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A man with short brown hair, wearing a black short-sleeved button-down shirt and black trousers, is sitting on a brown leather tufted sofa. He is smiling at the camera with his hands clasped in his lap. He is wearing tan suede boots. Behind him is a large window with a black frame, looking out onto a bright, sunny day with greenery and a house visible. On the windowsill to the right, there is a small potted plant in a white pot with a gold band.

Brian Rush

Beyond Sunday: A
Pastor's Heart in the
World of Real Estate

Photo by Nested Tours

AGENT FEATURE

Daryn Rody

CELEBRATING LEADERS

Lauren Toppins

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

 07 Meet The <i>OKC Real Producers</i> Team	 10 Sponsor Spotlight: OKCMAR	 14 Agent Feature: Daryn Rody
 22 Cele- brating Leaders: Lauren Toppins	 26 Cover Story: Brian Rush	 31 Upcoming Events in 2023



If you are interested in contributing or nominating a REALTOR® for certain stories please email us at kelly.kilmer@realproducersmag.com or katherine.fondren@n2pub.com.

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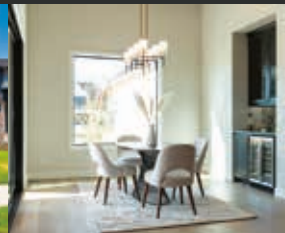
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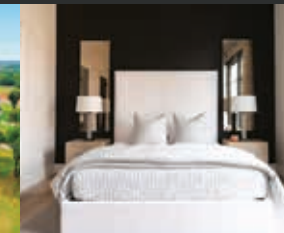
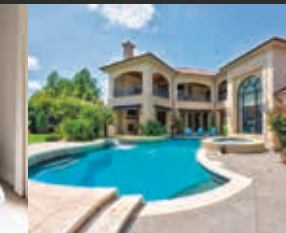





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Join us at the Oak Tree Country Club on September 19, 2023, from 12:00-6:00 pm for our annual CE Day! This year, we're shaking things up. The education portion of the day will take place from 12:00-4:00 pm and will be directly followed by a happy hour networking event from 4:00-6:00 pm. Follow along with us on social media for more details!

PS - Nominations for this year's Fall Ball Awards Ceremony Recipients will be taken at THIS event and will only be open for a limited time. Be there!



2nd ANNUAL FALL BALL AWARDS CEREMONY

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strength in numbers and shared purpose

Some of the most constructive and important elements in the industry were created out of necessity and they continue out of value.

That's definitely the case with the Oklahoma City Metropolitan Association of REALTORS® (OKCMAR).

That dedication to making a difference is personified by the group's membership, including President Carolyn Sims.

During her leadership of the group, Carolyn follows a platform she calls DICEY, which stands for Diversity, Inclusion, Collaboration, Empowerment and You (for members and the public).

Substantial Results

The group's outreach efforts have been substantial, involving five different sub-organizations with the National Association of REALTORS®, including NAHREP, NAREB, ARIA, the Alliance for LGBTQ+ and YPN.

"Many of these organizations represent underserved communities," Carolyn points out. "We have helped those groups with funding and we are getting ready to do some leadership training to help them to be self-sustaining within the organization."

The group advocates for property rights as part of more than 30 municipalities in its jurisdiction.

"We have collaborated well with the OKC government. We have had two REALTOR® days at City Hall where we attend a city council

meeting and have a session afterwards to meet with city staff to better understand issues such as zoning," Carolyn says.



“

We have more participation in our committees than we have had for many years.

”

» sponsor spotlight Written by Dave Danielson • Photos by Nested Tours

“We were the second-largest contributor to the Oklahoma City school bond issue, as our buyers are interested in school districts. We currently have place-making grants to work on a community garden in the Ten Penn area. Our goal is to be a resource to partner with these various municipalities. We are collaborating with other REALTOR® boards around us. We have started a homeless initiative and we were highlighted at the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) for our efforts and we’re working with the city, mental health and several other organizations.”

Empowerment

The level of empowerment in the group is impressive. The group hired a new CEO in 2022 who Carolyn credits with reorganizing the organization.

“We have more participation in our committees than we have had for many years. Our homeless task force has over 40 members,” Carolyn says.

“We are also encouraging our members to be involved with the state and national associations, as well as our community. It meant a lot to see that our efforts were highlighted at the NAR meeting this year, too.”

Tangible Impact

Today the OKCMAR membership stands at a remarkable total of nearly 5,000. The strength of the organization lies in many areas. In addition to the outreach that comes as a natural extension of that membership size, the organization has a tangible impact in the community.

“I’m a policy nerd. The fact that we can influence decisions

“
VOLUNTEERISM IS KEY.
Our REALTOR®
members tend to
volunteer a lot of hours.



I like the fact that we are part
of volunteering for various
organizations. We have been
able to give financial support
to various non-profits.

”

having to do with property rights and how we will be developing for the future is something I am very proud of,” Carolyn points out.

“We participated in the conversations about zoning, because we will need more housing for workers. Part of our homeless problem is that we need more affordable housing. The fact that we can sit down with our officials and help them figure out the course for the future and talk with them about smart growth is vital. We can’t just keep building large houses, because people can’t afford them. If we are going to attract new business to the state, we have to have places for the workers to live.”

There is definitely room for you and your efforts as part of the OKCMAR team.

“Volunteerism is key. Our REALTOR® members tend to volunteer a lot of hours. I like the fact that we are part of volunteering for various organizations. We have been able to give financial support to various non-profits,” she says.

“REALTORS® are out in the community every day seeing the issues and hearing about those from the public. We are the boots on the ground. So, I encourage others to come collaborate with us. Together, we’re doing things that will affect the next generation.”

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Written by **Zachary Cohen**

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Location: Commonplace Books & Round Midnight, Edmond, OK



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DARYN

RIGHT AT
HOME

RODY

Two things have been staples in Daryn Rody's life: real estate and living in Edmond, Oklahoma.

Daryn was born and raised in Edmond to a family of builders and REALTORS®. His grandparents were local home builders for over 40 years, and both of his parents were successful REALTORS®. Some of Daryn's earliest memories are from attending open houses with his dad and walking job sites with his grandparents.

"I've been around homes and home sites since I can remember," Daryn reflects. "Real estate has long been second nature."

Daryn gained his entrepreneurial spirit from his family, too. Before beginning his real estate career, he opened a small car dealership, which he still owns and operates today. "When I graduated college, I began to see the power of real estate, especially for investments and building a financial future," Daryn continues.

Being surrounded by expertise in the housing industry prepared Daryn to pursue his own legacy in the Edmond real estate community. In 2014, he officially launched his real estate business.

Selling Edmond

Daryn has now been thriving in Edmond real estate for nearly a decade. He's successfully leveraged his passion for sales and homes to create a lasting career and a healthy business. He closed 25 transactions for \$8.5 million as an individual agent with Thrive Realty in 2022.

Daryn prides himself on his work ethic, drive, and client care. He considers himself a crafty negotiator — something that's necessary in an industry with an overabundance of salespeople jostling for business.

"First off, clients trust me," Daryn says. "I really want what's best for others. It can be tempting to want to make a sale and move on, but I really want to work in

my clients' best interests... That's the cornerstone of my business... Having the background I do — the knowledge, skillset, and experience of being a top producer over the last few years in a very fast and changing real estate market — has really set me apart."

As an Edmond local, Daryn has the advantage of a large sphere of influence and a strong reputation in the community. People like working with REALTORS®

they know, and Daryn is well-known in his hometown.

"I am honored to help people with what is typically their largest purchase. Coming alongside people, getting to know them, and putting myself in their shoes — that's what I enjoy doing. I love helping people get to the next step," Daryn continues. "And I love the community we are in. The growth of Edmond has been really exciting. Our community and our lives are here."



“

I am honored to help people with what is typically their largest purchase. Coming alongside people, getting to know them, and putting myself in their shoes — that's what I enjoy doing. I love helping people get to the next step.

”

Family First

Daryn met his wife, Melody, through his connections in real estate. She's been working in the business since before the couple met and has experience in real estate, title, and marketing. Now, Melody is ready to take the next step in her career. While she's been helping Daryn on the backend of his business for some time — handling paperwork, responding to emails, and staging listings — she's now preparing to get her license and join Daryn as a full-time REALTOR®.

“We’re a great team,” Daryn explains. “She’s extremely detail-oriented and creative, and I love working with people. I’m excited for this next step because I believe we can be really good with all of our strengths in this together.”

Daryn and Melody’s home life is equally as rich as their professional life. They have three daughters, Austyn (15), Adelyn (8), and Alexis (6), who keep them busy with sports and scholastic engagements. As a family, they enjoy traveling, going to church, being outdoors, and hanging out at home with their golden retriever, Chance. “I want to be known for being a follower of Jesus, for following him every day, for being a good husband and father for our daughters, and for showing them love and grace. That’s important to me above all else.”



FUN FACT
After spending a year at the Kanakuk Institute for their Ministry Training Program, Daryn went on to earn a master’s degree from John Brown University in leadership and ethics.



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Submitted by **Stephanie Carter**, Association Executive, Edmond Board of REALTORS®

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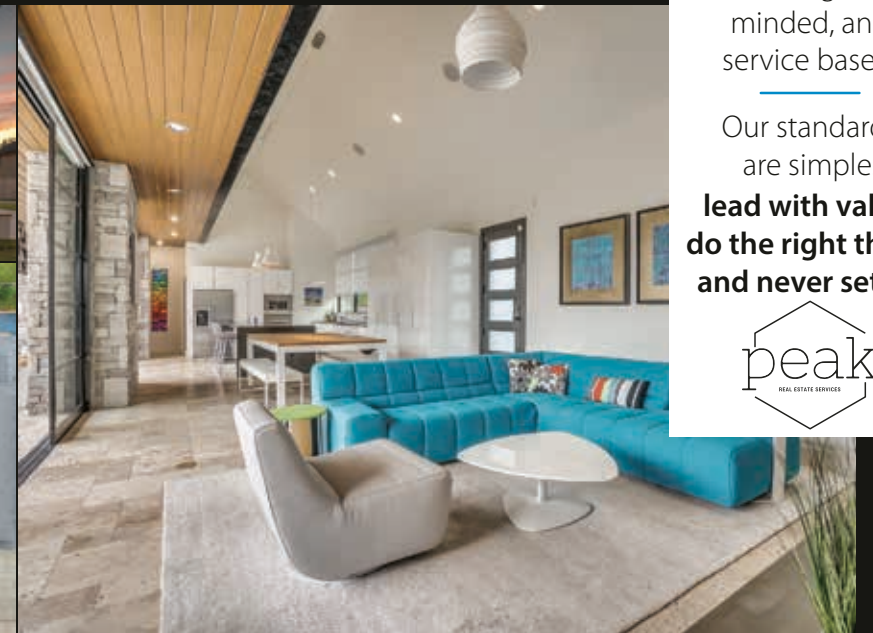
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Lauren TOPPINS

OF CHERRYWOOD REAL ESTATE

In just three short years, Lauren Toppins has grown Cherrywood Real Estate to one of Oklahoma City's fastest-rising real estate brokerages. Founded in May 2020, Cherrywood has already grown to a team of 47 agents spread over two offices — one in Oklahoma City and another in Edmond. The brokerage is supported by a full-service property management division and two construction crews to provide homeowners and investors with additional resources.

Cherrywood Real Estate is more than a brokerage. It's a place for agents to build their careers and raise their families. It's a place where clients can feel at home. For Lauren, community, culture, and family are everything.

The Road to Cherrywood

Lauren was born and raised in Lawton, OK. She earned her undergraduate and law degrees from Oklahoma University before launching a career as an attorney. Lauren went on to spend ten years as a corporate lawyer in various roles.

She was first introduced to the world of real estate through her in-house counsel work for a local payroll provider. As the only attorney on staff, she was tasked with managing leases, strategizing, and negotiating in the real estate sector.

"I caught the real estate bug," Lauren reflects.

After ten years as an attorney, Lauren shifted into a role as a stay-at-home mom to her three daughters.

During this time, she began focusing on personal investments — buying properties, fixing them up, and flipping them for a profit. As she delved deeper into real estate, she uncovered increasing passion for the work, but one thing was missing.

"I found I missed the professional engagement I had as a licensed attorney. I wanted to be a part of people's processes," Lauren explains.

With the desire to be more connected, Lauren set out to build a real estate brokerage. The idea for Cherrywood Real Estate was born in 2019, and the company officially launched a year later.

“Life has taken me through a crazy path, but if you stay with trying to help people, things will work out.”

”



The Birth of a
Leader

▶▶ celebrating leaders

Written by **Zachary Cohen**
Photos by **Nested Tours**

Built on Culture

Over the past three years, Lauren has built a unique culture at Cherrywood Real Estate.

“Real estate can be isolating, and the goal of Cherrywood is to put a boutique, customized experience together with a family concept,” Lauren explains. “We have a kids’ room at every office. We are professional and have that separation, but it’s a family environment. That’s a big part of our culture.”

Another big piece of Cherrywood’s culture is the ability to manage multiple parts of a real estate deal. In addition to their team of agents who help families buy and sell real estate, they have a property management division and two construction crews.

“If someone wants to invest in real estate, we can quote it, renovate it, then even manage the property and get a tenant in there,” Lauren explains.

Dreaming Big

Lauren is guiding Cherrywood into the future with an attitude of positivity and optimism. She surrounds herself with the best in the business, which not only allows her business to thrive; it helps her be more available for her family.

Lauren and her husband, Matt, have three daughters, Dylan (13), Walker (9), and Maguire (6). In 2019, they lost their youngest daughter, Claire, 25 hours post-birth.

When she’s not working, you’ll find Lauren hanging with her family at Grand Lake, watching Sooners games, or simply spending time at home.

“I’m hardworking, I love my family, and I truly care — maybe a little too much. That’s what I really want people to know about me,” Lauren says. “I’m loud, kind of silly, and have a big heart. I want to teach my daughters that you can have it all.

Life has taken me through a crazy path, but if you stay with trying to help people, things will work out.

“I’m thankful. It’s been a ride, but we’re just starting. I can’t wait to see where else the business goes.”

Words of Wisdom

“Try to find a place that supports you on the days you’re winning and on your hard days. I hope we all continue to encourage each other to push to the next level. Some days that looks like education, and some days it’s kindness. Let’s all strive for 1% more of our better selves every day.”



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Brian Rush



►► cover story

Written by **Zachary Cohen**
Photos by **Nested Tours**

Beyond Sunday: A Pastor's Heart in the World of Real Estate

At first glance, ministry and real estate may not have much in common, but that's not how Brian Rush sees it. He believes his 15+ years as a worship and executive pastor formed the perfect backdrop for a successful and honorable career in real estate.

Brian launched his real estate career in 2015 in Dallas, a short time after closing out his time as a full-time executive pastor and church leader. He returned to Oklahoma City the following year, setting out to build a business upon the same principles he held in ministry.

"In real estate, I'm the same person I was in ministry," Brian says proudly. "There is nothing that could have prepared me for real estate more than ministry. In ministry, you are serving people, problem-solving, and helping people walk through difficult situations in their lives. It's all about relationships. There is a lot of carryover."

Built on Values

Brian runs a highly relational real estate business — a strategy that has helped him build a reputation for his integrity and become one of Oklahoma City's top agents. "I care about people and want to help them accomplish their dreams. My pastor's heart — that never went away. It's just redirected in real estate and the people we serve," Brian offers. "Our business has followed the same model from the beginning. We treat

everybody as valuable and important. We don't cater to only one type of client or price range of homes, but rather, want to give the best service to every person we serve."

After many years with Keller Williams, Brian transitioned to Bailee & Co Real Estate in late 2022. He closed out the year with 46 units sold for \$14.8 million, and he's looking to build upon those numbers in 2023 with over \$10 million in volume closed through June.

"I absolutely love KW," Brian affirms. "The training, support, and business guidance — it's top shelf at KW. But in mid-year 2022, watching the market, I could see the writing on the wall that a shift was upon us. Bailee & Co is a Zillow Flex brokerage, offering a high level of partnership with Zillow. The amount of business that comes in from that is huge. I knew it would be important to have another strong leg of business, and that is exactly what has happened."



“ I care about people and want to help them accomplish their dreams. My pastor's heart — that never went away. It's just redirected in real estate and the people we serve. ”



A Pastor's Heart

Outside of his real estate endeavors, Brian's focus is on his family. He has been married to his wife, Alicia, for 25 years, and they have two children, Isabelle (18) and Ian (16). Family is at the core of their lives. Brian and Alicia actively participate in their spiritual community at Faith Church, leading worship monthly and serving as leaders. Brian is a church elder, contributing to the direction and future projects of the church.

As Brian reflects on his legacy, he returns to what he values most: serving others with heart, spreading love wherever he goes, and keeping God at the center of his life.

"I firmly believe you reap what you sow. If you sow seeds of service, hard work, and kindness, you will reap all of that back. If you do things right, you will come out on the other side of things strong. And it's proven to be true in every sense," he says.

"I want people to know I love God and my family with all my heart, and that shows up in my life and all I do. I want to be known as somebody who genuinely loves the people around him — obviously my family and friends, but also my clients. My hope and my goal is that when somebody does business with us, they know Brian Rush genuinely loves and cares for their family. With that as a guiding value, I serve."



Photo provided by Brian Rush

FUN FACT

Brian is a talented vocalist and pianist. He's been leading worship through music since he was 14.



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Upcoming Events in 2023

OKC REAL PRODUCERS TOP 500 AGENTS AND PARTNERS CE DAY & HAPPY HOUR— SEPT. 19, 2023

Join us at the Oak Tree Country Club from 12:00-6:00 pm for our annual CE Day! This year, we're shaking things up. The education portion of the day will take place from 12:00-4:00 pm and will be directly followed by a happy hour networking event from 4:00-6:00 pm. Follow along with us on social media for more details!

PS - Nominations for this year's Fall Ball Awards Ceremony recipients will be taken at THIS event and will only be open for a limited time. Be there!

2ND ANNUAL FALL BALL AWARDS GALA — NOV. 9TH, 2023 - PETROLEUM CLUB

The Fall Ball Awards Gala is our BIGGEST event of the year, and this year, we need sponsorship commitments early! If you are interested in becoming a 2023 Fall Ball Sponsor, email Kelly at kelly.kilmer@realproducersmag.com.

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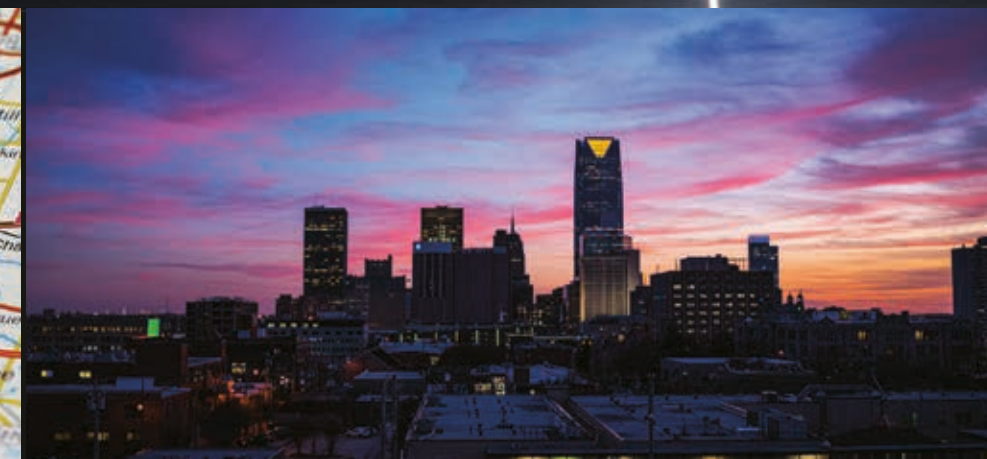
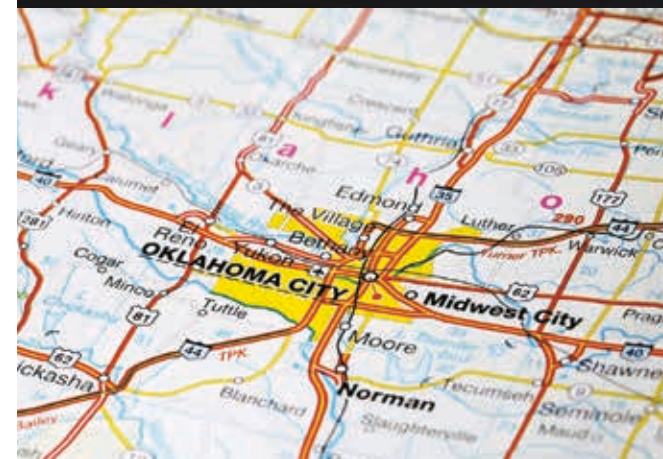
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