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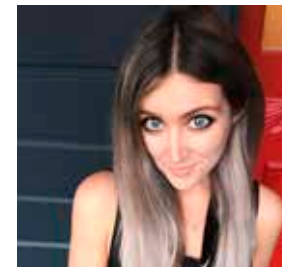
MEET THE BIRMINGHAM REAL PRODUCERS TEAM



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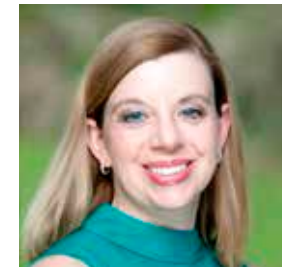
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▶▶ publisher's note

TOO BUSY?

Do you ever find yourself saying, "I'm too busy to?" Lately, this has been on my mind because I find myself thinking "I'm too busy" in different aspects of my own life and businesses.

On the surface, "busy" sounds like a perfectly valid excuse. In fact, it can almost sound downright positive in some cases. For example, you might be asked, "How are you?", and a common reply might be something along the lines of, "Oh, busy as usual."

"Busy" is such a great excuse because it sounds both plausible and positive in some cases. Yet, if we're honest, the same people will miraculously find time to do many other activities such as binge watching a few seasons on Netflix, running errands during peak work hours, watching cat videos on TikTok, etc.

What if we started reframing "I don't have time" and honestly say "It's not a priority." I think in a lot of cases, the latter is more valid and accurate. When we believe that we don't have time, we get stuck because there's no way to add more hours into a day and it becomes a limiting belief. Being honest with ourselves and admitting that something isn't a priority is far more empowering. By rephrasing the statement, we acknowledge the realities of our current situation and own our decisions.

"I am too busy" could also mean "I don't manage my time effectively." If I were to look at your calendar right now, what would I find scheduled? Would I be able to determine your priorities by looking at your calendar? Do you have times blocked out to grocery shop, have client appointments, go to the gym, or meal prep? Or, do you just "wing it" every week?

In my experience, if it isn't on the calendar it, it's unlikely to happen. Take a few minutes on Sunday evening or Monday morning to plan out your week. As Benjamin Franklin said, "If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail!"

I hope you'll consider retiring the "I'm too busy" excuse. Don't let yourself be fooled into thinking it's a valid excuse for why you aren't achieving your goals or spending time doing the things that are truly important to you.

If you need some help making this shift, attend our next *Birmingham Real Producers* event and network with like-minded people who won't accept "I don't have time" as an excuse.



Meredith Jones
Owner/Publisher
Birmingham Real Producers

Source: <https://www.crossfitinictus.com/blog/really-means-say-youre-busy/>

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A RENOWNED FAMILY BUSINESS

“I’m a big proponent of always learning, because the more I learn, the more I can pass that knowledge along to others.”

Craig Williams was born and raised in Birmingham, Alabama, in a family of entrepreneurs. His father and grandfather started their family business, Alabama Professional Exterminators, in 1977. Craig went to work for their company in 1984 and hasn’t looked back since.

He started out as a pest control technician for five years. Then in 1989, he became the supervisor of the termite installation department and also started getting into the sales component of the business. Craig stayed in that role until 2002 when the company underwent a major restructuring after his grandfather passed away.

Craig was also one of two principals of Alabama Foundation Specialists (AFS), which was a

foundation repair and waterproofing company. These services often go hand-in-hand with pest control, so it was a natural shift to make.

In 2003, they changed the parent company’s name to Alabama Professional Services (APS), and Craig was promoted to VP while his father was president of the company. His father retired in 2004 and Craig was named president, where he remains to this day.

Eventually, Craig was bought out of Alabama Foundation Specialists (AFS) in 2016. Once his non-compete agreement had expired, Craig launched APS Foundation, which now operates under the Alabama Professional Services (APS) umbrella.

Alabama Professional Services Today

Collectively, Alabama Professional Services (APS) and APS Foundation Repair & Waterproofing have grown to 106 total employees and service over 40,000 customers every year. Aside from foundation repair and waterproofing, the company offers a wide range of services for residential and commercial properties across Alabama, including pest control, termite control, exclusion and animal control, and mosquito control. They’ve also launched a lawn treatment department specializing in weed control and fertilization for residential lawns.

Over the decades they’ve been in business, they’ve experienced steady growth, but the last 7 years have been the most significant, nearly quadrupling their revenue since 2015.

“Our trajectory is still full steam ahead. Our target is to continue to have double-digit growth over the next 3-5 years, and we plan to grow our marketing budget, sales team, and all of our support staff that it will take to manage a larger customer base.”

The company also has plans to expand their footprint in the state and will soon open new offices in North Alabama and South Alabama.

Craig says the two keys to the company’s continued success over the years are their dedication to their employees and customers. They offer exceptional tools, products, and in-depth training for employees so they can

“

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serve customers to the best of their ability. From there, they're able to consistently go above and beyond for their customer base.

“We give our customers quality service beyond their expectations by going out of the way to do something for them that's either not expected, or not warranted in some cases. That's the APS reputation that we've focused on and tried to maintain. We've been very well received and have a great reputation among the community to be able to be relied upon and provide the services we provide.”

Craig also credits their exceptional management team for all that they do for the company. Their commitment to providing training and continued education for their staff is what supports

their positive company culture, continued growth, and the technical side of the business.

Working with Real Estate Agents

“If you're a real estate agent in the Birmingham area, you've surely heard of Alabama Professional Services (APS).”

Thanks to Alabama Professional Services' (APS) exceptional reputation in the Birmingham area, they're well-known across the real estate community. Something that sets their company apart from similar service-based companies is that they have a dedicated department that specializes in real estate transactions. This translates into a seamless experience for real estate agents whenever one of their clients needs help with their home.

“We have a real estate department that has trained personnel to take their calls, take their orders, and handle their transactions for closings in a timely manner. We've been around a long time – 46 years to be exact – because we've worked to maintain a high level of professionalism that real estate agents and closing attorneys value, appreciate, and expect.”

Outside of work, Craig enjoys getting outside for a round of golf or a hunting trip. He and his wife also love to travel and spend time with their kids whenever possible. Above all, Craig is committed to continuing to be a staple for homeowners, real estate investors, and agents across the state of Alabama.



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OVERCOMING OBSTACLES AND RISING IN RESIDENTIAL REAL ESTATE

Sometimes the most difficult roads in life lead to the most incredible destinations. Broker Associate Timothy A. Taylor of Barnes & Associates, REALTORS® can attest to that truth. While growing up in an underserved community, he experienced firsthand the challenges that come with limited resources. He, however, has learned to see the positive in his past while making a world of difference in the process.

“Growing up in a financially disadvantaged environment has shaped my perspective and instilled resilience and resourcefulness in me,” explains Timothy. “It has motivated me to work hard, overcome obstacles, and strive for a better future. Despite the hardships, I am proud of my upbringing as it has taught me valuable life lessons and deep empathy for others facing similar circumstances.”

DISCOVERING A PASSION FOR REAL ESTATE

As a young individual, Timothy always knew he wanted to help people. Initially considering careers in firefighting and engineering, his life took a turn when he crossed paths with a landlord, Mr. Maddox, who became a source of inspiration. During his teenage years, Timothy spent time riding around with him, exploring investment properties, and learning the ins and outs of real estate. “It was eye-opening,” he comments. The experience ignited a passion for the industry and Tim knew that was where he wanted to build his career.

Mr. Maddox was different from the slumlords that Timothy had known in his childhood days. He was very helpful and essentially changed the trajectory of his life. Timothy landed his first job as a home preservation specialist with Wells Fargo. At Wells Fargo, he helped homeowners keep their homes during challenging economic times. Within a year, he was promoted to mortgage underwriter, working in that role from 2011 - 2014.

Due to conflicts of interest, Timothy couldn't fully delve into real estate at that time. Nevertheless, his determination never wavered, and in 2018, he finally obtained his real

TIMOTHY A. TAYLOR

▶ rising star

Written by
Elizabeth McCabe
Photos by
Brendon Pinola, Brendon
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OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

Like any journey, Timothy's path in real estate was not without challenges. He encountered market fluctuations, time management struggles, and faced failures along the way. However, he adopted a growth mindset, continuously learned and adapted to industry changes, and embraced a proactive and solution-oriented approach to overcome obstacles. Timothy also emphasized the importance of building strong networks, nurturing client relationships, and maintaining a positive mindset.

"Building a professional network and establishing meaningful connections can be challenging, especially in competitive industries. Actively engaging in networking events, online communities, and seeking mentorship has helped me," he comments.

DEFINING SUCCESS: BALANCING CAREER AND PERSONAL FULFILLMENT

For Timothy, success is multi-faceted, encompassing both career achievements and personal fulfillment. In his career, success includes financial stability, career progression, recognition, making a positive impact, and finding joy in the work he does. Beyond his professional endeavors, success in his personal life involves maintaining a healthy work-life balance, nurturing relationships with loved ones, and pursuing hobbies.

estate license. Leaving his job in federal bankruptcy, he embraced real estate as his true calling, taking the bold step towards a fulfilling, purpose-driven career.

FINDING HIS NICHE

Timothy found his niche at his current brokerage, Barnes & Associates. "I love that Barnes is very family-oriented," he comments. The small boutique-style brokerage has been around for 25 years and is double minority-owned.

"We do a lot of service in the community," says Timothy. Barnes & Associates gives back through organizations and programs such as Habitat for Humanity and Housing and Urban Development (HUD). "We educate those in the underserved community because we believe that everyone deserves to be homeowners."

Timothy is also excited to train the next generation of REALTORS®. "I have a team of mentees," he explains. They are enrolled in the Momentum Program which assists new Barnes and Associates agents as they continue to learn and maneuver through the business and close on their first five deals. Training agents and showing them the secrets to success comes naturally to him since he has overcome the odds in his own life and career.



"For me, it's all about friends and family," says Timothy. He has two kids, Timia (16) and Kortnee (17). He cherishes time spent with them and wants to ensure that not only are their needs met but they are afforded a life with opportunities and experiences he didn't have growing up. "That's what drives and keeps me happy."

Timothy adds, "I'm a simple and laid-back guy." Fun for him takes place at family parties and cookouts. "I also like anything in nature; being outside brings me peace and serenity." Taking time to relax and recharge is important for this top producer.

FROM POVERTY TO PROSPERITY

Timothy overcame daunting obstacles in his life to bring him to the place where he is today. From growing up with slumlords to making his mark in real estate, he is an inspiration with passion and purpose. Through his dedication to helping others and community reinvestment, Timothy is making a lasting impact on the lives of those around him, reflecting the true essence of a determined and driven individual.

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▶▶ making a difference

Written by Elizabeth McCabe
Photos by Brendon Pinola, Brendon Pinola Photography

@fightlikelanagrace

What doesn't kill us makes us stronger. REALTOR® Danielle Turner admires her daughter, Lana, who survived childhood cancer. "She's one of the strongest people I ever met in my life," she smiles.

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

In February 2020, Danielle's life took an unexpected turn when her daughter Lana, 18, was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia. For eight long months, they stayed in the hospital followed by a year of outpatient treatment. During this challenging period, Danielle received an outpouring of support from real estate agents across the country, including those from Keller Williams, RE/MAX, eXp, and Realty South. Eager to lend a helping hand, these agents reached out to help because they understood that Danielle couldn't work as much and couldn't leave her daughter's side. Their kindness meant the world to Danielle and her family.

USING THEIR PAIN FOR A PURPOSE

After treatment, my daughter and I talked," says Danielle. "We wanted to give back to other families going through what we went through, paying it forward like it was to my family."

Many families they had encountered had to make sacrifices, leaving their jobs and homes to

be with their children during their cancer battles. This sparked an idea, and Danielle and Lana began making bows adorned with childhood cancer ribbons. These bows could be placed on doors or mailboxes, and each one would carry a person's story, either honoring someone who lost their fight or sharing the journey of someone currently battling cancer.

For the past two years, Danielle and Lana have been making these bows, raising an impressive \$15,000. "Each bow has a person's story on it, telling the story of someone who is fighting or who lost their fight to cancer," says Danielle.

Every dollar makes a difference for those who need it most. The funds raised are converted into gift cards that are donated to the Children's Hospital of Alabama. The gift cards are given to social workers, who distribute them to families in need on the oncology/hematology floor of the hospital as they see fit.

In addition to this initiative, Danielle also contributes a portion of the proceeds from her real estate closings to the Children's Hospital. These funds are also converted into gift cards, providing much-needed assistance to families facing the financial burdens associated with childhood cancer.

While Danielle recognizes that they may not be able to raise enough money for extensive research, which requires millions of dollars, she saw the immediate need within her local community. The families they support often struggle with the costs of gas, food, and other bills, and Danielle believed that providing financial assistance in these areas would make a significant impact on their lives.

Alongside the gift cards, Danielle also took another heartfelt step by purchasing a lake property at Lake Eufaula. She got this idea when her mortgage lender offered them his vacation property when Lana was going through her cancer fight and it made a world of difference for them.

This property is now gifted to families whose children are currently fighting cancer or have tragically lost their battle, providing them with a place to retreat and find solace during such trying times.

FACE THE FACTS

The need to support families battling childhood cancer is evident by the statistics. Each year, approximately 15,000 to 16,000 children and young adults under the age of 19 are diagnosed with cancer, and tragically, around 2,000 of them will lose their lives to this devastating disease.

These numbers hit home for Danielle and her family, as they have personally experienced the challenges and hardships associated with childhood cancer. Lana, in particular, faces ongoing risks due to specific mutations, as well as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and neuropathy. The fear of relapse is a constant companion for these families, fueling their passion and determination to make a difference.

AN INSPIRATION

Lana, now 22 years old and cancer-free for almost two years, has become an inspiration to others. She mentors people going through cancer treatments, and mothers often reach out to her via text, seeking advice and comfort. Danielle firmly believes that God saved Lana for a reason, and she witnesses this purpose unfolding every day.

Danielle's journey in real estate has been intertwined with her passion for helping others. For the past 16 years, she has been with Keller Williams Metro South Birmingham office. While she is recognized as a top producer and part of the #2 team in her office, Danielle's focus has always been on taking care of her family, especially Lana and her siblings, Dillon (who is now a real estate

agent) and Lindsey. Real estate has provided her with a platform to make a difference, leveraging her background in social work to connect with and support families facing adversity.

GET INVOLVED

It only takes one person to make a difference. Those interested in supporting @fightlikelanagrace can purchase a bow for \$10.00 and \$7.95 for shipping. Or consider making a donation through Venmo at @fightlikelanagrace this September, which is Cancer Awareness Month. All proceeds go directly to the social workers at the Children's Hospital, ensuring that the gift cards reach the families who need them most. The heartfelt messages they receive from these families, expressing their gratitude for the support they receive, make their work rewarding.

Danielle would also like to acknowledge the incredible support she receives from Sherry Conde, a fellow agent at her Keller Williams office, who has been making bows alongside her from the very beginning. Sherry's dedication and contribution have been invaluable, and Danielle couldn't do it without her.

Danielle stands as a beacon of hope and support for the kids out there who are fighting this battle and desperately need help. What an inspiration!



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KELLIE DROZDOWICZ

FOR THE LOVE OF HOME

Written by **Ann Marie Harvey** • Photos by **Brendon Pinola**, Brendon Pinola Photography

Kellie Drozdowicz became an adult overnight during her senior year in high school after her younger brother, Jeffrey, was diagnosed with cancer. With her parents spending the majority of their time at Children's Hospital, Kellie would relieve them for quick respites or help with her younger sister, Staci. While her friends were mapping out their college and future plans, Kellie couldn't see past her current situation.

Those two years until Jeffrey's remission were a defining character experience of her life. "I really believe it's why I work as hard as I do," Kellie muses. "No one was there to save the day or tell me what my next steps were going to be. I was thrust into being self-sufficient and put myself through college."

SELF-DRIVEN TO SUCCEED

Kellie came into real estate through the back door. Already an investor in rental properties, she got her real estate license 17 years ago in order to see upcoming listings first. "Back then, you had to wait 90 days after a property went live before you could put in an offer," she remembers. "My plan backfired because I ended up being the last one to buy!"

It wasn't long before Kellie found she enjoyed helping others find their dream homes. After working with a boutique firm for many years, she and her partner formed their own team in 2016. "We were fortunate that a good number of agents jumped on board quickly," she says. "We hit the ground running and went from ground zero to full speed ahead quickly."

By 2017, their team had 15 agents and was a top-selling team in their boutique brokerage. A year later, Kellie was approached by a Keller Williams associate who offered the opportunity to launch a market center to encompass Homewood, Mountain Brook, and downtown Birmingham. "The chance to become an investor was enticing," she explains. "We incubated in 2018 within the Vestavia market center before launching our Homewood location in 2019."



Their 18 agents are led by Kellie as sole team owner and her husband, Frankie, also a real estate investor and flipper. A carpenter by trade, Frankie was remodeling homes before they met, so it wasn't long before they began flipping or buying rentals together. "A large piece of our business model includes short- and long-term rentals," Kellie says. "Not only do we own a city block in the entertainment district of Trussville, but we bought the second phase of a subdivision in Argo that will eventually include 83 new homes."

In addition to development, the couple enjoys bringing old beauties back to life, including current projects in Birmingham's Glen Iris and Norwood neighborhoods. "It's amazing to restore old mahogany pocket doors or hunt for original hardware to bring the character of the home back to life," she says. "We feel really good about the growth and redevelopment in these neighborhoods. It also gives us great joy to provide jobs for our crew members."

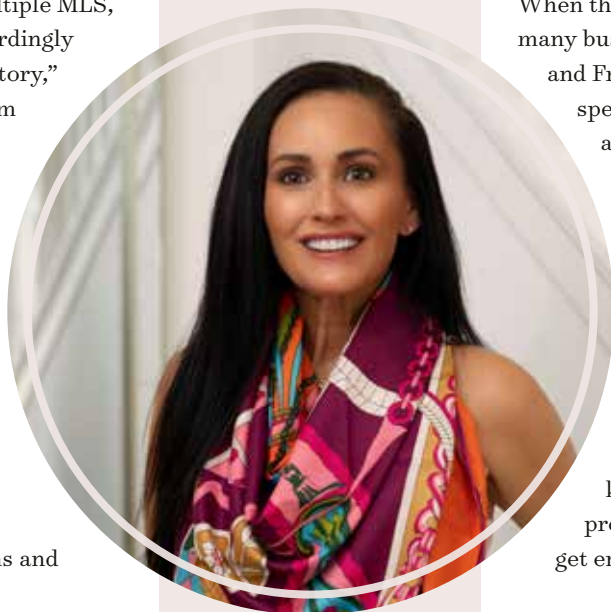
COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Although their office is located on Shades Cahaba Road in Homewood, the team has a statewide presence, from Crestline to Gardendale, Lake Martin to Huntsville. "Our agents are members of multiple MLS, so we can expand the team accordingly and not just hone in on our territory," Kellie says. "You can place a team anywhere and have organic growth in that footprint, but it was important to me that I could recruit and attract talent from all parts of Alabama and beyond."

The market center is home to about 100 agents, with nearly 20 of them on Kellie's team. In addition, she has several administration staff members, including a director of operations and



“
YOU KNOW
YOU’VE
CHOSEN
THE RIGHT
PROFESSION
WHEN YOU
JUST CAN’T
GET ENOUGH.”



sales, technology, contract and close coordinators. "Our administrative staff sets us apart because they care more about our clients' transactions than even the clients themselves," she says. "Our customer satisfaction rate remains high because my team pays close attention to detail and is committed to each transaction."

Twice a week, Kellie holds "Power Up" calls with her team to discuss upcoming listings, wins and losses. They also use Slack as a team communication app and have recently partnered with PLACE, a technology designed to create a better experience for their customers and agents.

THE THRILL OF REAL ESTATE

Since the team's inception, sales of 2,500 units have totaled more than \$700 million. "I am a salesman by trade and I love the thrill of the deal," Kellie says. "I still get that tingly feeling in my fingertips when I'm anticipating a new listing hitting the market." Her goals include expanding to other markets outside Birmingham and she is always looking to recruit agents in those markets to broaden their footprint.

When they aren't busy with their many business opportunities, Kellie and Frankie and their four children spend as much time as possible at the beach with their boat on the water and the wind in their hair. Even on the water, Kellie may be spying potential real estate opportunities. "I can't help it; I love to scope properties in my spare time and you get a better viewpoint from the water," she laughs. "You know you've chosen the right profession when you just can't get enough."

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FAQ

ABOUT THIS MAGAZINE

Real Producers magazine started in Indianapolis in 2015 and is now in over 125 markets across the nation and continues to spread rapidly. *Real Producers* is launching in May 2023!

Q: WHO RECEIVES *Real Producers* MAGAZINES?

A: The top 300 real estate agents serving the Birmingham Metro Area, based on their annual residential sales production for the previous year, as recorded on the MLS. Refer to the map in this publication for the exact territories. If your broker address is within that given territory, and you are in the top 300, you will receive that publication for the year. The list will reset at the end of every year and continue to update annually.

Q: WHAT IS THE GOAL OF THIS MAGAZINE?

A: We believe that we are better together. When we surround ourselves with other successful, like-minded people, we grow to new heights. *Real Producers* is a platform that brings together the most elite individuals in Birmingham real estate.

We take the top 300 real estate agents and RP Vetted Businesses in our market, and we build an exclusive community around that group. We share their stories, successes, market trends, and upcoming events — really, anything that will connect, inform, and inspire, we put in our monthly publication.

It is important to note that *Real Producers* is not a brag book. To be in the top 1-2% in your field takes a lot of grit, passion, hard work, trials, tribulations, and a strong “why” to keep pushing on. *Real Producers* is about sharing and honoring those stories and humanizing you and your peers to create a culture of honor and collaboration that propels us all to the next level.

Q: DOES *Real Producers* HAVE EVENTS?

A: Yes! We'll host them throughout the year and have several different types of events, such as magazine celebration events, partners-only events, social events, mastermind/educational style events, and an annual awards gala. For these events, we invite the top 300 real estate agents and our RP-vetted businesses. Top 300 agents are allowed to invite members of their team, as well. These events are an incredible opportunity to connect with the best of the best in Birmingham real estate. It is amazing to see the power in the connections made at these events. Be on the lookout for your exclusive invites!

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

A: It's really simple. You have to be on the top 300 list, and we take nominations seriously. You can nominate other real estate agents, businesses, brokers, owners, or even yourself! Office leaders can also nominate real estate agents. We will consider anyone brought to our attention who is in the top 300 because we don't know everyone's story, so we need your help to learn about them. We cannot guarantee a feature, but we encourage you to meet with one of our team members, support *Real Producers* and attend our private events to increase your chances.

You can email your nominations to meredith.jones@realproducersmag.com.

Q: WHAT DOES IT COST A REAL ESTATE AGENT/TEAM TO BE FEATURED?

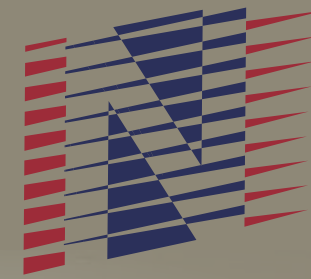
A: Zero, zilch, zippo, nada, nil. It costs nothing, my friends, so nominate away! We are not a pay-to-play model. We share real stories of *Real Producers*.

Q: WHO ARE THE RP-VETTED BUSINESSES?

A: They are one of the best businesses in Birmingham in their category, and you can find them listed in our index! 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 real estate agents has recommended every single business 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 team will further vet every business to make sure they are a good fit and bring value to our community. Our goal is to create a powerhouse network, not only for the best real estate agents in the area but for the best businesses, as well, so we can grow stronger together. When you meet one of them, be sure to thank them for their continued support and for investing in you and your growth.

Q: HOW CAN I RECOMMEND A BUSINESS?

A: If you know and want to recommend a business that works with top real estate agents, please email us to let us know at meredith.jones@realproducersmag.com.



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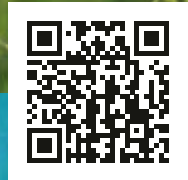
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