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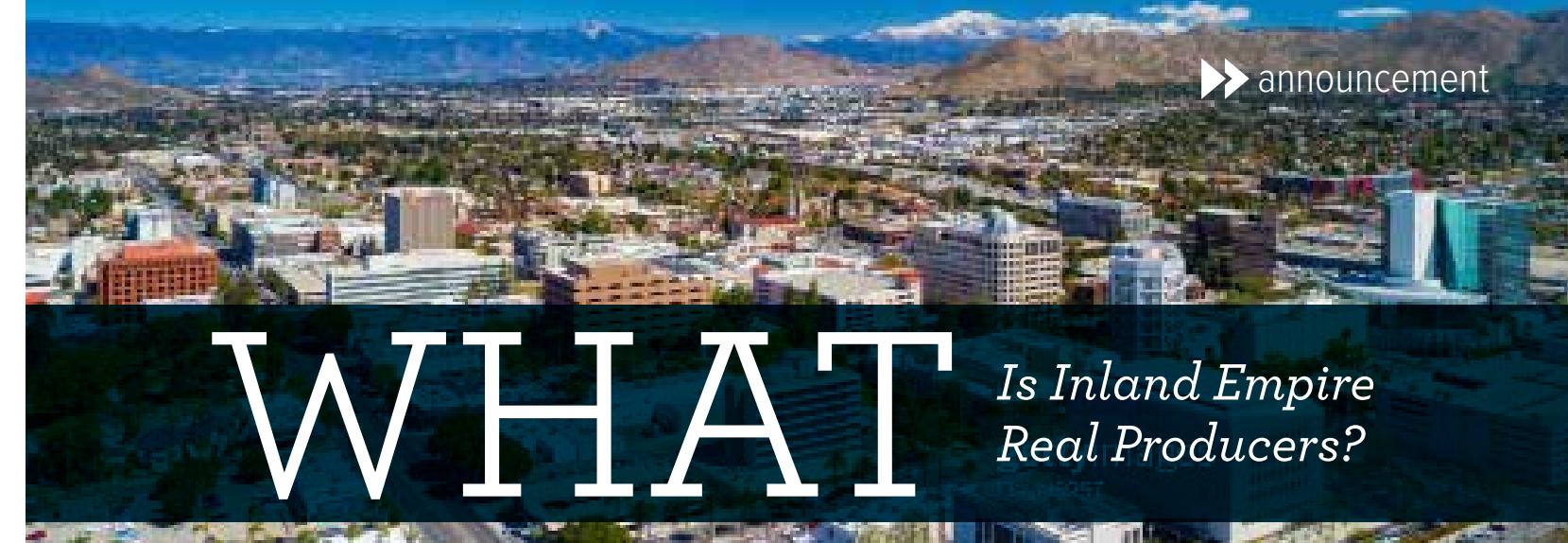
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# WHAT

*Is Inland Empire  
Real Producers?*

A nomination currently looks like this: You email our publisher Marissa Menezes at [marissa.menezes@n2co.com](mailto:marissa.menezes@n2co.com) with the subject line, “Nomination: (Name of Nominee).”

Please explain why you are nominating them to be featured. It could be they have an amazing story that needs to be told — perhaps they overcame extreme obstacles, they are an exceptional leader, have the best customer service, or they give back to the community in a big way, etc. The next step is an interview with us to ensure it's a good fit. If it all works out, then we put the wheels in motion for our writer to conduct an interview to write the article and for our photographers to schedule a photo shoot.

### Q: WHAT DOES IT COST A REALTOR® / TEAM TO BE FEATURED?

*Zero, zilch, zippo, nada, nil. It costs nothing, my friends, so nominate away!*

We are not a pay-to-play model. We share real stories of Real Producers.

### Q: WHO ARE THE PREFERRED PARTNERS?

Anyone listed as a “preferred partner” in the front of the magazine is a part of this community. They will have an ad in every issue of the magazine, attend our quarterly events, and be a part of our online community. We don’t just find these businesses off the street, nor do we work with all businesses that approach us. One of many of the top agents has recommended every single preferred partner you see in this publication. We won’t even meet with a business that has not been vetted by one of you and “stamped for approval,” in a sense. Our goal is to create a powerhouse network, not only for the best REALTORS® in the area but the best affiliates, as well, so we can grow stronger together.

### Q: WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR BEING FEATURED IN THIS MAGAZINE?

It’s really simple — every feature you see has first been nominated. You can nominate other REALTORS®, affiliates, brokers, owners, or even yourself! Office leaders can also nominate REALTORS®. We will consider anyone brought to our attention who is in the Top 500 because we don’t know everyone’s story, so we need your help to learn about them.

### Q: HOW CAN I RECOMMEND A PREFERRED PARTNER?

A: If you know and want to recommend a local business that works with top REALTORS®, please email our owner to let us know at [mike.maletich@n2co.com](mailto:mike.maletich@n2co.com)

# 2022

## BY THE NUMBERS

HERE'S WHAT THE  
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SOLD IN 2022

23,574  
TOTAL TRANSACTIONS

\$ \$9,836,209,802  
SALES VOLUME

\$19.674  
MILLION

AVERAGE  
SALES VOLUME  
PER AGENT

48  
AVERAGE  
TRANSACTIONS  
PER AGENT

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Using your badge? We would love to see how! Show us how you are using your badge and you just might find a picture of what you shared in the magazine! Social media, email signatures, web, listings, marketing material...nothing is off-limits.

Our RP-vetted businesses have been carefully selected to be a part of this community and have their own badge. They have been recommended by your peers in the top 500 and are some of the Inland Empire's most respected businesses. Look for this badge to know that you are working with one of the best of the recommended best!

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**KARI**  
Janikowski

cover story 

Written by Zachary Cohen Photography by Marissa Menezes

## "FOR ME, IT'S BEEN A WHOLE DIFFERENT PATH," KARI JANIKOWSKI BEGINS.

Kari Janikowski has taken an unconventional path into real estate sales, beginning her career as an appraiser and later becoming a REALTOR® and broker. Kari and her husband, Rafe, have owned and operated Sunland Appraisals since 2000, but it wasn't until 2013 that Kari kicked off her tenure as a REALTOR®. Today, she is an appraiser, a REALTOR®, and the Broker/Owner of KJ Realty Group.

Kari's background, experience, and expertise give her a unique perspective on the real estate business. After over 25 years in the business, she remains inspired to grow and serve through the business she has come to love.

Kari was born in Orange County and grew up in Menifee. She's a country girl at heart; her love for rural California runs deep. Early in her adult life, she spent six years away from SoCal, following her husband up and down the east coast of the US during his six-year military tenure. Kari worked as a legal secretary for ten years, but as any military spouse knows, building a career when constantly on the move is a daunting task.

When Rafe's military career came to a close, Kari and Rafe returned home to Southern California. Rafe originally planned to continue his work in nuclear power for

California Steel Industries, but a surprise opportunity led him and Kari to the appraisal business.

"His brother was an appraiser and needed help, and I guess the rest is history," Kari says with a laugh.

Kari and Rafe began their appraising career by supporting Rafe's brother, developing a love for the business. Two years later, they founded their own appraising company, Sunland Appraisals.

Kari built a strong reputation as an appraiser and business owner for twelve years before her next opportunity arose.

"I woke up one day, and the market had crashed. It was a tough market, and I was trying to sell our home so we could get a house with a guest house for my parents. It was a difficult market, and the commissions were important, so I became a REALTOR® to sell my own home," Kari explains.

Kari completed the sale and purchase of her personal properties, but something else happened along the way, too — her real estate sales business began to take off.

"I had been appraising in Riverside for so many years by that point. Over the years, I was referring out agents all day long. And suddenly, all those people were coming to me. Very quickly, I became crazy busy because everyone already knew me as an appraiser. My appraisal work created a level of confidence in me, and it took off."

Today, Kari is a REALTOR® as well as the broker of KJ Realty Group, the brokerage she founded in 2020. Her passion for real estate, commitment to service, and energetic nature have allowed her to succeed as a REALTOR® and broker.

"I credit my success to the knowledge [I have]. I want people to learn everything they can learn about real estate, whether that's a client buying a home or one of my agents," Kari explains. "I'm passionate about training people. I'm loyal and trustworthy in business."

**I want people to learn everything they can learn about real estate, whether that's a client buying a home or one of my agents.**



•••

Kari closed 33 transactions for \$25 million (individually) in 2022. KJ Realty is a team of ten agents, including Kari. The KJ Realty Group model allows agents to build their own brand while keeping costs to the brokerage low and more money in their pocket. Kari offers training, support, and

mentorship, but each agent is responsible for lead generating and growing their pipeline independently.

One of the greatest benefits of a real estate career is the flexibility to raise a family. Kari and Rafe's sons, Joshua and Ethan, are now 22 and 21. Both

will soon receive bachelor's degrees from Boise State University.

"We were able to raise our kids without any daycare, balancing our schedules. We were able to be there for our kids, and we were very active with our kids," Kari reflects. "The family life it gave us was great. That's been a gift."

While Kari's kids are now in their twenties, she continues to be grateful for the flexibility a career in real estate offers. Both her sons are working on getting their real estate licenses and plan to join the family business in some form — Joshua as

an appraiser and investor and Ethan as a part-time agent around his plans to be a physician's assistant.

"Friends, family, and everything we do is around real estate. It's not intentional, but the way the road takes us," Kari beams. "We eat, sleep, and drink

real estate. We love it... But I want to remind people it hasn't been easy, either. I have so many people look at my husband and me — we have a beautiful home and a good life, but nothing is easy. It's an up and down market. To succeed, you have to stick with it, and you have to believe in yourself."



**“** We were able to raise our kids without any daycare, balancing our schedules. We were able to be there for our kids, and we were very active with our kids. The family life it gave us was great. That's been a gift.

# MUSEUM

“

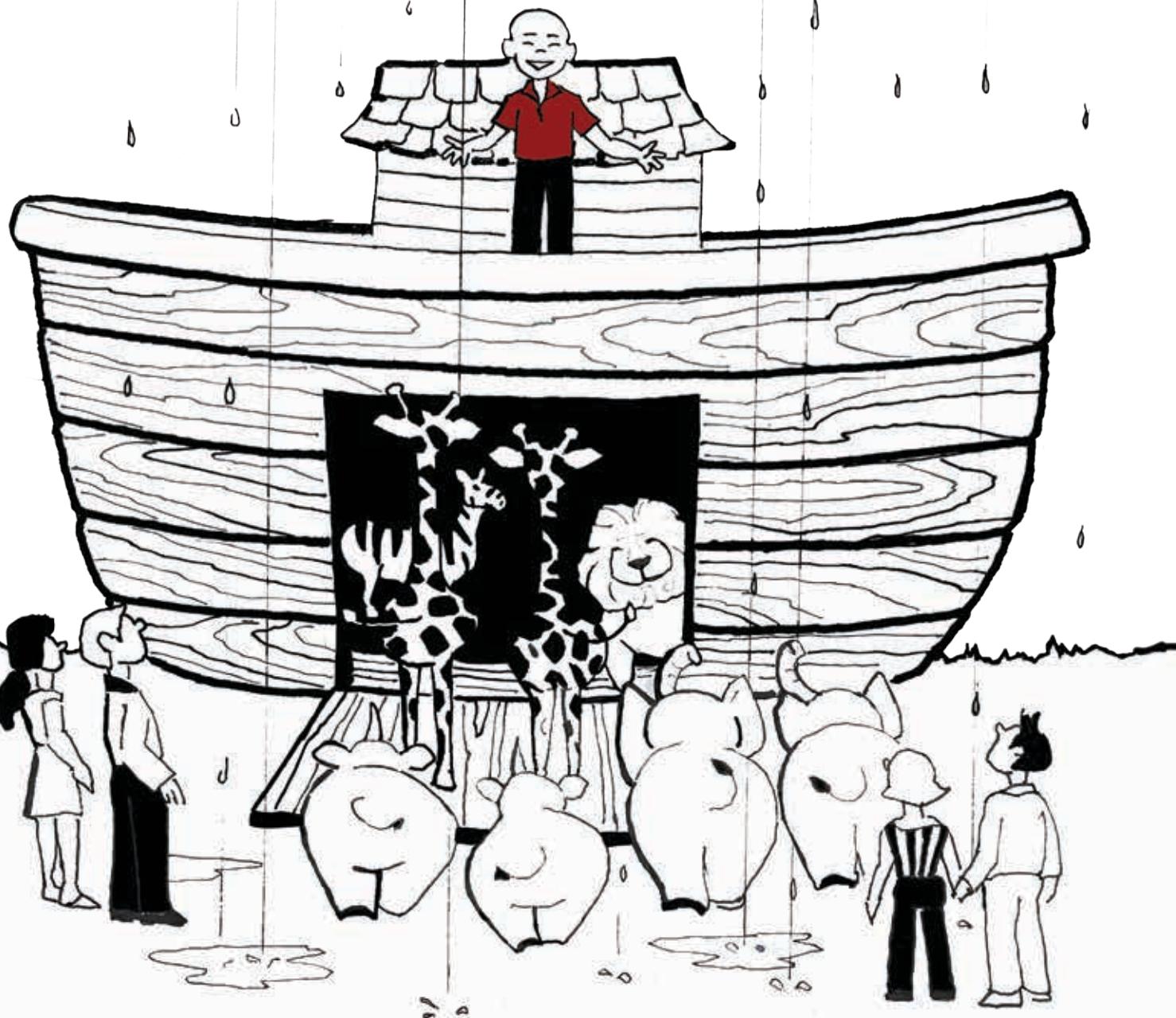
Friends, family, and everything we do is around real estate.  
It's not intentional, but the way the road takes us.

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We eat, sleep, and drink real estate. We love it...  
But I want to remind people it hasn't been easy, either.



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# RYAN PEAKE

At 27 years old, Ryan Peake was handed news no one wants to hear.

"I was working for the Union Pacific Railroad, and I was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer," Ryan recalls. "Stage 4 non-Hodgkin's Burkitt lymphoma. There are only 200 cases a year diagnosed. It was aggressive and came out of nowhere. They gave me, honestly, days to live."

Ryan was not only young; he had lived a healthy lifestyle, but as they say, cancer doesn't discriminate. Over the next seven months, Ryan lived in a hospital. His time there was marked by ICU visits and intensive treatment.

"I consider myself a fighter. I took it personally," Ryan continues. "It was hard. I spent a lot of time in ICU on a 24-hour watch where they weren't sure which way things would go. Some moments, I was focusing breath to breath. 'Just keep breathing. Just keep breathing.' I thought, 'If I'm breathing, I'm still alive.'"

During this time, Ryan also leaned into his relationship with the Lord. His son was just six years old, and he wasn't planning to leave him without a dad. With faith and a fighter's mentality, Ryan persevered, and in 2008, he was declared cancer-free.

Ryan was afforded a new lease on life. Along with it came a new perspective.

"After going through that, I decided I didn't want to work for the railroad anymore. I wanted to get into a career where I could help people with their health and help cancer survivors."

Ryan had long been into fitness, so he got his personal training certificate and began anew. After three years of training at various local facilities, he opened Peake Fitness, the studio he continues to own and operate, in 2012. Much of his early work was with cancer survivors.

...

“

I wanted to get into a career where I could help people with their health **and help cancer survivors.**

► realtor on the rise

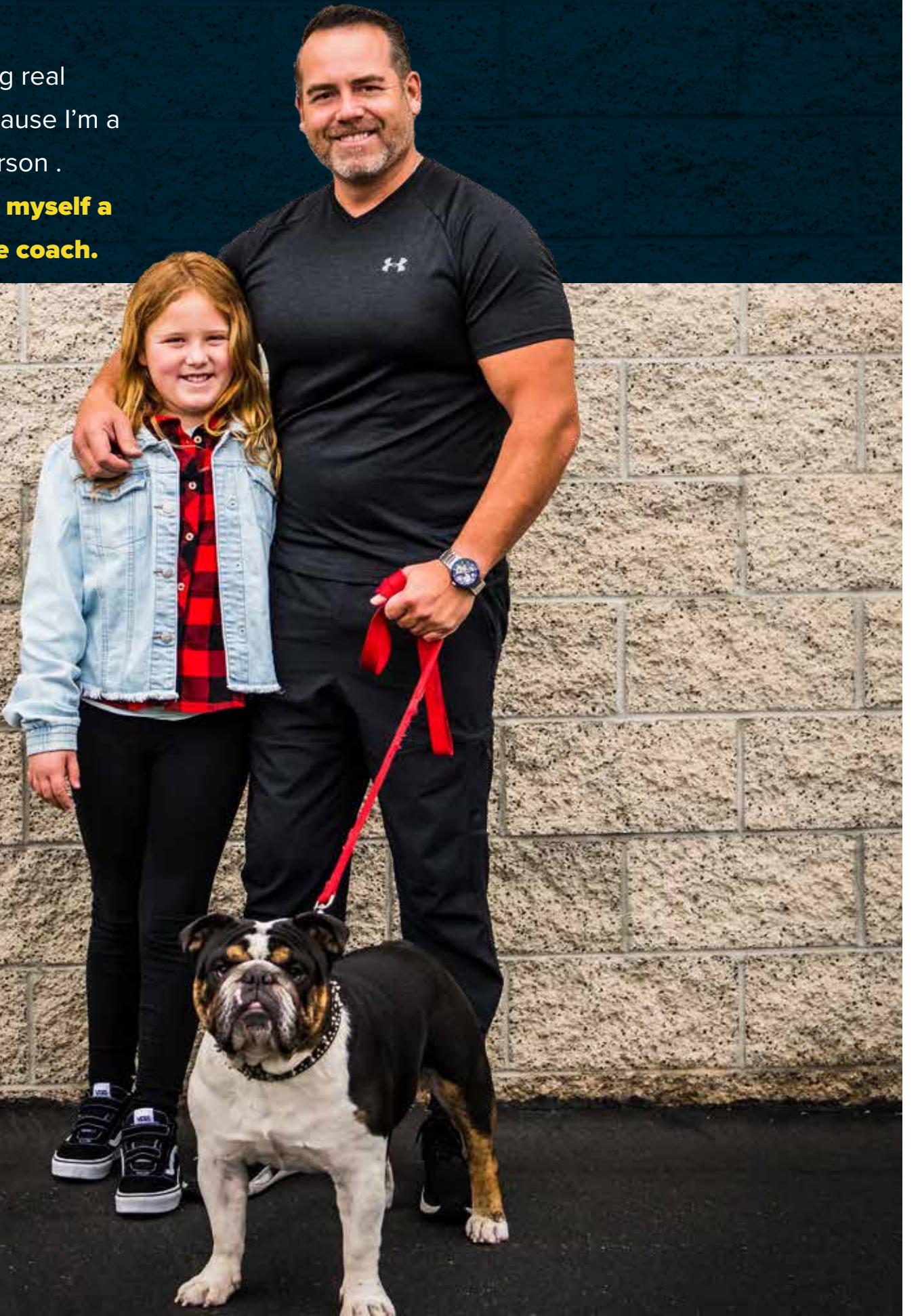
Written by **Zachary Cohen**  
Photography by **Marissa Menezes**



“

I love doing real estate because I'm a people person.

I consider myself a real estate coach.



•••

“My battle with cancer changed my life in every way you can imagine — my health, my faith, my career, my outlook on life. I'm very grateful I'm still here. I'm a man of faith and believe God kept me here for a reason. So I try to serve and give back as much as I can. There are more important things in life than chasing a paycheck. I want to do something that really matters. I'd probably still be at the railroad driving trains and hating my job if not for that diagnosis.”

Through 2020, Ryan's personal training business was his sole source of income. But over the years, he began to get curious about a career in real estate, and he got his license just before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, planning to dip his toes into a new professional venture.

“It had been in the back of my mind for a while, but the timing was one of those God things. I had to shut down my studio during COVID. It was hard, going from having a full business running, a client base, a few trainers working here, to nothing. Luckily, real estate was there at the perfect time,” Ryan explains.

Over the past three years, Ryan has developed his real estate business into a strong part-time operation. He continues to run his personal training studio as his real estate business picks up steam. For Ryan, real estate

Outside work, Ryan spends much of his time with his family and his bulldog, Rocco. His son, Julian, is now 22, and his daughter, Luna, is 8. He serves at his church and is on the board of the Beloved Foundation, a nonprofit organization offering compassionate care for cancer and terminally ill patients.

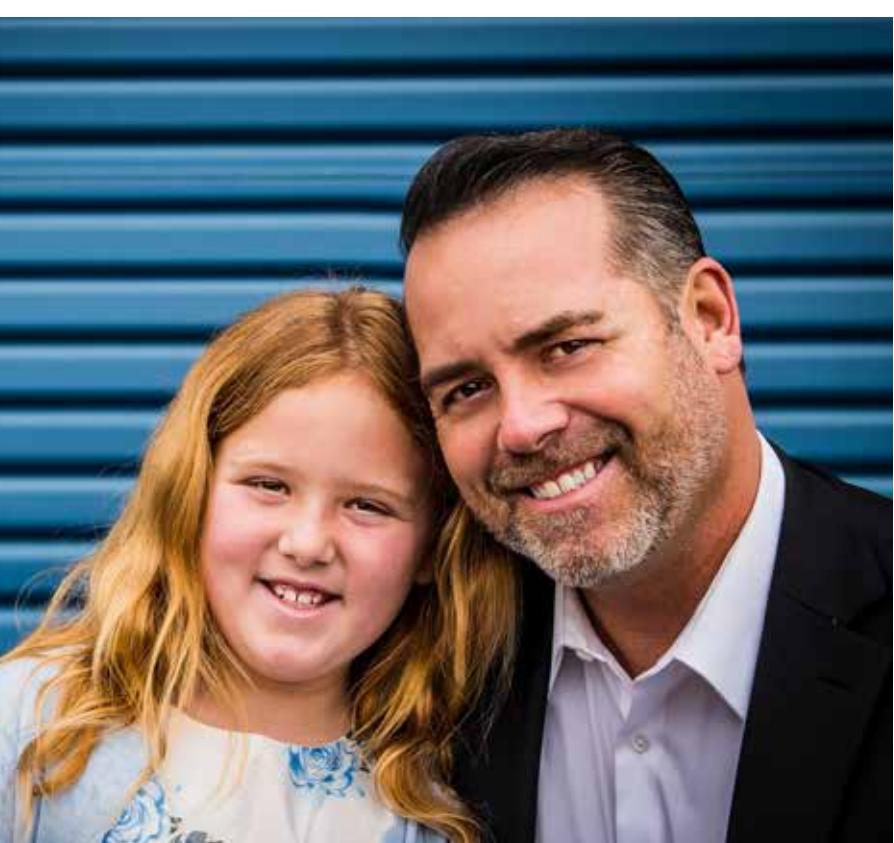
As Ryan reflects on his journey, gratitude rises to the surface. Fifteen years ago, he was in a fight for his life. Now, he's making the most of his second lease on life by running two successful businesses, raising happy children, and serving the community through his work.

“The key to success? You have to remain humble but work hard.”



is a second source of income and a second way to serve his community.

“I love doing real estate because I'm a people person,” he says. “I consider myself a real estate coach. I'm going to coach my clients through the transaction process. I meet them where they are at.”





► preferred partner spotlight

Written by **Zachary Cohen**  
Photography by **Marissa Menezes**

# Patti MacGregor

CHICAGO TITLE

In the early 2000s, Patti MacGregor was living in Orange County and working as a licensed broker in the securities and financial services industry, the career she enjoyed for 17 years. For years, Patti's sister, Mary, encouraged her to move to the Inland Empire and join her in the title industry. Patti resisted, but eventually, her mindset shifted.

What finally drew Patti into the title business was the desire to be closer to her family. So in 2003, she began anew, leaving behind her career in securities and joining her sister.

Patti admits she didn't know much about the title business when she started, but over the past 20 years, she's become a seasoned professional and a valued business partner. The opportunities to problem-solve and build relationships continue to inspire her daily.

"Relationships with my clients — and their successes — motivate me. I get a great sense of satisfaction and accomplishment from my work, and I have a genuine passion for helping people. I love my client relationships," Patti offers.

Patti has the backing of Chicago Title, a company with a history dating back to the mid-1800s and one of the strongest reputations in the nation. She is thankful she has an amazing staff behind her, including management, the title/escrow department, and customer service. Patti acknowledges her support network has been an integral part of her success.

Patti has developed a reputation for being a problem-solver. She doesn't shy away from challenging situations, welcoming the opportunity to come through for a partner or client in a difficult situation.

...

**“**  
I get a great sense of satisfaction and accomplishment from my work, and I have a genuine passion for helping people.



**FUN FACT**  
In her free time,  
Patti enjoys hiking,  
mountain bike riding,  
and is an avid  
Pickleball player.

...

"I love working on problems to help close transactions for my REALTOR® and lender clients," she says proudly. "When it comes down to the 11th hour and there's a title issue, I'm going to do whatever I can to get that deal closed. I've always been a hard worker. I love getting to the bottom of problems."

Patti's capacity for strength, perseverance, and responsibility runs deep. She was the oldest of six siblings who grew up without a mom.

Patti took on a caretaker role for many of her younger siblings, helping them navigate difficult situations and the challenges of daily life. The strength of her character has continued to follow her into adulthood. It's, perhaps, her greatest gift.

Patti is also a two-time cancer survivor. Throughout each of these periods, she has continued to work, showing her dedication to her craft and her personal strength.

"I worked through it all. It's made me a strong person, and that's part of me," Patti says. "The strength of my character [and] my faith, family, and friends, is what helped me through."

Patti's battles with cancer have also helped her tap into gratitude for the fulfilling, happy life she lives. She's grateful for her large family, including her husband of 32 years, her career, and the opportunity to improve the lives of everyone she touches.

"I've learned that everyone has challenges. We all do. You just do the best you can to overcome them and appreciate every day you are here. Stay positive. Be a giver. What I love about this job is that I have the opportunity to help people every day."

**Patti MacGregor is an Account Executive with Chicago Title, a title company founded in 1847. For more information, visit <http://www.pattimacgregor.com>.**



“

I've learned  
that everyone has  
challenges. We all do. You  
just do the best you can  
to overcome them and  
appreciate every day  
you are here.

“ **Ultimately, life is about people.** I’m not in the business of selling real estate; I’m in the business of relationships and hopefully making people’s lives better.

# BC MENDEZ BCBY

Written by **Zachary Cohen** Photography by **Marissa Menezes**

After graduating with a bachelor’s degree in business and entrepreneurial management, Bobby Mendez set off to achieve his dream of becoming a business owner. Despite his conviction that he wanted to be an entrepreneur, Bobby wasn’t yet sure about his chosen industry.

Bobby graduated from Cal State University, San Bernardino in 2014 and immediately began applying for jobs. Even he admits most were jobs he “never really wanted.” Yet, somehow, this process led him into the industry he has come to know and love.

“I applied for a job to be an assistant for a real estate broker,” Bobby recalls. “After interviewing me, he said, ‘I don’t think you’d be a good assistant, but get your license and come work with me.’ And that’s exactly what I did.”

Bobby’s first mentor worked in both the residential and commercial space, laying the groundwork for Bobby’s unique business model. He stayed there for nearly a year, learning the business and earning his chops, before joining The Robillard Consulting Group, then with Keller Williams.

Today, Bobby remains part of The Robillard Consulting Group, which has now moved to Realty Masters & Associates. Bobby has a unique business model; he works a wide range of deal types, from residential to commercial to land. His bread and butter is the often complex land and commercial deals.

“I specialize in commercial land development,” Bobby explains. “I do a lot of land properties; that’s the gateway into all real estate sectors.”

Bobby has discovered a hole in the commercial and land sectors. While it’s common for residential real estate agents to value communication and long-term relationship building, he’s found that these skills are often lacking in the commercial space. So, he’s filling the hole, bringing exceptional service and communication to a sector that badly needs it. Bobby is also willing to work through the complexities and long timelines of commercial and land deals — something many agents aren’t willing to do.

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**“**I'd like to primarily be a real estate investor one day, but my biggest goal is to have a family that is well-connected and on good terms. I don't want to miss my kids growing up. **Time is real wealth.**

“What makes me unique is my versatility in the real estate space. I can help a lot of residential REALTORS® because a lot of residential REALTORS® work with business owners who have real estate needs that are not just buying and selling a house. That's where I come in to partner with residential agents,” he explains.

Now in his eighth year in real estate, Bobby's business is thriving. He's building a business that is helping him reach his ultimate goal: to become a full-time real estate investor. For now, however, he's focused on growing his sales business alongside his rental portfolio.

Bobby's driving purpose has changed over the last few years with the growth of his family. He and his wife, Victoria, now have two children, Connor (2) and Bailey (born February 2023). They enjoy hiking, spending time outdoors, and the simple things in life, like going to the park or grabbing a cup of coffee together. Bobby and his family lived faith-based lives centered around God and family.

“One day, I'd like to move more toward real estate investing and devote my time to missionary work and giving back. The most important thing to me, from a spiritual standpoint, is my relationship with God. From an earthly standpoint, it's all about my family.”

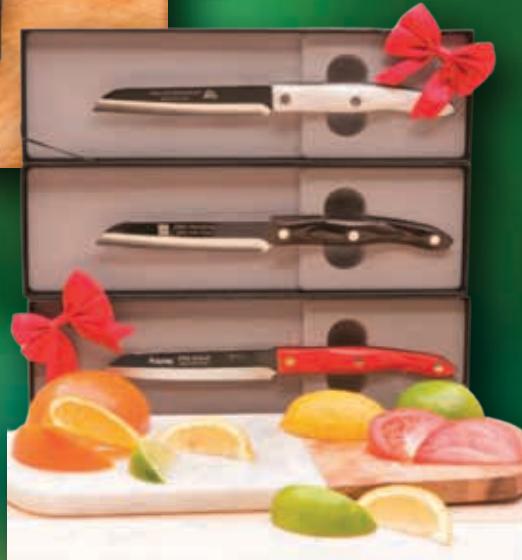
As Bobby reflects on his journey into real estate, he's proud of how far he's come in eight years. He's grown from a new college graduate with entrepreneurial dreams to a top real estate agent with a unique business model and a happy family. As he looks toward the future, he hopes to continue to move toward what inspires him.

“I'd like to primarily be a real estate investor one day, but my biggest goal is to have a family that is well-connected and on good terms. I don't want to miss my kids growing up. Time is real wealth. So to be able to create time for the family and to spend more time together — that's what I'm here for.

“Ultimately, life is about people. I'm not in the business of selling real estate; I'm in the business of relationships and hopefully making people's lives better. If that means helping them buy their dream home or helping them with their next development project, I'm happy. To get what you want, you have to help people get what they want; that's how I approach my business — and my life.”



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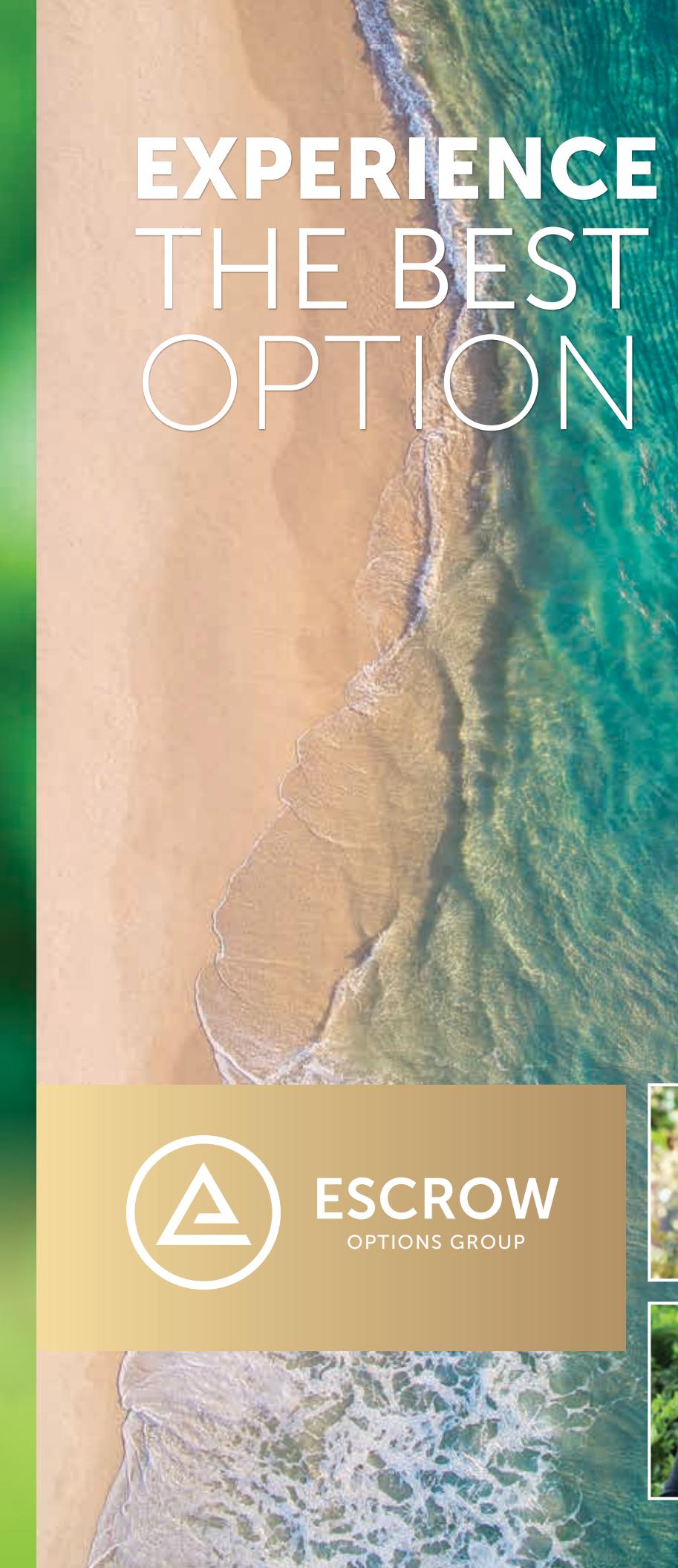
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