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COVER STORY

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Alicia Graham Allen

AGHealth LLC

BIG SHOTS

Event Recap

DECEMBER 2024



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Louisiana Born, LSU Proud: As a native of South Louisiana and former LSU Offensive Lineman, I bring passion to everything I do. A Business Administration graduate, my two decades in the mortgage industry have been marked by a commitment to client success. Married for over 20 years with a son, my free time revolves around sports and outdoor activities. Whether coaching youth sports or cheering on LSU and the Saints, I'm dedicated to staying active. Joining NOLA Lending over a decade ago, I believe in their process and products, ensuring the best service for my clients. Let's achieve your goals together!

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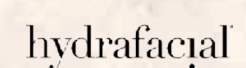
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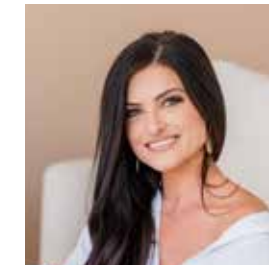
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ALICIA GRAHAM ALLEN

AGHealth LLC

Alicia Graham Allen, owner of AGHealth LLC, has been offering health, life, dental, vision, and supplemental insurance advising services in Baton Rouge for the past four years. The company prides itself on providing clients with complimentary guidance on the individual insurance market—coupled with an unwavering commitment to honesty and compassion.

Alicia joined *Baton Rouge Real Producers* this past year due to the nature of the platform; relationship building and connections. She wants to be a trusted resource for our real estate agents when it comes to the often-complex world of health insurance. “My clients have my personal number,” Allen notes. “I don’t have kids yet, but I have my clients! They mean everything to me, and exceptional customer service is essential for building long-term relationships.”

Networking is second nature to Alicia. “I look for ways to bring people together.” Whether it’s a Saturday brunch with the girls, her local BNI group or a Real Producers event, Alicia values connections and facilitates ways to bring like minded individuals together. All with the understanding that relationships are





I WANT THEM TO KNOW WHO I AM BEFORE THEY KNOW WHAT I DO.



the core of what she does. “I want to know others and I want them to know me...I want them to know who I am before they know what I do.”

Navigating the evolving landscape of health insurance has been one of Alicia’s primary challenges, particularly amid rising healthcare costs. “Clients often rush into plans, leaving them underinsured and facing unexpected bills later,” she says. “This is where having a trustworthy agent can make all the difference.”

Alicia’s advocacy goes beyond plan selection; she actively supports clients when dealing with hospital bills or insurance issues. “The knowledge and experiences I’ve gained over the years have been invaluable,” she says, reflecting on her journey.

Five minutes with Alicia and you will find her to be kind-hearted, energetic, and supportive. “I am always eager to help clients understand their options fully and I encourage clear communication in every interaction.”

When she’s not working, you can find Alicia enjoying downtime at the farm she shares with her husband. “My husband, who is an angel, cooks for me while I cuddle up on the couch with a great book!” Alicia says she loves to dive into a good book, whether historical, self-development, or suspense. “Anything that keeps me on the edge of my seat!” She is also a fan of 80s movies like *Pretty in Pink* or *Welcome Home Roxy Carmichael*.

When not at the office helping her clients, you could likely run into Alicia and her niece on one of their shopping adventures, bowling or at Barnes & Noble.



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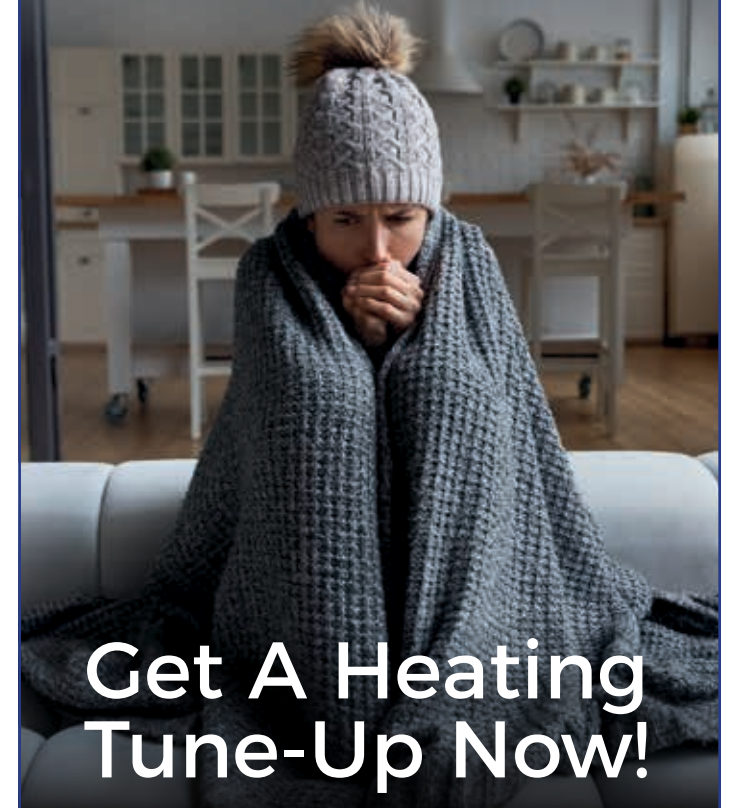
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BIG SHOTS

FALL NETWORKING



On Thursday, October 24, our Fall Networking BIG SHOTS event was held at GolfSuites off Siegen Lane in Baton Rouge, and it couldn't have been a better day! With perfect weather and a fantastic turnout, 120 attendees came together for an afternoon of fun, competition, and camaraderie.

exciting event for all. Michael Borne claimed the overall 1st place victory, while the team trophies added to the excitement. Top Team Roofing & Construction captured both 1st and 2nd place team honors, while NOLA Lending Group proudly took home 3rd place.

Thank you to everyone who attended, and congratulations to our winners! We look forward to the next opportunity to connect, collaborate, and celebrate together!

Realtors and BRRP Preferred Partners showed up ready to network and compete, making it an

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3rd Place Team
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Patton Brantley, John Griffin, Shannon Babin, Chase Muller, Susanne Wampold, Micah Fairchild, Kay Landry, Jarrod Brown
Front Row: Shemika Mayfield, Katie Meiners, Alicia Hedrick, Nina Wright



2nd Place Team
Top Team Roofing & Construction
Devin Kleinpeter, Chase Pino, Travis Baker, Jessica Singletary



1st Place Team
Top Team Roofing & Construction
Dustin Alexander, Dustin Singletary, Michael Borne, Jessica Singletary



1st Place Individual
Michael Borne

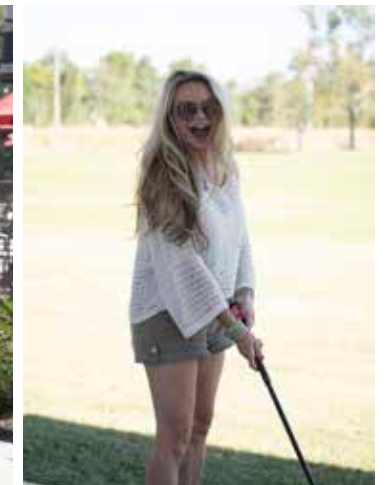




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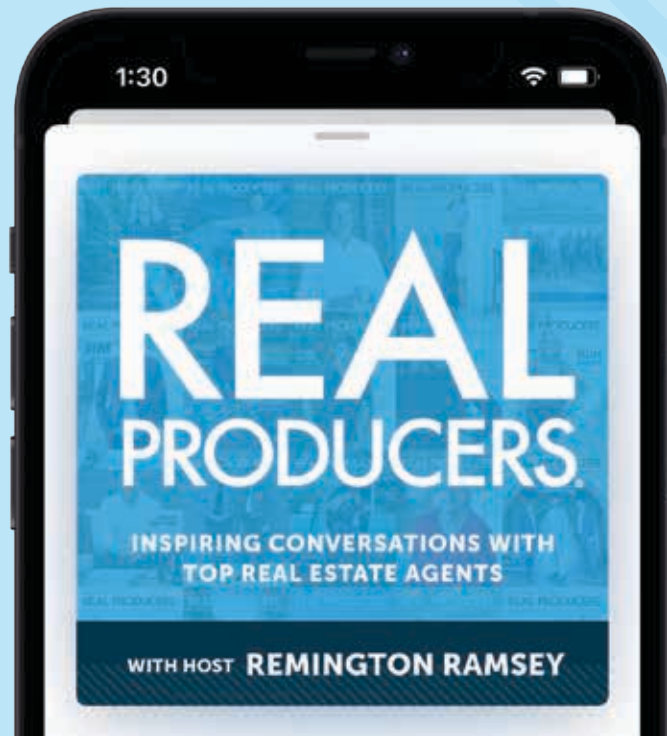
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Real Producers Podcast is hosted by Remington Ramsey, creator of the Real Producers brand that reaches more than 100 markets nationwide. He is a real estate investor as well as an avid reader and writer.




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MARIE BROCK

ROOTED IN TRADITION

Running under the stately oaks and rolling down the Campus Mounds, Marie Brock's connection to LSU started long before she ever set foot in a classroom. Growing up on the campus, with her father as a professor and their family welcoming a steady flow of scholars as dinner guests, the spirit of LSU has always been a part of her life. But it wasn't just her father's legacy that kept her close to the university—it's also where she formed her own.

Marie attended University High on campus before enrolling at LSU, where she joined Zeta Tau Alpha sorority, a place that helped her form lifelong friendships, meet her husband and raise her children in the heart of LSU's vibrant community. Her first date with Jase? An LSU football game, of course. Their connection to LSU runs deep, with Jase's family also rooted in the university—his grandfather's football scholarship led to a career as the Dean of the College of Education, further cementing their family's ties to the institution. "During Sunday dinners with his family, it was ingrained that without his grandfather receiving a football scholarship from LSU, his family would not be where they are today," she says.

Marie's support for LSU and the Greater Baton Rouge community didn't end with graduation. Alongside her thriving real estate career, she has devoted time to several community initiatives, volunteering with the Junior League of Baton Rouge and serving on boards like the Arts Council of Livingston Parish. Her leadership roles with the Panhellenic Council and ZTA sorority have been particularly close to her heart. Marie has served as president of the ZTA LSU Alumnae Chapter, the Parents Club, and the Greater Baton Rouge Alumnae Panhellenic.

"We helped promote sorority life, not just here at LSU," Marie shares. "Whether a girl was going to LSU or another college, we'd host panels and teas to prepare them for recruitment and show them that sorority life is about much more than four years—it's for a lifetime."

Her connection to ZTA took on even greater meaning when her sister was diagnosed with breast cancer, a cause deeply tied to the sorority's philanthropic mission. The support and strength of the women in her sister's breast cancer

community left a lasting impact on Marie. "When my sister was going through treatment, my sorority sisters and friends were right there for us," Marie recalls. "They helped get my kids off the bus and with whatever we needed while I was beside her. It really was a group effort."

When her daughters, Mary Katherine and Anna Claire, followed in her footsteps at LSU, they carried on the family tradition by joining ZTA as legacies—and like their mother, grandmother and aunt, they did it with the radiant red hair they all share.

"My family's been there from the beginning," Marie says. "My girls were in first grade and third grade when I started in real estate, so they would tag along on listing appointments or showing appointments and help me put signs in the yards."

When a client needed help with the last-minute move, Marie called Jase, who jumped in to help. As her real estate career picked up, Jase took over most of the cooking duties—a role their daughters now lovingly declare as his. "I used to do all the cooking when they were younger, but they know Jase as the family chef," she laughs.

Her childhood friend's mom inspired Marie's decision to become a Realtor. "I saw how hard she worked for her clients. She was so professional and caring. And that left a lasting impression on me," she explains. After eight years of teaching elementary school, which she loved, Marie took a few years off to stay home with her daughters.

When her youngest started first grade, Marie pursued a career in real estate, a path that aligned with her lifelong fascination with homes. As a child, she and her friends





would spend hours in the backyard, using pine straw to design elaborate floor plans, imagining the perfect layouts for their dream houses.

She credits her broker and friend, Shelley Simmons, with helping her consistently grow her business. “She is always my cheerleader and motivator and helps me step out of my comfort zone,” Marie says.

Soon after entering the industry, Marie discovered that real estate perfectly complemented her passion for learning, another thread that runs through her life and something she credits her parents for instilling in her. “My parents taught me that life is about changing and growing, and you have to keep learning. That’s what I love about real estate—you’re constantly learning and working with people, and you have to stay open-minded.” It’s a lesson she’s passed on to her daughters. Anna Claire, an LSU alumna of the class of 2021, is now in medical school, while Mary Katherine, class of 2019, earned a degree in chemical engineering and works for SpaceX.

Marie’s journey, rooted in education, philanthropy and the camaraderie fostered at LSU, comes full circle as she passes on these values to her daughters. It’s no surprise that her family continues to live out the principles of their alma mater—always learning, always giving back and forever LSU.



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MARK AKCHIN

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LESSONS IN
LAUGHTER

By Breanna Pizzolato
Photos by Ace Sylvester

MARK AKCHIN'S philosophy is simple: regardless of the situation, one can always find something to smile or laugh about. As he searches for the bright side of hard times or the solution to a challenging situation, he uses humor to make the journey better. His authenticity and penchant for hospitality, which he defines as creating a safe, welcoming space, served him well as an educator and corporate sales trainer. But when he earned his real estate license in 2002, Mark truly hit his stride.

As a real estate agent, he blends expertise with his natural charisma to pursue his ultimate mission in life: “to make the world a better place through hospitality, education and humor.”

LAUGH THROUGH THE PAIN

Mark's journey as a caregiver began when his mother, Betty, was diagnosed with dementia. He embraced each moment with compassion and a healthy dash of humor. “The caretaking came very easily for me,” he says. “It is my nature. It is who I am. And I think she has impacted me more, in a way, after her passing, as it helped me to realize how incredibly blessed I was with the life that we had.”

He has a deep appreciation for the simple things in life, like the fact that his family had a nourishing dinner with meat, vegetables and a starch every night thanks to his mom. “I didn't know that everybody didn't have steak several times a week because that's what we had.



We had a cheap cut of steak, but we had it a lot,” he says, smiling. “And I had a hot breakfast against my will every morning. Every day, I begged for Pop-Tarts. I begged for cereal, and Mama would say, ‘Not on a school day.’”

Caring for her in that same gentle, patient and lovingly stern way during her battle with dementia came naturally for Mark. He used humor in an intentional way to cope with the challenges dementia presents for those affected and their families.

For example, she often asked him where he was headed, and he never missed an opportunity to respond with a new outlandish career choice just for a chuckle at her reaction—an exotic dancer and a piano player for a local house of ill repute, to name a couple. “She looked me up and down three times before saying, ‘Well, be good,’” he laughs. “Or she'd ask when I learned to play piano.”

Mark volunteered with Alzheimer's Services of the Capital Area after her passing and stumbled upon



doesn't want them to feel overwhelmed and scared by the process. "You don't need to see every house that's on the market," he often tells clients. "You only want to see the ones that match your criteria. It doesn't hurt me to see all of them because that's my business."

For Mark, the joy of his business is firmly rooted in his mission to provide unmatched hospitality.

TAKING ADVANTAGE

Mark's passion for tennis is another outlet where he finds joy, both from staying active and giving back. He's been hooked since childhood, having grown up with a tennis court and pool behind his house. His father signed him up for lessons at 8, and he went on to play all four years in high school, qualifying for state tournaments every year.

In the last ten years, Mark has become a competitive tennis player, traveling to tournaments in Toronto, Las Vegas, San Diego and cities in Texas. "I am by no means a pro and certainly couldn't teach it," he says. He plays purely for the love of it. And he appreciates that the tournaments he plays in all have a charitable component, raising funds through events like silent auctions and player parties to support local charities in the tournament's host city.

"I do like to win trophies, though," he says. His latest—a colorful, rainbow one—sits proudly on his living room mantle alongside the others. Mark credits his ability to balance tennis and caring for his mother to Keller Williams' commitment to prioritizing God, family, and business. Those principles have guided him since joining Keller Williams Red

Stick Partners at the start of his real estate career. "If you're not doing it for your family and yourself, what are you doing it for?" he asks.

Whether through real estate, tennis or simply joking with a server, Mark's goal remains the same—to create a space where people feel welcome and cared for, with a bit of humor to make the journey smoother.



IF YOU'RE NOT DOING IT FOR YOUR FAMILY AND YOURSELF,

WHAT ARE YOU DOING IT FOR?



his mother's name on a sign lining the fundraising walkway. "I forgot that years before, I donated in her honor," he says. "So I took a really cheesy picture of myself holding my mom's sign and sent it to my sister." Soon after, following years of struggling to put pen to paper, he poured out a book titled *Laugh Through the Pain: How I Used Humor to Deal with My Mom's Dementia*. "It was for no one but me," he says. "And I used that silly picture as the front cover." Over the years, he has shared it with people who might benefit as caretakers or those seeking a fresh perspective on a

challenging situation. *That's* Mark's kind of hospitality.

Just as he used humor and compassion to ease his mother's struggles, Mark carries that same approach into his work with clients, guiding them through buying or selling a home. His natural ease with people makes even the most complex real estate processes feel approachable and manageable.

THAT'S MY BUSINESS

As a former English, reading and social studies teacher at an inner-city school, he used popular music

to teach grammar concepts to students. He recalls using the iconic introduction to the song "Baby Got Back" by Sir Mix A Lot for a lesson on pronouns. You know the line.

As a Realtor, Mark's approach remains the same. He thinks outside the box and uses humor and creativity to foster connection and understanding. For example, he avoids using intimidating industry terms like pre-approved when working with first-time homebuyers. Instead, he asks, "Have you discussed your buying power with a lender?" His words are a purposeful choice, as he

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Cheri Mack

cover story



If there's one thing you can count on, it's that Cheri Mack will show up. Whether it's sending a thoughtful soup box to a friend feeling under the weather, attending a neighbor's fundraiser or cheering on her seven-year-old son, Levi, from the sidelines of robotics competitions and soccer matches—She prides herself on showing up for people, having their back and offering genuine support when it matters most.



By Breanna Pizzolato • Photos by Stevie LeJeune

MAKING MOMENTS MATTER

As a real estate agent with 14 years of industry experience—eight in residential sales and six managing multi-family housing—Cherie delivers excellent, personalized service to her clients. However, when her son was born, she knew it was essential to set firm boundaries to protect her time with family. Her carefully managed schedule helps ensure that she is fully present with her family while

maintaining her commitment to her clients. “These days, it’s really important to protect those hours,” she explains, referring to her family’s cherished evening routine. “The evenings are our protected time. It’s our time as a family to decompress and be together.” This balance allows her to show up and give 100% to her family and clients.

“Becoming a mom changed my whole world,” Cherie says. “He is

the reason I work hard every day. I love setting a strong example for him and giving him an incredible life.”

Creating that incredible life means giving Levi experiences that create lasting memories. “Growing up, we’d go to the beach, and as we got older, we’d occasionally visit Disney World—that was the extent of our traveling,” she says. But everything changed when she boarded a plane for the first time



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on her way to Jamaica for her honeymoon with her husband, Dustin. “I was hooked,” she laughs. Since then, Cherie, Dustin and Levi have journeyed across the U.S., from the sunny beaches she loves to scenic mountain escapes. Estes Park, Colorado, stands out as a family favorite, a destination that fulfilled her son Levi’s long-held request for a “snow vacation” and became a quick favorite despite her initial hesitations. “I’m a beach girl through and through. I could live at the beach,” she says. “But Estes Park ignited our desire to see more national parks, especially because of how much we all enjoyed that trip.”

She prioritizes immersive experiences in her travels, like their trips to New York and her recent adventure in Scottsdale, Arizona, where she toured luxury real estate and discussed new ways to elevate her business with some longtime friends who are fellow agents. For Cherie, travel is a blend of business and pleasure, but she always focuses on creating special moments with her people. She believes their shared experiences and memories are far more valuable than physical gifts, especially as her son grows older. This shift has led them to prioritize meaningful travel and shared activities. Her emphasis on family time over material possessions is rooted in her upbringing in Central, where family and community have always been at the core of her life.

COMPASSION IN ACTION

Growing up, Cherie lived on the sprawling property that is the only land her parents have ever owned alongside her three siblings and just down the road from her grandparents and many cousins. The sense of closeness is something she’s carried into her adult

life, which only strengthened in moments of hardship. The flood of 2016 hit her family hard. “My mom, dad, sister, grandparents and uncle all experienced flooding,” she recalls. “And that’s not even counting close friends and extended family.”

That experience was a turning point for her. “That’s when I saw that at the base of humanity, we were designed to help and serve,” she says. “When you see people hurting, when you see loss like that—it magnified things for me. I told myself I could do so much more for others.”

Since then, giving back has become more than a value. Extending a helping hand has become Cherie’s way of life. Whether scrolling through social media or listening to friends, she’s always on the lookout for someone in need of a little extra kindness. “I see someone posting that they’re sick, having a baby, starting a new job, or maybe their dog passed away. Those pivotal moments in life that feel tough, or maybe it’s something huge to celebrate. Those moments that matter most,” she says. She doesn’t stop at a heart reaction or kind words underneath a status. She sends flowers, a soup box or buys something off a registry. “There is something so special about showing up for others,” she smiles. “Giving like that fills my cup more than most things in life.”

Her dedication to service doesn’t stop there. As a seasoned real estate professional with Magnolia Roots Realty, she has made it a point to give back to her peers by educating and mentoring fellow agents. “I’ve taught at the board, been part of the Professional

Development Committee, and this year, I'm on the leadership advisory board for the Greater Baton Rouge Association of Realtors," she says, beaming. "Teaching classes and helping newer agents find their way has always been a big part of my career."

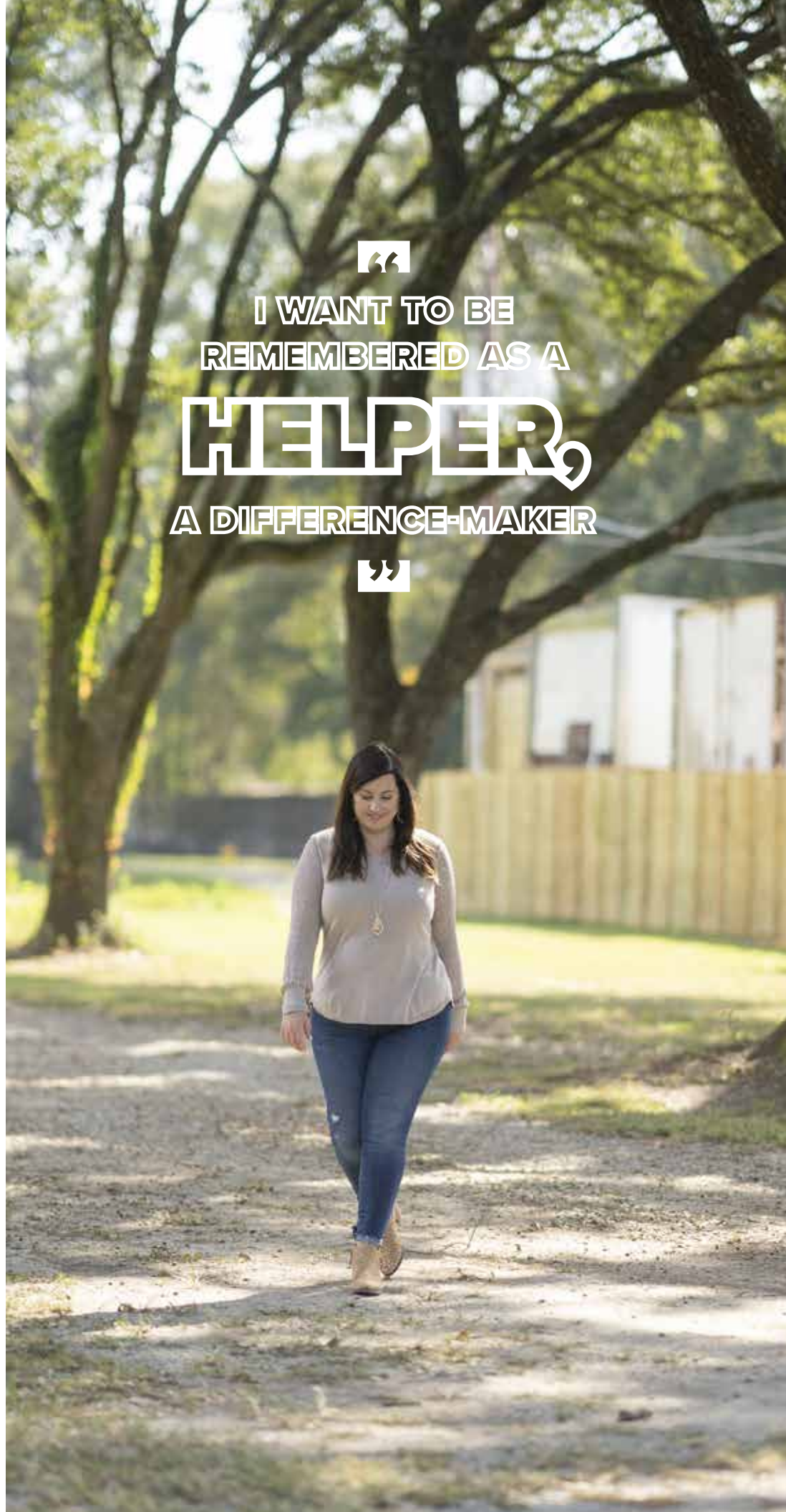
For Cherie, it's not just about growing her own business—it's about lifting others as she climbs. "Pouring into other agents and watching them grow, it's part of that give-back mentality. It's one of the most rewarding things I do," she says.

When asked what legacy she hopes to leave behind, Cherie doesn't hesitate. "I want to be remembered as a helper, a difference-maker," she says. One book that left a lasting impact on her is *The Go-Giver*, a story about the importance of giving more than you take. "When you give more than you take, the world is a better place," she adds.

And that philosophy drives her in her work every day. "For me, real estate isn't about sales—it's about service. The joy I get from helping clients find their dream homes goes far beyond the closing table," she explains. "Leading with that mindset, knowing I've made a real impact on someone's life, is something I'm proud of."

In a career that often revolves around competition and closing deals, Cherie stands out for her genuine care for her clients, her community and her fellow agents. She's not just selling homes—she's building relationships, creating memories and showing up in ways that make a lasting impact. For Cherie, it all comes back to one simple truth: "When you take a moment to show up for somebody, that's what really makes a difference in their life."

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