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## *Paul Baker*

REALTOR on the Rise

Sarah McNurlin

Partner Spotlight

Stratton Inspection Services LLC

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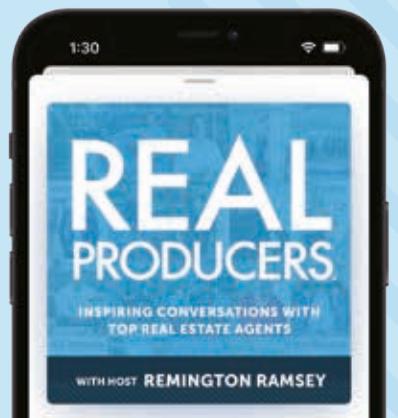
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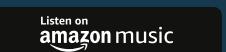


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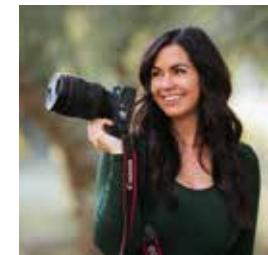
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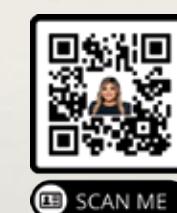
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# Paul Baker

## LEADING WITH HEART IN REAL ESTATE & LIFE

Tested. Tried. True. Paul Baker has built an impeccable reputation in real estate through his 37 years of service to the community. His passion and commitment for his clients and to the real estate profession exemplifies his dedication and passion. Currently, he works for RE/MAX Fine Properties and has been awarded the RE/MAX Hall of Fame as well as the Realtor of the Year for the Scottsdale Association of Realtors (SAAR) in 2021.

### A Foundation Built on People Skills

Paul's launch into real estate began as a college student. His decision to enter the field was fueled by his love for working with people and helping them realize their dreams of homeownership.

"I like working with people and helping them become homeowners," says Paul. He thoughtfully adds, "And I have good people skills." His personal approach resonates with clients and colleagues alike. He especially likes working and growing the group of his clients who are professional athletes, which is very rewarding.

He recalls one memorable moment working with a professional baseball player and his wife. The exact same day they were about to close on their dream home, he was traded to a new baseball team! Fortunately, there was a bright side. "It worked out for the best for him and his family," remembers Paul.

### Motivated by Family

Interestingly, Paul's road in real estate is also motivated by others. His family is why he does what he does. "My 'why' is my wife, daughter, and grandson," he smiles. Paul has been through many "peaks and valleys of 37 years with never having a guaranteed paycheck," but his love for his family has been his anchor throughout his career. When he puts others first, the paycheck follows. Service is near and dear to his heart.

### A Legacy of Excellence: Commitment to Serve

Over his career spanning close to four decades, Paul has earned an impressive collection of awards and recognition. His tenure as the Chair of the Arizona Association of

Realtors (AAR) Legislative and Political Affairs Committee in 2023 speaks to his dedication to advocacy and shaping the industry's future. Notably, he has been a consistent RAPAC Major Investor from 2018 to 2023 and served on the AAR Executive Committee from 2021 to 2023. He has also earned the NAR C2EX designation.

In the community, he also believes in making a difference. Paul was the recipient of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Scottsdale (BGCS) Jim Hill Award in 2022. Not to mention being part of the BGCS Executive Committee from 2020-2023, where he works on the Board as Governor for BGCS.

### A Family-Centric Life

Beyond his professional pursuits, Paul and his wife, Denise, have celebrated 32 years of marriage. "Denise runs an in-home daycare business," explains Paul. He and Denise have one daughter, Rachel, who was married in April of 2021. "She blessed us with a grandson named Cash in November of 2022," says Paul.

One fun fact about Paul is that he was an only child. "My parents were only children," he adds. They also had an only child. However, they are a tight-knit family. They cherish their family time, often bonding through travel and supporting various Valley sports teams.

When not immersed in the world of real estate, Paul can be found attending and watching the Diamondbacks, Suns, and Cardinals. His love for sports extends beyond the office and into his personal life.

### Giving Back

For those new to real estate, Paul encourages them, "Get involved in our industry! Join a committee and do some volunteer work; it will be very rewarding if you make the effort." Paul is proud to be an active alumnus of Scottsdale Leadership and keeps in touch with his Scottsdale 20/30 Club friends.

### Final Thoughts

Paul Baker is not just a real estate professional; he is a leader who operates from the heart. His dedication to



### ► leadership spotlight

Written by Elizabeth McCabe

Photos by The Capture Collective

“  
MY ‘WHY’ IS MY  
WIFE, DAUGHTER,  
AND GRANDSON.  
”



Paul with his family



family, community, and the industry he loves is remarkable. This Top Producer has stood the test of time in real estate, helping countless clients, and many more years to come. Leading with heart is what Paul does best and it shows with his passion and enthusiasm. He can't imagine doing anything else.

---

As a REALTOR®, do you rank in the top 500? Have you been a successful leader in the real estate industry and would like to share your story? Email us at [scottsdale@realproducersmag.com](mailto:scottsdale@realproducersmag.com) or reach out via social media to learn how.





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# SARAH MCNURLIN

realtor on the rise

Written by Elizabeth McCabe

## Former Dental Assistant Gives Clients Reason to Smile in Real Estate

Sarah McNurlin took the road less traveled to real estate. "I was a dental assistant for 12 years," she comments. "I loved every minute of it, but I was looking for something different to challenge myself." She feared burnout and decided to be proactive, searching for a new career in the process.

"I was looking for something with more freedom, something outside of a traditional office setting with set times to work," she comments. Inspired by her partner's career as a landscape architect, Sarah admired that he owned his own business. Real estate was what she desired. "It felt like a great fit to find something that had the same amount of freedom and flexibility as his business," she explains.

Her friends also pointed the way to real estate. "I have friends who are REALTORS® in my current brokerage (Arizona Best Real Estate), who suggested that real estate would be a great fit for me as well," points out Sarah. She immediately felt at home at Arizona Best Real Estate and trusted her friends' guidance. Let's just say they were right.

### Finding Her Niche

Sarah, the proud recipient of the 40 Under 40 Award, genuinely loves her job. Gone are the days helping patients through complex dental procedures. Now she helps people's real estate dreams come true. She earned her real estate license in 2017.

"I love helping people and seeing the joy on their faces when they find the home of their dreams; it is incredibly rewarding. I help people find homes in the Phoenix Metro Area and with my network through Leading RE, I am able to help connect friends,

family, and past clients to any place in the world to find their next home or investment property," she comments.

Working with first-time home buyers is really rewarding for Sarah. Being able to walk them through the process for the first time is rewarding, although it can have its challenges.

Sarah prides herself in providing excellent communication through the entire process. "Hearing that my clients had a smooth transaction and they felt informed throughout the whole process is the most rewarding," she shares.

### Signs of Success

One secret to being a successful agent is Sarah's system. She comments, "I found a system that worked for me and worked that system." She also credits Ninja training during the first year of her business, which has helped shape her business, keep her on track, and help her build the foundation for her real estate career.

Sarah also credits her brokerage for helping her in her real estate journey. She comments, "Every agent in the office and our staff is willing to step up and mentor, answer questions, and help with showings. It has been amazing to be a part of the Best brokerage."

### Sky's the Limit

Looking into the future of real estate, Sarah says, "The sky is the limit for my future in real estate." Real estate has given her freedom to enjoy her life, providing her with the opportunity to travel, spend time with family and friends, volunteer more, and explore Arizona.

She has been together with her partner, Matt Horne, since 2010. Matt is



Photo by AZing Realty Media

Sarah with her family  
Photo by Lexy Popa Photography



“  
I love helping people and seeing the joy on their faces when they find the home of their dreams; it is incredibly rewarding.

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a landscape architect from Kentucky. They share their home with their adorable dog named Wyatt, a rescue from Arizona Animal Welfare League.

#### Popular Pastimes

When not working, Sarah and Matt enjoy traveling, hiking, camping, going for walks, eating out, and road trips. Sarah also has a heart for the community and likes to give back.

“I volunteer every week with the Caring Coalition; we serve underprivileged families by providing boxes of food to families in need. We also supply food and snacks to after school programs,” she comments.

#### Fun Facts

One fun fact about Sarah is that she doesn't like chocolate! She jokes, “I heard it's a sin, but I can't help that I can't stand the smell or taste of chocolate.”

Another fun fact about Sarah is that she grew up in Washington State, although she was born in Phoenix. Most people would never guess! With her expert knowledge of the local area, people consider Sarah to have always lived in Arizona.



Photo by Lexy Popa Photography

#### Final Thoughts

Sarah followed her heart into real estate and has achieved a future that she only imagined. She concludes, “I love what I do! Helping people with the largest transaction that most people make in their lives is not something I take lightly.” She goes above and beyond for her clients, giving them professional service with a personal touch.

From working in the dental industry to making her mark in real estate, Sarah is an inspiration. It's never too late to make a change in life and start a new chapter. Sarah is living proof of that fact.

---

Do you know of any awesome real estate professionals who have worked in the industry for five or more years and are still crushing it, or are one yourself? Email us at [scottsdale@realproducersmag.com](mailto:scottsdale@realproducersmag.com) to get the word out.

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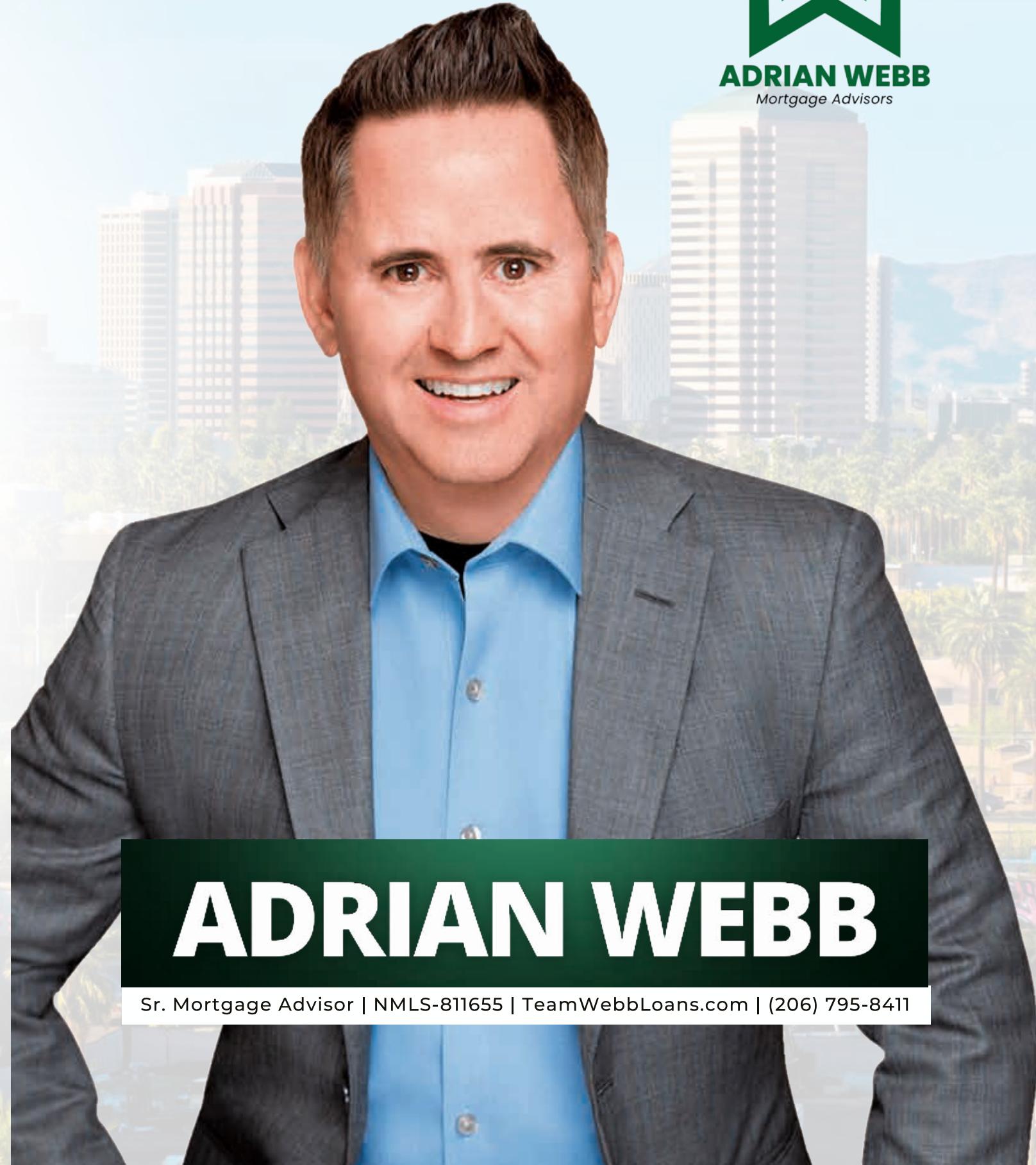


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## ➤ partner spotlight

Written by Elizabeth McCabe  
*In the hustle and bustle of real estate, moments matter. Top-producing agents need help when seconds count. That's where Stratton Inspection Services delivers.*

"Our office staff is second to none. You can practically get a hold of one of us 24/7, whether nights or weekends. We are in the trenches with real estate agents. They have to put contracts together at night and if they need something, they can get a hold of us anytime," says owner Paul Stratton. Paul understands the challenges agents face, and strives to make the inspection process as smooth as possible, ensuring that agents have the time and resources to focus on their clients.

### **Paul's Perseverance: From Stumbling Blocks to Building Blocks**

Hard work pays off and Paul is living proof of that fact. How he started the business showcases his perseverance and refusal to give up.

The Great Recession was a challenging time to start a business. On top of that, he was experiencing a divorce and in the midst of raising his children full-time. However, Paul took a bold step forward by founding Stratton Inspection Services; his determination was unshakable.

Paul recalls, "Being grounded with my kids helped me to stay focused. My kids needed me as much as I needed them." Balancing the responsibilities of parenting while nurturing a fledgling business was no easy feat, but it was this very challenge that drove Paul to persevere. He utilized every spare moment to market his company, reaching out to potential clients and realtors. Then slowly but steadily, Stratton Inspection Services began to take root.

He took the words of his father, an electrician, to heart, "Forget yourself and go to work. When I forgot about

my problems and focused on serving others, that's when it started coming together for me," says Paul.

### **Experience + Expertise**

Paul's path to entrepreneurship was not a straight line. Before establishing his inspection company, he had worn different hats. From working as an electrician (following in the footsteps of his father) and venturing into landscaping to eventually owning a commercial landscape business, Paul's experiences laid the foundation for his journey into the world of home inspections. His construction background and passion for business growth led him to the realization that becoming a certified home inspector was a natural fit.

### **From Small Beginnings to Building a Team**

Since the inception of his business, Stratton Inspection Services has grown into the success it is today. "I



**You are only as good as those  
who you work with.**

”

was lucky to have one inspection a month,” he says.

However, Paul’s determination shone through. He established relationships with real estate agents who believed in his expertise, then the referrals began to trickle in. By 2012, Paul made the pivotal decision to focus solely on inspections, leaving behind any side work he had been doing. This shift allowed him to channel his energy into growing Stratton Inspection Services and build his team.

“We went from just me to 11 amazing inspectors and 4 amazing office staff,” Paul smiles. Developing a team was essential. “You are only as good as those who you work with,” he emphasizes. Paul firmly believes that to achieve greatness, you need the right people by your side.

**Services and Relationships That Matter**  
Stratton Inspection Services offers a range of services, including

commercial inspections, new build inspections, residential and multi-unit inspections, sewer scope inspections, and mold inspections. Beyond the services, it’s the relationships that Paul has built that truly stand out. The connections he’s forged with clients, real estate agents, and others in the industry have been instrumental in the growth of his business. Paul’s perspective on home inspections goes beyond just knowledge; it’s about “phenomenal people skills and communication skills” as well as trust.

“You meet a lot of people and develop really good relationships,” he smiles. “It’s a great industry for that.” He is grateful to all the clients he has partnered with through the years.

Proper communication, honesty, and the ability to convey findings accurately in home inspections are crucial in building trust. Stratton Inspection Services treats each home inspection as if it were their own, striving to

provide a positive, educational experience for all parties involved.

#### **Paul’s Personal Pursuits**

Beyond the world of inspections, Paul is a family man at heart. He finds solace in roping and rodeo, hobbies that bring him joy and relaxation. With homes in both Phoenix and the White Mountains, he’s managed to create a space where he can connect with his love for horses and the outdoors.

#### **From Surviving to Thriving**

From facing adversity during the Great Recession to building a thriving inspection business, Paul refused to give up. His drive and determination have made him the successful business owner he is today. He is eager to meet more top-producing real estate agents and help them with all their inspection needs.

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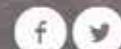
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