."

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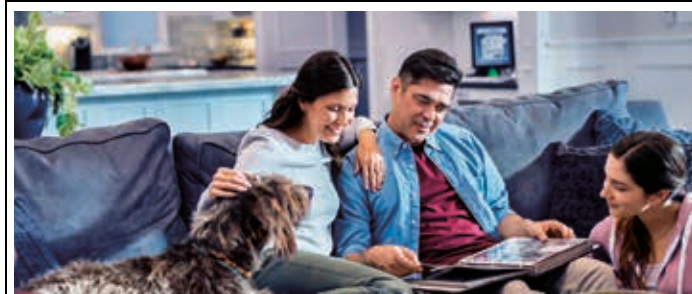
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Work Hard and Smart

Born in China, Lili Chen immigrated to the US with her family when she was six. Lili's parents came to America to provide a better life for their family, and their journey took them from coast to coast. After several years in New

York, they moved to Florida, then Southern California. At each stop, they owned and operated restaurants.

Lili grew up in the restaurant business. She witnessed her parents pour their energy and hearts into their business. The hours were often long and grueling, their work ethics unshakable.



"I walked to my parents' restaurant after school every day," Lili reflects. "My parents instilled hard-working habits; they worked seven days a week, twelve to fourteen hour days. I learned tenacity. I acquired a will to never give up."

The values and lessons Lili learned from her parents have continued to serve her as a real estate agent. Her likability is coupled with tenacity, allowing her to connect with clients from all walks of life.

Gaining Confidence

Lili's parents eventually expanded into the import/export food distribution business. As Lili got older, she joined the family business, becoming Vice President and Controller of the wholesale company.

When the import/export food business took a hit during the recession of the late 2000s, Lili became a paralegal. She enjoyed the work, but her growth was capped. She has always been driven to achieve more, so at the



“**I’VE LEARNED THAT WORKING HARD DOESN’T ALWAYS GET YOU SOMEWHERE IN LIFE.** It’s about working smart, learning how to leverage what you’ve got.

advice of a friend, she turned toward real estate.

Lili was licensed in 2016. Over the past six years, she’s built a strong business in the Bay Area. She closed nearly \$25 million in 2021 and, in 2022, is set to almost double her sales volume.

Lili has grown personally over the past six years, too. She started her real estate career more timid, a bit unsure of her skills and value. Today, her confidence is greatly improved due to her focus on personal development.

“I come from an immigrant background. I didn’t even get my green card until 2015. I didn’t finish college. So coming into real estate, I had to understand my beliefs and how I can overcome them. I had to ask myself, ‘Am I good enough to sell a \$2, \$3, \$4, or \$5 million house? It’s been a lot of personal work and internal work.”

Lili is confident in her ability to weather the current market downturn. She prides herself on her ability

to develop creative, individual strategies for each client and negotiate the most advantageous deal.

“At the end of the day, they are people like us. What’s important is that I love on them and help them like I would my own family member.”

Work Hard – and Smart

As a real estate agent, Lili calls upon the work ethic her parents taught her daily. But she’s also learned another lesson – hard work isn’t the only path to success.

“I’ve learned that working hard doesn’t always get you somewhere in life,” she says frankly. “It’s about working smart, learning how to leverage what you’ve got. Wealth and success is saving pennies and being frugal like my parents, but it’s also about how you leverage your money. So you won’t see me working seven days a week for 12 to 14 hours. I have an assistant. I have a coach. I’m all about what it is going to take to move the needle in the business.”

Staying Connected

Outside work, Lili enjoys spending time with her son, Calvin, working out, and personal development. Although Calvin currently lives with his dad in Arizona, Lili was a single mom for ten years.

“Being a mom is one of my greatest accomplishments,” she says proudly.

As Lili looks ahead, she is focused on growth, but her growth won’t be at the expense of others. She hopes to create the type of success that leads to success for others.

“I have a spiritual belief that we are all connected,” she says. “So much in real estate is a facade. You have to appear a certain way. There are things you can or can’t say. But I feel if you focus on yourself and your clients, you can’t go wrong. I want to create win-win opportunities for everyone. I want to help people achieve their goals.”



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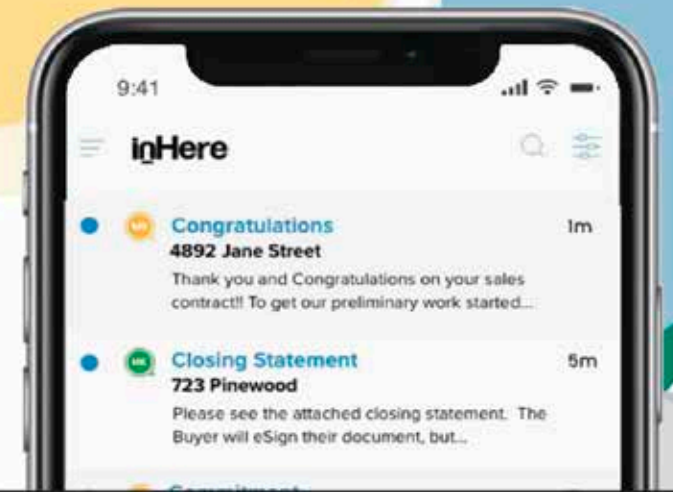
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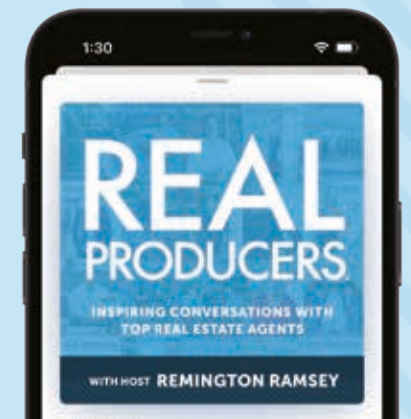


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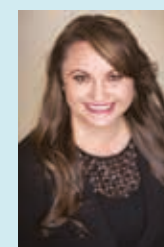
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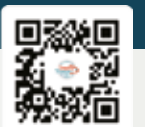


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PHIL CHEN

*phil***CHEN**
 From the Street Skate to Real Estate Sales: Continuing to Take the Leap of Faith



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Were you, your broker or the team featured in an issue of Real Producers?

I eventually dropped off, while my friends became professionals. In their *Thrasher Magazine* interviews they would say things like, "I need to skate with Phil Chen, but he says, 'I will never forget that.'"

"I remember I took a few years off and when I was in college, I registered and started skating." Phil chuckles. "I told my parents, 'I'm going to register this my whole life. I'm going to get schooled and go pro; but I never did it. And I am going to regret it my whole life. I was too young to enjoy or see what the potential would be.'"

Despite the sense of loss from a skateboarding career that never was, Phil's path has led him to great things: first, a career in fitness, and now, a blossoming real estate business. He still takes lessons from his early years on a skateboard with him every day.

With the nature of a skateboarder, Phil remains willing to take chances when the time is ripe. "I'm constantly rolling the dice and taking risks and chances. That's my nature. I'm not conservative towards risk. I'm always going to take the leap of faith," he explains.

"The lessons I learned from skateboarding... it was discrimination. Living, sleeping, sweating what you do, it becomes natural and instinctive. In a little ways, it's a sense of what being an elite athlete was like. I could go to sleep, dream a trick, and do it the next day. I tell my kids now, try to be the best at whatever you do."

In college, Phil delved into another sport story << **COVER STORY** in the *San Francisco Chronicle* by *Robert Lee*

"This is the key if you want to be good at something, you have to not sleep, and dream it."

Broader than the early days of pro gear and pro money, his early exposure of the street skateboarding scene of San Francisco.

As a native San Francisco teenager growing up in the Bay Area, Phil Chen was already making waves in the skateboarding world. He was not only a competitive skateboarder, but was naturally skilled, and one of the top sponsored skaters in the nation. He skated through high school and into my Gymnastics and Christian Church.

"I was fresh off a second place finish in national competition and probably spent more training pro's than I was!" Phil chuckles. "I could come home from school, do my homework, and then have a practice to bring up my sponsor's expectations."

Despite his love for skateboarding and the money that came with it, the discipline became too much for a 17-year-old that was just coming out of high school. "I wanted to find like a job, sponsor, and commitment outside the lines for the sport."

"When I got my father's license and got behind, it became harder to drive."

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"But before I did that, I reached out my credit cards to open my gym and that's where I got the most training for real estate."

In the fitness world, Phil learned the service business. It was a natural segue to shift from personal fitness training to luxury real estate. "It's the same thing," Phil explains. "Fitness is an art backed by science. Real estate is an art backed by quantitative analysis."

During his years as a gym owner in the San Francisco financial district, Phil was also able to (unbeknownst to) begin to build his real estate client database. Phil's private personal training studio catered to Fortune 500 CEOs, bankers, lawyers, and other affluent clientele.

"I was just in my gym, working and hanging out," Phil says, smiling. Eventually, some of Phil's clients became his business partners. "They would buy real estate, and I would manage it. I had no money back then. That's how I got my feet wet."

By 2006, Phil realized it was time to make a choice. With one foot in the fitness world and the other in the real estate world, his attention was divided. As he admits, "I was half-sitting [on real estate]."

"I had no choice. I took the leap of faith and got into real estate full time in '06."

In 2006, Phil experienced success, but the downturn of 2007 through 2009 would make him think twice about his decision to dive into real estate. "I had no choice. I took the leap of faith and got into real estate full time in '06."

Phil spread his own boutique brokerage, *Epiphany*, without ever working for a larger brokerage, using the knowledge he accrued mainly on his own through his family's investments, observation, intuition, and experience. By 2010, he put himself on the map as a top real estate agent in the highly competitive area of Millbrae.

Coming to Compare from Epiphany, which he operated and ran for the better part of a decade, has given Phil a unique perspective on the state of the local real estate market. "Compare is a unique appealing freight train right now," Phil comments.

"I'm fortunate to have had three careers that I was passionate about, but none really great at and made six figures."

Regardless of the brokerage where he hangs his license, Phil knows his reputation is what carries him to success.

"People trust me. Reputation is so important over any deal or commission. That's the reason an usually one of the first choices amongst an array of talented agents in the Bay Area."

Phil stays motivated by staying humble and continuously striving to improve in all aspects of his work.

"I'm still hungry, so watch out."

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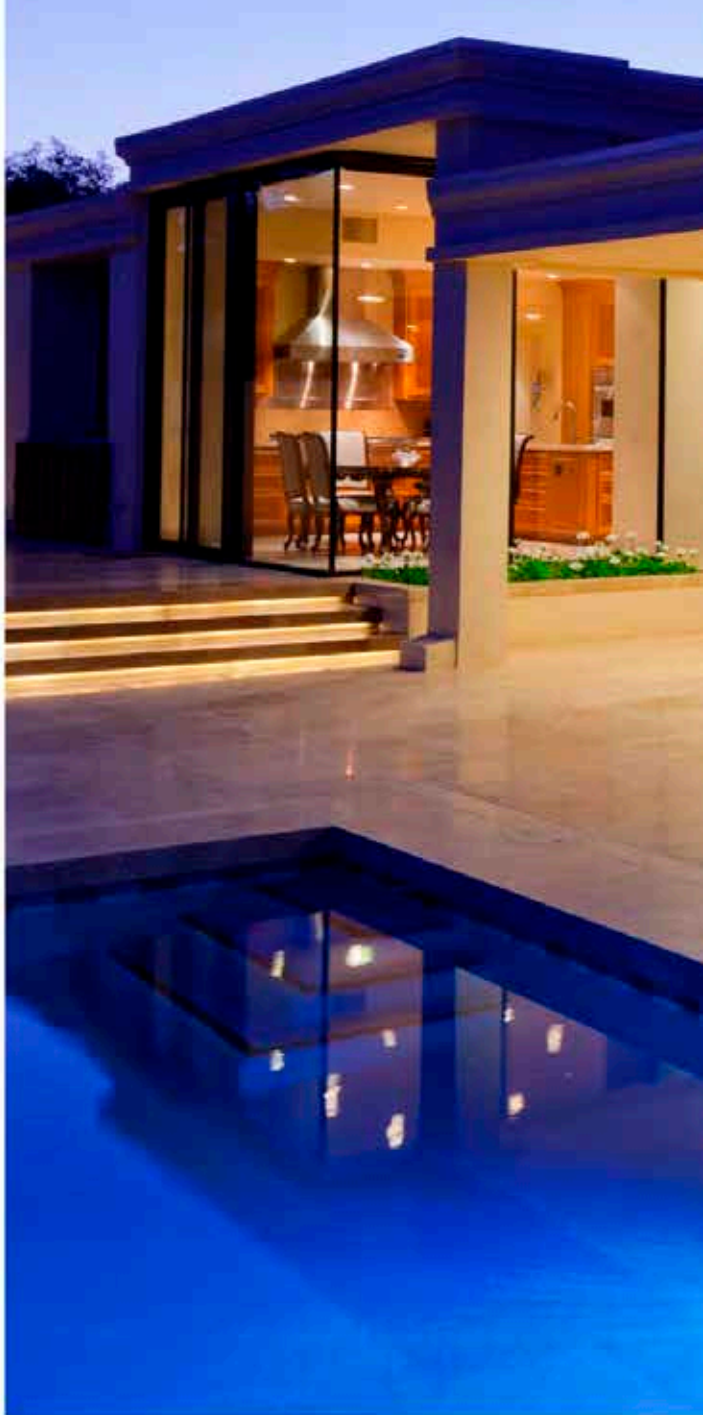
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