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# MEET THE BRANDYWINE VALLEY REAL PRODUCERS TEAM



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# FAQ

## ALL ABOUT BRANDYWINE VALLEY REAL PRODUCERS



The first Real Producers magazine started in Indianapolis in 2015. Real Producers is now in over 130 markets across the nation and is continuing to grow nationwide.



is straightforward. To be eligible, you need to be on the top 500 list, and we value nominations highly. Whether you're a real estate agent, business, broker, owner, or someone who admires the work of others, you can nominate individuals, including yourself. Even office leaders have the opportunity to nominate outstanding real estate agents. We take every nomination seriously and consider anyone from the top 500 list who is brought to our attention. While we cannot guarantee a feature, we strongly encourage you to connect with one of our team members, show support for Real Producers, and participate in our private events. These steps can enhance your chances of being featured in our publication.

To submit a nomination, please visit: <https://www.brandywinevalleyrealproducers.com/nominate>

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

**A:** Zero, zilch, zippo, nada, nil. It costs nothing to agents, 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:** The RP-vetted businesses featured in our publication represent the some of best in the business in their respective categories within the Brandywine Valley. You can easily locate them in our index. We do not randomly select businesses, nor do we collaborate with every business that approaches us. We prioritize businesses that have received your stamp of approval through recommendations and each business showcased has been personally recommended by many of the top agents featured in our publication. Before featuring any business, our team conducts additional vetting to ensure they align with our community's values and bring substantial value. Our aim is to build a robust network that not only includes the best real estate agents but also features top-tier businesses, fostering collective growth and strength within our community.

**Q: HOW CAN I RECOMMEND A BUSINESS?**

**A:** If you want to recommend a business that works with top real estate agents, please email or message us.  
**Email:** [ryan.zinn@realproducersmag.com](mailto:ryan.zinn@realproducersmag.com) or [chris.brena@realproducersmag.com](mailto:chris.brena@realproducersmag.com)  
**Website:** [BrandywineValleyRealProducers.com](http://BrandywineValleyRealProducers.com)

**Q: WHO RECEIVES REAL PRODUCERS MAGAZINES?**

**A:** The top 500 real estate agents across Brandywine Valley and our preferred partners.

**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 accomplished individuals in the Brandywine Valley real estate sector.

By curating an exclusive community comprised of the top 500 real estate agents and RP-vetted businesses in each market, we foster a shared space for sharing stories, celebrating successes, discussing market

trends, and highlighting upcoming events. Our monthly publication is dedicated to connecting, informing, and inspiring, encompassing anything that contributes to the enrichment of our community.

**Q: DOES REAL PRODUCERS HAVE EVENTS?**

**A:** Yes! We have specific networking events throughout the year.

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

**A:** The process for getting featured in our magazine

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By Ryan Zinn

# The "Whys"

## UNCOVERING OUR PASSION AND PURPOSE

**Do you ever ask yourself the question - Why do I do what I do? What motivates me to wake up every day and practice real estate? Is it a profession or a passion? For our seller clients, we may strive to help them realize the goal of downsizing, upsizing, relocating, or navigating an emotional transition stemming from a life change. For our buyer clients, we might find satisfaction in helping people find their home; a sanctuary where they can establish their lives, start a family, merge households, nurture pets, spend time with their closest friends and find solace in a personal retreat called home. We aspire to assist our clients in achieving financial stability through the meaningful investment they make in their homes.**

As you most certainly know, the real estate profession extends far beyond transactions. It becomes a journey anchored in the human experience. Ducky Ryan, our featured agent this

month, embodies a dedication to his clients and the gratification derived from aiding others. Karen Kimmel Legum, our featured Rising Star this month, finds fulfillment in the care and purpose with which she serves her clients in order to make a lasting impact on their lives and the lives of their families.

I have recently been exploring the question of why. It seems as though our "whys" often unfold as our lives transition and we evolve. I've had insightful conversations with some of our top agents, gaining a deeper understanding not only of their journeys in real estate but also their journeys in life. I have witnessed the profound impact that pursuing one's passion can have, not only on professional success but also on personal accomplishment. I have learned that as we embrace and explore who we are, we discover fulfillment.

My partner Chris and I recently renovated an old Amish-built wood children's playhouse into a chicken coop. We tore off the old roof and put on a new cedar roof. We sanded and treated the worn wood, we painted the outside white,



we built nesting boxes, a simple door with framing, hinges and a locking latch, and we secured the windows to protect the girls from the foxes and hawks. Our final touches were a modern farmhouse-style wreath and a solar barn light over the door that we built. Since we did all of this in our "spare time" it took months of work. We didn't always agree on the process and it certainly wasn't all rosy. Often it was a weekend chore when we had other things to do or when we just wanted to relax. We began the project in July and we finally finished it one night a few days before Christmas in the pouring rain, working past sunset and into the cold and wet darkness of a December night, just after we'd seen foxes trotting past our temporary and makeshift old-kitchen-cabinet-coop the night before. I feel confident that I can speak for both Chris and I when I tell you how deeply satisfying it was to have put in the many, many hours of hard work and to see our vision come to life. I still pull into my driveway on our quiet hilltop and feel a sense of happiness when I see our chicken house standing tall and beautiful, having been brought back to life and serving as a safe haven for our feathered girls.

Through the planning, design and construction of this project, I realized one of my "whys" - a sense of accomplishment in creating something that I believe in and that fulfills a purpose. Uncovering this passion has not only provided personal fulfillment but



has also led me to my current venture with *Brandywine Valley Real Producers*. Now, I am immersed in creating a monthly publication that engages my colleagues in an industry that I adore, shedding light on their successes and accomplishments. I am grateful for this journey and the opportunity to contribute to a community that I am truly fortunate to be a part of.

As I continue to connect with exceptional agents, I am eager to connect with you and hear your "whys". Your stories are not just testimonials to your professional journey but glimpses into the significance of life's purpose and fulfillment. Feel free to reach out and

share your experiences and motivations that drive you in this vibrant and dynamic industry that touches the lives of so many.

Keep up the good work, my friends.



**RYAN ZINN**  
Owner/Publisher  
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# KAREN KIMMEL LEGUM



▶▶ rising star

By Dave Danielson  
Photography By Kirstie  
Donohue Photography

## Care and Purpose

As you know, life and business can become closely intertwined, especially in this business.

Karen Kimmel Legum manages all of this while making a timeless difference for others.

### Working for All the Right Reasons

As a REALTOR® with The Levy Group with Long & Foster in Greenville, Delaware, Karen dedicates herself to serving her clients with care and purpose.

“I love helping people make Delaware their home. I enjoy showing people around the state. One of my favorite moments is when I see a child pick out a room in his or her new home,” she says.

Karen grew up in Wilmington, Delaware and attended Tatnall School and graduated from Sanford. Karen earned her real estate license in 2019. Prior to selling real estate, she worked in the fashion industry in New York City for Bergdorf Goodman. She also served the needs of people through selling life insurance and providing financial planning in Philadelphia before moving back to Delaware.

### Crucial Conversation

There was a pivotal conversation that Karen remembers having with her father, Morton Kimmel, several years ago... one that set her on her current path in life.

As she remembers, “My dad stressed enjoying what you do and pursuing your interests and passions in life. I realized I wanted to be back home in Delaware and raise my family here. Selling real estate was a great way to help people and show my love for the state. My dad connected me with Judy Levy, a Delaware real estate mogul who was a close family friend. Judy Levy, as well as Phil Epstein and R.T. Christopher, have been incredible mentors of mine in the business of real estate.

As Karen looks back on those early days in the business, she remembers the challenge of getting started in a business where almost all of her prospective clients already had a REALTOR®.

“I had to prove myself. I worked a lot of open houses and took a lot of Zillow calls. I was able to start my business based on people I had never met before,” she says.



“It feels good to have proven myself. I enjoy helping people and making their dreams come true. I consider myself to be a concierge REALTOR® ... I introduce my clients into the community, help them find country clubs, a place to volunteer, hair dressers, restaurants, and even jobs. I make sure they have a smooth transition.”

### Wonderful World

Away from work, Karen’s world is made even richer by her family, including her husband, Brian Legum, who serves as a partner at Kimmel Carter, a Delaware law firm.

Karen and Brian treasure time with their children: 14-year old son, Dylan; 11-year old daughter, Taylor; and 8 year old son, Cole. The three are students at Wilmington Friends School.

In her free time, Karen enjoys watching her children participate in ballet performances, baseball and basketball games. She also enjoys time spent with their Labrador retriever dogs, Duke and Rocky.

She also is involved in supporting the needs of Christiana Hospital and The Helen F. Graham Cancer Center. She volunteers there, and also runs a young friends group at the cancer center. She also is very engaged in volunteering and supporting the local Jewish community.





Karen has also earned her senior real estate specialist certification. Karen takes pride in serving the local senior population.

“I have learned a lot about caring for seniors,” she says. “I like doing that in real estate and having the chance to be a resource for them.”

Congratulations to Karen Kimmel Legum for the way she makes a tangible and lasting impact on the lives of families every day. Truly, she dedicates herself to meeting the best interests of her clients with care and purpose.



**Leading by Example**

As Karen thinks about her first few years in the real estate business, she offers helpful tips to others who are starting their real estate career.

“My advice to new Realtors getting into the business is to join a team,” she emphasizes. “If you ever have a question or concern, you have the experience of your team to provide support. It’s like a family. Teamwork will make you successful.”

Those who have had a chance to know and work with Karen appreciate her personable, passionate and outgoing nature.

“My clients know that I will be there for them.” she says.

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# DEREK ▶ cover story

By Dave Danielson  
Photography by Kirstie Donohue Photography

# “DUCKY”

## FOR ALL THE RIGHT REASONS RYAN

There’s no doubt that reaching lofty levels of achievement is rewarding. After all, one of the keys in life that fuels success is setting and achieving goals throughout our journey. But that’s just the start.

What makes those positive steps even more worthwhile is knowing that you have served the needs of others along the way.

That’s the spirit that Derek “Ducky” Ryan brings to the world each day. As a REALTOR® with Keller Williams based in the Exton office, he carries out his efforts for all the right reasons.

### Finding His Path

As Derek looks back, he remembers how his path in life led him to his real estate future.

“Before I got into the business, I didn’t really have a vision for what I wanted to do, but I loved people. Friends of mine were selling their home with a local real estate team. When they found out the team was hiring, they said, ‘You should look into this. The description of who they’re looking for sounds just like you.’ So I did, they hired me and 10 years later, here we are,” Derek says.

“Originally, I went to school for education and then picked up psychology. I never thought about myself getting into the business world. I am an extrovert who loves to talk with people. Friends of mine were in real estate and encouraged me to get into it. It means a lot to be able to help others.”

### An Early Start

Derek earned his license in September 2014. He got an early start to be sure. In fact, he was just 21 when he started his adventure. As he recalls, he faced a challenging transition.

“The average age of REALTORS® was 57 at the time I got into the business. I got my start as a real estate agent in Southeast Pennsylvania,” Derek remembers.

“It was difficult. I didn’t make a dime the first six months. I worked for an arborist during the day and I did real estate nights and weekends.”

### Skyrocketing Success

During his first year as a REALTOR®, Derek recorded two transactions. He followed that up with 24 in his second year, followed by 47 in his third year, and 50 each year since, including more than 70 units closed in 2023, representing \$30 million in sales volume.







“  
BEFORE  
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BUSINESS,  
I DIDN'T  
REALLY  
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The path has been grueling with a decade of 80 to 100-hour weeks. In the process, he has built the kind of success that doesn't rely on advertising. Instead, he has cemented a solid reputation for results in place built on word-of-mouth triumphs.

**What Matters Most**

Family has always been at the heart of Derek's edge in life.

“I grew up in a wonderful family with great parents and brothers. We didn't have a ton growing up. When I came out of college, I had no money and a bunch of debt and I didn't like the way that felt. That feeling motivated me,” Derek says.

“For a long time, I felt like I had to live a chaotic life to live a peaceful life. I stopped pushing so hard and started focusing on people. It's been a lot less stress that way.”

Today, Derek's world is made much richer by his wife, Kaley.





In his free time, he likes to spend time with their two golden retrievers. He also likes to run and exercise several times a week. Other favorites in his free time include hunting, traveling and backpacking.

When it comes to giving back, Derek likes to support the efforts of The Timothy Foundation ... mentoring and pouring into the next generation of Christian leaders.

**Passion for the Profession**

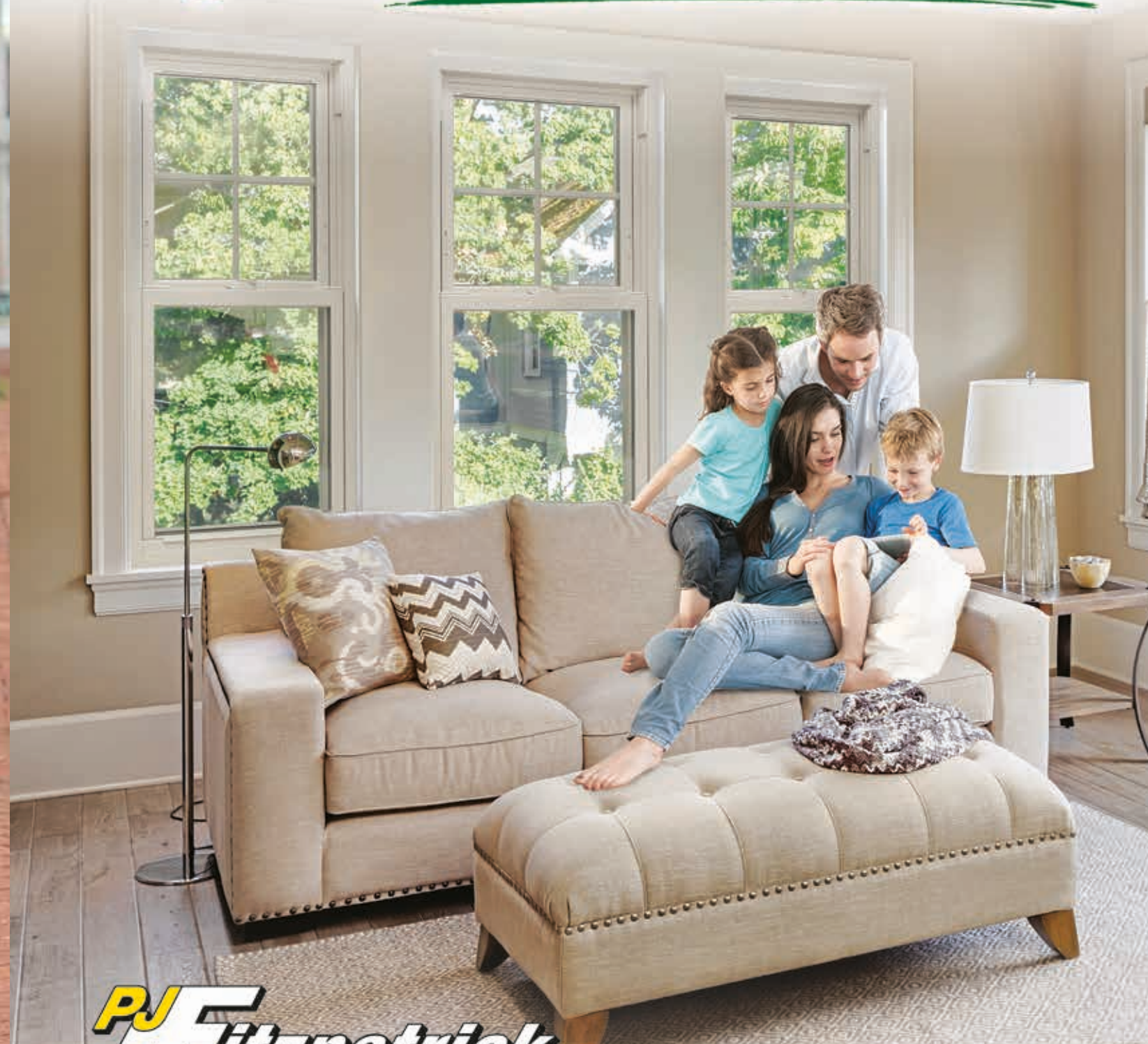
When you talk with Derek, you can instantly see the passion he has for what he does ... a love that is fueled by helping others achieve their goals.

“My hope is that the people I work with know that I truly care for them and that I will be straightforward and honest with them,” he says. “I’m here to put their needs before my own.”

Congratulations to Derek Ryan for the tangible, positive impact that he makes in the world around him. And it all begins with a selfless sense of service ... and a relentless drive to carry out his work for all the right reasons.



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▶ partner spotlight

By Dave Danielson  
Photography by Wheeler Home Concepts

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### Continuing the Legacy

The company is led by Thomas Bennett IV (President & Operations); Marc Quirk (Vice President & Sales); Corie Bennett-DeCubellis (Corporate Secretary and Office Manager); and Tamara Quirk (Treasurer & Accounting).

Together, they continue a legacy of industry leadership that began generations ago. In 1926, their great grandfather established T. Bennett & Sons. In 1959, their grandparents began American Van & Storage Co.

“We have a sincere love for helping people. I really enjoy the customer service aspect of what we do,” Corie explains.

“When a customer calls us they are going through something very stressful. They don’t know where to start. There’s so much anxiety. I love helping them get to the plan and figuring out what will work for them and helping them understand what to expect so that everything runs smoothly.”

### Serving with Gratitude

In the process, one of the most gratifying parts of each day is the positive feedback that routinely

comes back from clients and partners about the team.

“I love hearing that the crew was great and about the difference that we made,” Corie points out.

At the heart of the success is the versatile brand of teamwork that has been developed at the company through time. In addition to their expert level of service they deliver to residential clients, the team also handles a wide range of commercial and corporate moves.

### Committed Effort

While it’s no secret that customer service truly makes a winning difference, being able to deliver on that ideal consistently through time takes a remarkable commitment.

“Our customer service makes us stand out. The guys we have are trained and stick around a long time. They learn the skills of packing, disassembling, wrapping, loading, inventory and store items,” Corie says. “We also offer full placement and reassembly of their household goods in their new home. I think it shows that the guys have the right skills so there are very few problems. When we can promise something to a customer, it’s going to get done.”







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WE DO AND GOING TO WORK  
WITH FAMILY IS A BIG PLUS."**

American Van & Storage Co. is a full-service company that offers palletized storage in a heated warehouse to take care of their customers' household goods. There is a rewarding aspect for the team knowing that they are helping their neighbors literally move to the next chapters in their lives.

"Having a local presence is important to us. It feels good helping people through both local and long-distance with Atlas Van Lines," Corie says. "We have been an agent with Atlas since 1963. We know what we're doing, feel good about what we do and going to work with family is a big plus."

Those who have had a chance to be on the receiving end of the team's exemplary brand of service rave about their experience.

"It means a lot when they say we are thoughtful ... that we listen to their issues and questions. It's important that we understand what they want and expect, and that we then accomplish their goals," Corie emphasizes. "We always want our partners and clients to feel that we're easy to work with, that our team does a fantastic job and things were done on time so that we help them meet their deadlines and closing timelines."



After 65 years, the team at American Van & Storage Co. continues to approach what they do with fresh energy and an unwavering hunger to see their partners and clients through.

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# Welcome to the Brandywine Valley Real Producers Community!

## What is Brandywine Valley Real Producers?

This magazine may be completely new to you, but I've been working on this launch for several months and I firmly believe in the mission of this publication. Real Producers is in over 130 markets across the U.S., where each city has its own version of Real Producers. I'm very excited to bring this magazine to our Brandywine Valley real estate market!

If we haven't met, you might be wondering, "What is *Brandywine Valley Real Producers*, and why am I receiving this magazine?"

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If you are holding this magazine in your hand, you should be incredibly proud.

- You can't buy this magazine.
- You can't pay to be featured in this magazine.
- You can't pay to attend our social events.

You must be nominated to be featured in this magazine and you must fall within the top 500 in the Brandywine Valley.

This magazine will be a vehicle to highlight all of the top-producing agents across the Brandywine Valley and to share what makes them so special.

## What does this magazine mean to the REALTOR®?

It is a badge of honor to be receiving this magazine out of the thousands of agents in our area. We want to validate your business and achievements. There are so many incredible real estate agents who don't get the opportunity to be in the spotlight as they should. We will celebrate our local legends, industry icons and rising stars each month and all the success they've created.

## What does this magazine mean to our Preferred Partners?

Our partners hold a special piece to this puzzle since their partnership helps support our monthly publication. Without them, we wouldn't be able to feature our top agents or host our social events. Each business in our magazine has been vetted and personally referred to *Brandywine Valley Real Producers*, so you can trust they're doing good work! If you are looking for a great business to try or to use, I strongly suggest our preferred partners.

## What content will be featured each month?

- Cover Story
- Rising Star
- Industry Icons
- Partner Spotlight featuring a Preferred Partner
- Social event recaps
- Other content will be added as we continue to grow our publication



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