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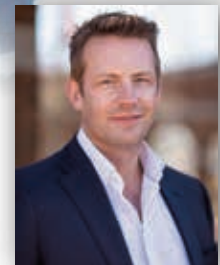
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Nate & Brandi HARR

WORKING TOGETHER TO EXCEED EXPECTATIONS

During the Great Recession in 2008, Nate and Brandi Harr were learning about the benefits of real estate. The two of them were 18 years old and looking for an apartment to rent with friends as they were getting ready to head off to college, but then Nate's uncle Randy Reeds suggested that they buy a house instead. "With some help from family, we were able to purchase our first home for \$50,000," Brandi recalled. Nate added, "For two months, Brandi and I spent every day fixing up that home to live in before school started in the fall. We decided that if we could survive remodeling a home together, we could survive anything!"

When it came time for the young couple to attend college, they went to different schools: Brandi enrolled at Cornerstone University while Nate went to Grand Valley State University. After they graduated in 2011, Brandi began working for Chase Bank. Four years later, she was a branch manager and didn't feel satisfied in her career. As a result, she left her job and took a few months off to figure out what she really wanted in her next career. She landed on real estate, became licensed and dove into her new job as a full-time agent. "Retail banking gave me a tremendous amount of knowledge that I have carried over to real estate, and it helped me establish a large sphere of influence that I was able to quickly utilize," Brandi explained.

Meanwhile, after Nate earned his bachelor's degree in sales and marketing, he got a job as a sales associate at a local Xerox company. He was honored with "Rookie of the Year" and was later promoted to managerial roles. After Brandi received her real estate license in 2015, Nate decided to join her and become a part-time agent. When he returned to Xerox from paternity leave, the company surprisingly let him go upon learning about his new side job. "By 10 a.m., I was at the brokerage and ready to work," Nate said. "Definitely one of the tougher ways to go to a 100%-commission career, but it was exactly the shove I needed to get where we are today."

Nowadays, Brandi and Nate are agents at Reeds Realty. Their broker, Randy Reeds, is the same



uncle who advised the couple to buy their first house. The two of them have obtained over \$100 million in sales since they first began their real estate careers, and Brandi is currently working toward becoming an associate broker. Their team — Harr Homes Real Estate Group — consists of each other and another agent, Ryan Schafer. As a team, they renovate homes together as well and flipped three houses in 2023.

Both Nate and Brandi agree that one of the most rewarding aspects of being agents is when they can exceed client expectations. "I love being able to create a tailored and unique experience that will most



benefit each person who I help and the outcome of each sale,” Brandi shared. “People pay a lot of money to use an agent, and we want them to feel like it was worth every dollar spent.”

Nate and Brandi go above and beyond to help their clients, and their efforts are especially highlighted in listings. They make sure that all of the houses are professionally cleaned, staged, updated and mended. “We have a covered trailer with two entire homes-worth of staging furniture,” Nate explained. “We will fix and repair homes prior to listing — from swapping out light fixtures to painting entire rooms and scheduling landscaping and home repairs.” As for buyers, the Harrs have extensive experience in remodeling and construction, so they can thoroughly view homes with clients unlike some other agents.

For Nate and Brandi, working as a team comes naturally. They met when they were 11 years old, began dating at 16, and now as a married couple, they know how to challenge each other to be the best version of themselves for their clients. When they’re not working, they’re often with their three children — sons Ellis, 6, and Remington, 4, and daughter Jentri, 1 ½. As a family, they love to play sports and spend time outdoors hiking

and boating. They also travel as often as they can. Nate and Brandi like to run and do CrossFit as well.

In addition to their active lifestyle, the Harrs are very involved in their church and serve regularly. Most of the charities that they support are through their church, but Brandi also has a soft spot for making donations toward pregnancy resource centers, new mothers who have limited or no maternity leave, and single moms. “Being a mom to three little ones, I know how important feeling supported is,” she said.

Nate and Brandi both agree that it’s sometimes difficult to turn themselves “off” as agents, but they have worked hard over the years to maintain some kind of work-life balance in the fast-paced world of real estate. For new agents in the industry, they recommend that agents join a group or find a mentor and be willing to learn from them. “Under the right mentor, you can learn more in one to two years than you would if you spent five to seven years on your own,” Nate explained.

“Don’t worry about how many deals you are closing or how much money you are making,” Brandi added. “If you are putting in 100% every single day, implementing the proven tasks and tools, you will be successful.”



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▶▶ agent spotlight

By Amanda Matkowski
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Amanda ROGERS

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Photo submitted by Amanda Rogers



Photo submitted by Amanda Rogers

Amanda Rogers is committed to creating a better neighborhood. She is actively involved in numerous nonprofit organizations in her Lowell community, and as a real estate agent, she is also helping people call the Greater Grand Rapids area home. “I love that every transaction is new and different, and I greatly enjoy all of the relationships that get built through the process,” she said.

Prior to her career in real estate, Amanda earned a degree in legal assisting and worked as a circuit court clerk in Kent County. She then took a few years off to raise her young daughters, jumping back into the workforce in 2017 to become a real estate executive assistant. Amanda quickly fell in love with the industry, and a couple months later, she officially became a licensed real estate agent and worked part time for a year and a half before transitioning into full time.

Now the owner and broker of Rogers Neighborhood Realty, Amanda has found great success in the industry. She achieved over \$11 million in sales in 2022 and 2023, and is on her way to having another solid year. She is involved with the Greater Regional

Alliance of REALTORS® (GRAR) as a Community Involvement Task Force member as well as part of its 2023 GRARLA program, which represents a selective number of agents and real estate professionals to become future industry leaders. Amanda has also earned various certifications from the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) such as Accredited Buyer’s Representative (ABR), Pricing Strategy Advisor (PSA) and e-PRO.

Amanda feels fulfilled when she sees the excited look on buyers’ faces once they’ve found the right home and when she can help sellers get their house ready for the market. In addition to being able to make a difference in a client’s life, she is relieved that she has found a career where she can thrive. “Once you find the thing that fits and you can honestly say that you enjoy it — and you keep coming back for it — you chase it down with everything you have to give,” Amanda shared.

Amanda understands that the housing market is always changing, and she is passionate about educating clients and other agents on how to navigate the ever-shifting industry. She is especially eager to show the general public how

valuable a good agent is as well as help people change their perceptions about agents after they have had a bad encounter in the past. “I think providing education, proving value, and being able to share actual client experiences help overcome those challenges,” Amanda said. “I will not take shortcuts or talk someone into a house they don’t love.”

As for Amanda’s team at Rogers Neighborhood Realty, everyone is on the same page when it comes to putting clients first. “While we fully help each other and learn from each other, we very much have our own niches and social spheres,” Amanda explained. Although Rogers Neighborhood Realty is a small team, Amanda realized that they needed more office space in 2022, so she took matters into her own hands by purchasing and renovating a historic building on East Main Street in downtown Lowell. By January of 2023, the hybrid brokerage moved into its new home.

Other than helping people with their real estate goals, Amanda is serious about being there for the people within her community. She is the treasurer of the Lowell Area



“

ONCE YOU FIND THE THING THAT FITS AND YOU CAN HONESTLY SAY THAT YOU ENJOY IT — AND YOU KEEP COMING BACK FOR IT — YOU CHASE IT DOWN WITH EVERYTHING YOU HAVE TO GIVE.

”

that West Michigan has to offer,” Amanda shared. Together, the couple has two daughters — Katie, 18, and Daphne, 15. Amanda enjoys going thrift shopping with the girls, but as a family, they love to spend time sitting on their porch in the evenings.

When she’s not working or doing something with her family, Amanda likes cooking, gardening and running. In the past, she has won and placed in several local races as well as completed five marathons. She also enjoys listening to podcasts, especially while she’s in the car on the way to showings. Her favorite podcasts are “History Daily” and “Hidden Brain.”

Amanda hopes that people will remember her as someone who cared about others and persevered against challenges. For agents who are new in the industry, she recommends that they get to know their community and learn how to run a business. “Be dedicated, be persistent, never stop learning,” she said. “Come in knowing that this is going to be an emotional roller coaster for your clients and that it’s your job to keep everything level.”

Recreation Authority (LARA), Lowell Rotary Club, and local Alpha Care Center. She was a Girls on the Run coach for four years and is currently a Girl Scout troop leader for two troops. In 2021, Amanda and her husband were named “People of the Year” by the Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce. Besides Amanda’s volunteer work, she has been a sponsor for multiple organizations — most of which serve children — such as Compassion International

and Kids’ Food Basket. “I think pouring into the next generation is critical to improving our community and keeping it a great place to live,” Amanda said.

Originally from Mesick, Michigan — the mushroom capital of the world — Amanda has been married to her husband, Bob, for almost 20 years. “He has a side hobby of brewing beer, which provides us lots of opportunities to visit all of the wonderful breweries



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Marcus

LOVE

BREAKING BOUNDARIES & BUILDING DREAMS

Marcus Love, a rising star in the world of real estate, is becoming known in the industry for his unwavering dedication, fresh perspective, and heartfelt commitment to helping others achieve their dreams of homeownership. At just 21 years old, Marcus has already achieved remarkable success in his first year as an agent, recording a career volume of \$8 million. His journey from a part-time real estate enthusiast to a full-time agent at Smallegan Real Estate - Keller Williams Grand Rapids North has been nothing short of inspiring.

For Marcus, the path to becoming an agent was not a conventional one. It began during his freshman year of college when his fascination with the industry's intricacies led him to embark on a road that ultimately led to the successful completion of the licensing exam the following summer. Initially, he juggled his real estate endeavors on a part-time basis while managing his academic pursuits. However, in 2023, Marcus made the pivotal decision to fully immerse himself in the profession, transitioning to a full-time role. This strategic move was driven by his desire to maximize his potential for growth and contribution, and it proved to be a rewarding transition, resulting in increased time investment and more impressive results.

Before entering the real estate world, Marcus was a manager at Panda Express, where he honed invaluable leadership, organizational, and people management skills. These experiences would prove to be a crucible for his future success in real estate.

What truly sets Marcus apart, however, is his personal journey and his unyielding determination to free himself from the restrictions of his childhood. As an adopted individual, he faced a unique set of challenges that ignited a fervent desire to rewrite the narrative. "I don't want to work a nine-to-five job for the rest of my life," he shared.



Marcus saw real estate as the conduit through which he could transcend limitations — not only for himself but also for his family and peers who were confronting similar struggles. "My decision to enter a career as an agent was underscored by an indomitable determination to break free from the constraints of my upbringing," he explained. Marcus had experienced the profound influence of economic circumstances on an individual's life course and was determined to dismantle the chains of generational adversity. His objective was not just personal success: It was also to champion equitable homeownership, affording individuals and families the opportunity to establish enduring stability and prosperity.

Originally from Lansing, Michigan, Marcus began his educational journey at Grand Valley State University, where he pursued business studies. Throughout his academic years, he actively engaged in extracurricular pursuits, including leadership roles in the marching band and as student body president. These experiences sharpened his leadership skills and emphasized his commitment to driving positive transformation within his community. He is now set to graduate with his degree in April of 2025.

One of Marcus' primary passions in real estate revolves around aiding less fortunate individuals in realizing their dreams of homeownership. Through his engagement on social media platforms, he has connected with a younger generation interested in real estate, providing them with valuable information and guidance. "It's incredibly rewarding to provide knowledge that empowers others to pursue their aspirations," he said. "Posting informative content has led to a significant increase in followers, which has allowed me to educate these individuals about buying homes and entering the real estate field. I receive around 10 direct messages daily from people seeking guidance."

At Smallegan Real Estate, Marcus is part of a cohesive team of 20 individuals, including 16 agents and four administrative support staff. The synergy within their team is remarkable, which has an emphasis on collaboration and mutual support. "Our team members willingly offer assistance whenever questions arise, fostering an environment where everyone thrives," he proudly shared.

For Marcus, the most gratifying aspect of his real estate journey is being able to witness the transformation of individuals who were once told that owning a home was beyond their reach. Guiding them through the process and witnessing their dreams materialize into reality are experiences that fuel his passion and reinforce his commitment to making a positive impact in the lives of others. Marcus also loves seeing his clients' offers accepted, especially after navigating through challenging circumstances. "The sense of accomplishment that follows these moments is incredibly rewarding and a reminder of the positive impact I can have," he said.

According to Marcus, success is the culmination of unshakable dedication, coupled with a deep-rooted commitment to growth. "It's the ability to make a tangible difference in people's lives while continuously evolving and pushing boundaries to reach new heights," he explained.

Beyond his professional life, Marcus cherishes his close-knit family, with whom he shares a strong bond with and a love for spending quality time together. They have a shared interest in traveling, which allows them to explore new places and create cherished memories. Marcus is also an amazing uncle to about 10 nieces and nephews, whom he cares for deeply.

Marcus is deeply devoted to supporting charitable organizations that align with his values, particularly those focused on providing opportunities for underprivileged



individuals to access education and mentorship in real estate. He believes in the transformative power of education and is determined to encourage others to overcome challenges and thrive.

Beyond the fast-paced world of real estate, Marcus cherishes moments of leisure — whether it's exploring the great outdoors through hiking and camping or indulging in his passion for music, both as a listener and creator.

To aspiring agents, Marcus offers helpful advice: "Harness the power of social media. It's an incredible tool for education and connection, and for building your personal brand. Leverage platforms to share valuable insights, engage with your audience, and demonstrate your expertise. Be relentless in your pursuit of knowledge and growth, and never underestimate the impact of caring deeply for your clients' needs."

Ultimately, Marcus aspires to be remembered for the lasting impact he makes within his immediate community and for the lives he touches through his online presence. "Empowering those around me — from my neighborhood to a global audience — is a legacy I am committed to building," he said.

If there's anything that describes Marcus as a person and an agent, it's that he shows genuine care toward others and that he thanks God every day for everything he's able to have. Amidst the complexities of the real estate world, his clients and peers can always expect a caring, empathetic approach. This sincerity in understanding their unique situations has proven invaluable in forging strong relationships and driving meaningful results.

Marcus' journey showcases the transformative power of determination and resilience, and the unwavering commitment to helping others achieve their dreams. As his online presence continues to expand, Marcus is poised to make an even greater impact in the world of real estate, inspiring and empowering individuals to navigate the landscape with confidence and hope.

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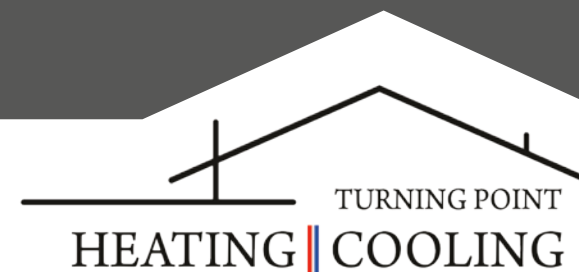
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Rebecca Zahm-Soldaat

► agent spotlight

WORKING HARD TO OVERCOME OBSTACLES

By Amanda Matkowski
Photos by Jacob Harr with harr Creative LLC

Rebecca Zahm-Soldaat was born and raised in Grand Rapids and has always loved living in the state of Michigan. She went to West Catholic High School and later attended Davenport University where she received a bachelor's degree in business management with a minor in marketing.

Although Rebecca was ready to tackle the job market with her new degree, she had a difficult time finding a decent-paying career that was able to support her. "No one wanted to give me a chance because I wasn't experienced. Taking a full-time position and working my way up also wasn't an option because I had a young daughter to support and a mortgage to pay," she explained.

As a bartender, Rebecca knew that she didn't want to remain in the food service industry, so in 2015, she got her real estate license and became a part-time agent in the meantime. "The first few years were stressful," Rebecca admitted. "I was a single mom, and I was driven to make my career a success."



Eight years later, Rebecca is now a full-time agent at Bellabay Realty - North and is making great strides in her business. In 2022, she sold 36 homes and acquired \$11.8 million in sales. She was also ranked as a top 10 agent by her brokerage for the past two years as well as a top 300 agent by the Greater Regional Alliance of REALTORS® (GRAR).

Rebecca appreciates how there are limitless opportunities as an agent and that she is constantly learning something new about the industry. "I enjoy showing houses and seeing how each home

varies in its uniqueness," she said. Her favorite part of her job, though, is being able to assist her clients with their real estate goals. "I love being a buyer's agent and helping first-time homebuyers achieve their dream of homeownership," Rebecca added.

Nowadays, Rebecca can't imagine her life without real estate. Like most other agents, she sometimes struggles with time management and how to set solid work boundaries, but her enthusiasm for the

“

I LOVE BEING A BUYER’S AGENT AND

HELPING FIRST-TIME HOMEBUYERS ACHIEVE

THEIR DREAM OF HOMEOWNERSHIP.

”

industry is still obvious in her everyday life. For instance, Rebecca and her husband, Dan Soldaat, have a passion for flipping houses and hope to invest in some rental properties in the future.

When Rebecca isn’t working or renovating houses, she is usually with her husband and children — Ligia, 16, William, 3, and Christian, who was born on December 12, 2023. As a family, they love to spend time at the lake, play at the park, and attend fun events that pop up around the city. Rebecca likes to read thrillers or motivational books as well and listen to podcasts that relate to real estate or true crime.

When it comes to her business, Rebecca credits her availability and honesty as factors for her success. For new agents, she recommends that they don’t give up while they are trying to establish themselves in the industry. After all, she can still remember the days when she was trying to launch her real estate career as a single mother while also balancing another job. “I wanted to quit so many times,” Rebecca said, “but now I plan on being an agent for the next 40 years!”



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